

Music Saved Them They Say

*on possible social impacts of making music (SIMM)
for young people in Kinshasa, DR Congo*

Lukas Pairon

(PhD-thesis - May 2019)

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PhD-thesis by **Lukas Pairon**

University of Ghent (UGent),
Faculty of Political and Social Sciences,
Department of Conflict and Development Studies

in collaboration with and with the support of
the School of Arts (University College of Ghent - www.hogent.be)

supervisor: Prof. Koen VLASSENROOT

head of the Department of Conflict and Development Studies,
Faculty of Political and Social Sciences of the University of Ghent

Examination board:

Dr Geoffrey BAKER

Professor of Music @ Royal Holloway, Department of Music (London)

Dr Karen BÜSCHER

Post-doc researcher @ Faculty of Political and Social Sciences,
Department of Conflict and Development Studies (University of Ghent)

Dr Jeroen CUVELIER

Post-doc researcher @ Faculty of Political and Social Sciences,
Department of Conflict and Development Studies (University of Ghent)

Dr Ilse DERLUYN

Professor @ Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences,
Department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy (University of Ghent)

Dr John SLOBODA

Research Professor @ Guildhall School of Music & Drama (London)

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Lukas Pairon

"We have witnessed a burning enthusiasm, an unhesitating encouragement for the other side of human folly: excessive projects, manic perfectionism, obsessive work - all the symptoms of this disease called Art - a disease without which our stay on earth would resemble a vast waiting room in a station without trains."

Jean-Luc Plouvier, artistic director Ictus Ensemble, January 2013

"When I play music, even when I did not eat or drink, I will forget all of that. When I am in front of the instrument, everything else does not count anymore. Also money does not count. I can play for no money at all, it does not matter. The only thing that matters then is the enjoyment of performing music. If I would not have my musical activity, I might have abandoned my struggle in life a long time ago. I love music so much. So when I play music, even if I am in trouble and have no money, I dash into it, take a dip and experience as an immersion into the music, feeling one with it."

(from life story interview with BM-CL,
member of music ensemble Beta Mbonda, 15.12.14, ref-08213)

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contact: www.lukas-pairon.eu / lukas.pairon@ugent.be

+32475445181 - SIMM: lukas.pairon@simm-platform.eu / Music Fund: lukas.pairon@musicfund.eu

Table of contents

Aknowledgements.....	9
1. ABSTRACT.....	11
2. INTRODUCTION.....	13
3. BUILT-UP PHD-DISSERTATION.....	22
PART 1: CONCEPTS-CONTEXTS-METHODS.....	23
4. RELEVANT LITERATURE, OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS, AND SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS.....	24
4.0. Introduction.....	24
4.1. Need for research on the possible social impact of making music...28	
4.2. Life in 'troubled' contexts.....	32
4.2.1. Violence / conflict dynamics and social becoming.....	32
4.2.2. Focus on resilience and agency rather than on deficit.....	34
4.2.3. Coming of age.....	41
4.2.4. Poverty.....	44
4.3. The roles of music.....	45
4.3.1. Musicians and violence.....	45
4.3.2. The phenomenon of 'flow'.....	48
4.3.3. Impact of co-ownership in social music projects.....	49
4.4. The specific context of Kinshasa.....	50
4.4.1. 'Witch'-children and children in street situations.....	50
4.4.2. The phenomenon of 'kuluna' and the 'Opération Likofi'.....	60
4.4.3. Youth and family background.....	70
4.4.4. The importance of music in Kinshasa.....	73
4.5. Preliminary considerations to this research.....	77
5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES.....	81
5.0. Main research question.....	81
5.1. Hypothesis 1: Artistic and social accompaniment.....	81
5.2. Hypothesis 2: At the wheel.....	82
5.3. Hypothesis 3: Shared ownership.....	83
5.4. Hypothesis 4: Beyond survival.....	84
6. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF METHODOLOGY.....	86
6.1. Qualitative research.....	87
6.2. Micro-sociological approach.....	87
6.3. Ethnographic approach.....	89
6.4. Inter-subjective and hermeunitical interpretative approach.....	90
6.5. Qualitative descriptive research.....	91
6.6. Transcription of interviews.....	92
6.7. Field notes.....	92
7. PRACTITIONER-RESEARCHER.....	94
7.0. Introduction.....	94
7.1. Networking.....	95
7.2. Walk the walk.....	96
7.3. The impact of the research itself on the lives of the participants	98
7.4. Proposing special encounters and events.....	99
7.5. Build-up of trust relationship with participants and its relation to discretion.....	100
7.6. Reciprocity - what is in it for you?.....	103
7.7. Social development study at crossroads of different disciplines..	103
7.8. Researcher - clarinet student.....	105
7.9. Participatory observation.....	106
7.10. Conclusion.....	107

8. DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	109
8.1. Introduction	109
8.2. 2012-2013: Exploratory phase of the research and positioning in relation to theoretical and empericial background	110
8.2.0. First surprise: only two social musical projects in Kinshasa	110
8.2.1. Exploratory individual and (focus) group interviews	111
8.2.2. Starting points of the research	115
Explorative questioning 1: Intrinsic influence of music	117
Explorative questioning 2: Extrinsic values attributed to music (and which are given as reasons and motivation for leaving the previous life)	117
Explorative questioning 3: The role of the mentors	118
Explorative questioning 4: From insecurity to quietude	118
Explorative questioning 5: Learning a highly skilled and specialized profession	118
Explorative questioning 6: Youngsters become violent, like 'kuluna' do, because they have no other activities	118
Music fills a void and a need for an activity	118
8.3. 2014-2016: The main fieldwork-period in Kinshasa	119
8.3.1. Original set-up	119
8.3.2. More detailed information on the cases studied	121
8.3.2.1. Espace Masolo	121
8.3.2.2. Beta Mbonda	124
8.3.3. # Participants in research (2012-2015)	126
8.3.4. Re-organisation from the original hypotheses into only 3 lines of inquiry	127
The framework ('mentorship') provided by the trainers and educators surrounding the musicians	127
8.3.5. Planning and design of the focus groups	130
8.3.6. Individual interviews with participants	132
8.3.6.1. Life story interview (LSI)	133
8.3.6.2. Interview on music-making (IIMM)	135
8.3.6.3. Interview on governance, organisation, participation and shared ownership	136
8.3.7. Mirror interviews	137
8.3.8. Invitation of professional musicians to focus group sessions	138
8.3.9. Financial agreement with participants	138
8.4. Ethical considerations	139
8.4.1. Access and consent participants	139
8.4.2. Confidentiality	140
8.4.3. Reciprocity of the research for the participants	141
8.5. Analysis of data	144
PART 2: FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS	148
9. WHY MAKE MUSIC AT ALL?	149
9.0. Introduction	149
9.1. Extrinsic outcome from making music	149
9.1.1. Financial income	150
9.1.1.1. More work in brass bands	152
9.1.1.2. Financial support from friends/family	152
9.1.1.3. Work/income from other activities	153
9.1.2. Further education	155
9.1.3. New identity and respect	156
9.1.3.1. Police leaves them alone	156
9.1.3.2. Recognition	156
9.1.3.3. It's the identity, stupid!	157
9.1.3.4. Meeting 'important' people	158
9.1.3.5. Self-image, self-esteem and self-confidence	159
9.1.4. Teaching others	160
9.1.4.1. Teaching others - introduction to instrument	162
9.1.4.2. Teaching others - difficulties	162

9.1.4.3. Teaching others - attract not force.....	163
9.1.4.4. Music as a new occupation.....	164
9.1.4.5. Stability and security.....	165
9.1.4.6. Possibility to travel outside DR Congo.....	166
9.2. Intrinsic outcome from making music.....	166
9.2.1. Enjoyment of discipline.....	169
9.2.2. Hard work leading to results.....	169
9.2.3. Enjoyment of playing music itself.....	170
9.2.4. Enjoyment to master music instrument(s) and music repertoire.....	170
9.2.5. Being in another world.....	171
9.2.6. Relationship master-disciple.....	172
9.3. How they began music-making.....	173
9.4. What makes someone a (good) musician?.....	174
9.5. Difficulties involved in making music.....	177
9.5.1. Hardly any money gained from music.....	177
9.5.2. Negative reactions surrounding.....	177
9.5.3. Difficulties to learn music.....	178
9.5.4. Performing at funerals.....	179
9.6. Drop-outs.....	180
9.6.1. Some died.....	181
9.6.2. Some left DR Congo.....	181
9.6.3. Girls drop out more easily.....	182
9.6.4. Dropouts from Espace Masolo.....	184
9.6.5. Dropouts from Beta Mbonda.....	186
9.7. Summary and conclusion.....	187
10. Hypothesis 1: ARTISTIC AND SOCIAL ACCOMPANIMENT.....	189
10.0. Introduction.....	189
10.1. Social accompaniment.....	190
10.1.1. Strength social accompaniment.....	191
10.1.2. Collaboration with shelters for street-children.....	194
10.1.3. 'ISAAC': Importance, Security, 'Amour' (love), Acceptance and Confidence.....	196
10.1.4. Reunification children in street situations with their family.....	196
10.2. Artistic accompaniment.....	200
10.2.1. Strength artistic accompaniment.....	200
10.2.2. Challenges coming from preparing concert programmes.....	201
10.2.3. Weaknesses artistic accompaniment.....	202
10.3. Practitioners' position and their needs for training (music pedagogues and social and community workers).....	207
10.4. Summary and conclusion.....	208
11. Hypothesis 2: AT THE WHEEL.....	211
11.0. Introduction.....	211
11.1. Physical & mental difficulties in mastering the instrument and repertoire.....	213
11.2. Importance of regular exercise.....	222
11.3. How rehearsals are organised.....	224
11.4. How music is memorised.....	230
11.5. Who takes leads during rehearsals and concerts.....	233
11.6. Summary and conclusions.....	235
12. Hypothesis 3: SHARED OWNERSHIP.....	238
12.0. Introduction.....	238
12.1. Democratic organisation.....	240
12.1.1. Heterarchy vs hierarchy.....	243
12.1.2. Direction versus members.....	246
12.1.3. Discipline difficult amongst peers.....	247
12.1.4. Power of management board vs direction.....	249
12.2. Financial management and transparency (or lack of).....	250
12.3. Project management.....	251
12.3.1. Social and/or artistic focus.....	251

12.3.2. Selection of musicians and repertoire.....	253
12.3.3. Selling concerts / representing the music ensemble.....	254
12.3.4. Selling self-made instruments.....	255
12.3.5. Feeling of ownership.....	256
12.3.6. Importance of being able to speak out.....	257
12.3.7. Co-governance including members.....	258
12.3.8. Future of the social music projects and the individual careers in Kinshasa.....	259
12.4. Future careers.....	260
12.4.1. Strong management needed to run music ensemble.....	260
12.4.2. Time needed to develop successful career as musician.....	260
12.4.3. Philosophy of enthusiasm.....	262
12.4.4. Successful career depends on type and repertoire of music...	262
12.4.5. Hard work needed to develop successful career as musician...	263
12.4.6. Why indeed make music at all?.....	264
12.5. Summary and conclusion.....	265
13. Hypothesis 4: BEYOND SURVIVAL - MUSIC FOR ITSELF.....	268
13.0. Introduction.....	268
13.1. Music itself gives enjoyment.....	272
13.2. Playing music is addictive.....	274
13.3. Enjoyment of mastering / performing well.....	275
13.4. Polyphony - the impact of group dynamics and of being 'rooted'..	276
13.5. Enjoyment of performing for audiences.....	280
13.6. Music in troublesome periods - an alternative reality.....	282
13.7. Summary and conclusion.....	285
14. CONCLUSIONS and summary of the main points of the study.....	286
14.1. Evidence.....	286
14.2. Description/understanding.....	286
14.3. Focus on participants.....	287
14.4. Liquid fields of realities.....	287
14.5. One main question remained.....	287
14.6. Murky waters of enjoyment.....	288
14.7. Four main conclusions.....	289
14.8. Other points of interest.....	290
14.9. Provisional findings.....	290
15. FOLLOW-UP.....	291
15.1. Future SIMM-research needed.....	291
15.1.1. Development of longitudinal research.....	291
15.1.2. The missing element: research on intrinsic benefits.....	292
15.1.3. Development of comparative research.....	292
15.1.4. Research by teams of researchers from different academic backgrounds.....	292
15.1.5. Open access to research data.....	293
15.2. Post-doc follow-up of this research in Kinshasa in 2021.....	293
15.3. Publication of book for musicians and social and community workers	295
16. SELECTED LITERATURE AND DOCUMENTATION.....	296
17. ATTACHMENTS.....	302
17.1. A selection of quoted transcriptions from interviews + field notes:	303
17.2. Participant biographic information.....	315
17.3. Transcriptions of individual interviews, focus groups & other meetings.....	316
17.4. Short overview planning of the PhD (2012-2018).....	317
17.5. Codebook 2012-2015.....	318
17.6. Codebook 2016-2017.....	323
17.6.1. Coding lists 2016 - August 2017.....	323
17.6.2. Coding lists September-December 2017.....	328

17.7. Accompaniment of PhD.....	336
17.7.1. Accompanying committee.....	336
17.7.2. Congolese research team.....	336
17.7.3. Steering committee.....	337
17.7.4. Key local advisers.....	338
17.7.5. Experts.....	338
17.8. Public pre-presentations.....	339
18. SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR.....	340
19. INDEXES.....	341

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abbreviations

BM = Beta Mbonda / **EM** = Espace Masolo / **LJT** = Les Jeunes Talents (ensemble of more advanced musicians of Espace Masolo) / **SIMM** = social impact of making music

1. ABSTRACT

Background:

Socially oriented interventions in the developing world take a wide variety of forms. In particular, there has been an interest in interventions that support human resilience in challenging situations. In recent years music-making interventions have become increasingly popular across a wide spectrum of social deprivations and challenges. Although such interventions are often believed to have positive social impact, there is insufficient research on the impacts of long-term structured musical programmes on the recipients, particularly research informed by elaborated recipient testimony and detailed contextual understanding.

Aim:

This thesis in the field of social development studies aims to increase understanding of how the experience of structured musical education and practice can have an influence on the social conditions of young people, by examining in detail one specific local context, the often difficult living socio-economic conditions of Kinshasa (DR Congo). It also aims to increase understanding of the factors which motivate young people to persist in music-making over substantial periods of time, even when such activity appears not to improve critical aspects of their external (e.g. economic) conditions very much.

Methods:

A qualitative approach was taken to the field study of two long-term musical projects in Kinshasa, one for so-called 'witch'-children (n = 22) both male and female between the ages of 16 and 23, and one involving former male gang members (n = 10) between the ages of 24 and 41. This involved observations and interviews (both group and individual) over a period of four years. A total of 175 hours of interview material was collected and 161 hours transcribed. Qualitative content analysis was undertaken on the transcriptions as well as extensive researcher case notes made during the field work. This allowed the identification and elaboration of key thematic strands.

Results:

The data demonstrated strong beliefs in both groups that becoming musicians played an important role in helping them navigate towards better positions in their social lives, some expressing this by saying that they were "saved by music". Detailed analysis derived four important contributory elements to success in the discourses of the recipients:

(1) a combination of artistic and psychosocial accompaniment from the leadership of the projects, (2) the experience of gaining mastery of an instrument and its music repertoire, (3) shared ownership and democratic organisation of the project, and (4) the intrinsic interest of making music as an activity in and for itself.

Conclusions and implications:

The research here offers support for the conclusion that music-making can be socially transformative, but that certain specific conditions may need to pertain for such transformation to be robust. Further research in other contexts is needed to clarify the generality of the factors discovered in these specific projects, but these results already provide pointers which may be useful for practitioners designing musical interventions in a range of social contexts.

2. INTRODUCTION

This PhD-thesis in the field of social development studies is the result of research done by someone who is a **practitioner-researcher**¹, with a long career in music and social work: Before taking on this PhD-research for the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences of the University of Ghent (Department of Conflict and Development Studies), I had already been associated for 10 years with Music Fund (www.musicfund.eu), working with music schools and musicians in regions of conflict (Gaza, West Bank, Israel) and in developing countries (DR Congo, Haiti, Morocco, Mozambique), and I had also for almost 20 years (1994-2013) been working as the founding director of the now famous classical contemporary music ensemble Ictus (www.ictus.be). My research has benefited from my understanding of social, cultural as well as musical and artistic contexts.

Qualitative description was the method of choice for this research, because it turned out to be the most suitable methodology for arriving at a description and understanding of the phenomena being studied².

When I started my projects in the Middle East with the music ensemble Ictus from 2002 to 2004, and later with Music Fund - from 2005 in Gaza, West Bank, Israel; from 2007 in Kinshasa; from 2006 in Mozambique - many people then told me *how wonderful these projects were, as music is known - they told me - to be a universal language, as well as an important factor for bringing peace and dialogue.*

I did not like these over-enthusiastic claims of so-called 'massive' impact of music on trauma, sleep, social becoming, conflict... I was often in company hearing such claims, without indications concerning research, nor even much interest in having such claims underpinned with research. I have for many years been - and continue to be - critical as well as sceptical about such hyperboles, vague ideas and overly romantic rhetoric on music in relation to conflict and violence. It has become one of the reasons for wanting to embark on this research project.

My ongoing experience since 2011 spending intensive and long periods of time in the projects of Music Fund in Gaza (Palestine), nevertheless diminished somewhat the strong scepticism I had towards such popular thoughts. The reason for this being that I recognised that the young people I knew

¹ detailed information on the position of practitioner-researcher in chapter 7

² more information on the choice for qualitative description research under 6.5

there who were studying and making music in Gaza found in their practice of music a source of inspiration and positive attitude towards life, in contrast with the often challenging surroundings of Gaza.

Furthermore, in about the same period, I discovered the grassroots social projects through musical activities (I propose to call them 'social music projects') developed with members of violent gangs and with children in street situations in some of the poor municipalities of Kinshasa (called 'la cité').

Knowing that many social music projects were being developed worldwide, I started to wonder whether it could be true that 'where there is smoke, there is fire': If so much practice continues to be developed in this field, music may after all play a certain role in social-artistic work?

There are many practitioners of social music schemes all over the world - those working in the well-known El Sistema in Venezuela, and many other practitioners in other countries - proposing the study of different forms of complex music - popular, classical or traditional - from different aesthetic schools. The reason for this growth of SIMM-like³ practices seems to be that a growing number of practitioners are concluding from their experience that the study of complex music by youngsters with difficult social backgrounds (drugs, violence, gangs, street life, child-soldiers...) can open up new perspectives for these children and youth.

The need for qualitative in-depth research is now more than ever strongly felt in the field, with especially follow-up studies missing on how the participating children and youth themselves are affected by such music training, and what happens to them following their training⁴.

This - in many ways pioneering - PhD-research in the field of development studies is proposing an intensive study of 2 case studies⁵ in Kinshasa, DR Congo, which are sharing the particular characteristic of seeing music as helping them to move on to a new position in their society. The number of young musicians studied is limited, but they can be seen as potential nodal points in their society.

As I have been focussing my research on in-depth case studies in the specific context of Kinshasa, I did not seek easy generalisations, but instead concentrated on a contextual understanding of the realities studied there.

³ SIMM = social impact of music-making

⁴ see also chapter 4 on relevant literature

⁵ find an introduction to the two projects in chapter 8.3.2

What is the 'social change' the participants in this research talked about? Which social ladder did they wish to climb? What was meant with 'finding a newly constructed and respected position in their society', or 'getting respect from society', or 'shifts in social positioning', all ways in which they have tried to explain what had changed for them. The former 'kuluna' (name given in Kinshasa to members of violent gangs) amongst the participants of this research were efficient, successful and respected. The respect from within that milieu was then - at least at first - lost though, when they started to dedicate themselves to music, in part because they did not earn much money with this new activity. But while being reviled by their ex-comrades in crime, they then started to be respected by their family and their neighbours, a.o. for leaving violence behind them.

This **social development study** is not about large-scale social change in society. The practices of music-making⁶ studied here were not observed as transformational in Congolese society at large, even though they can be transformational for the Congolese individuals studied here. Congolese society goes on its way without being very much impacted by what happened to these individuals learning music. The cases studied are little NGOs doing very interesting and important work, but they are not changing society. The study is not about processes in society which can be experienced as societal change, but about the impact of specific social work programs. 'Agency' - a classical concept in social science, which also takes an important place in this research - is only referring to actions, strategies and choices made by individuals. Danish anthropologist Henrik Vigh introduced the notion of 'social navigation' to explain how people try to change their strategy in order to improve their situation in a context which itself is also very volatile. Vigh's concept of 'social navigation' tries to combine both - elements of societal change and personal social change and engineering - and it is a notion which fits very well the situation of the persons I have been studying, who want to reposition themselves in a context which is extremely volatile. This research on social development is profiting from my personal master-studies and professional background in politics of education, and also in social work and music education.

Music can also not be seen as treating societal shortages. It is not by making music that one can remove the fact that children are being accused of witchcraft. It happened to them, and it marked them for life. They have often lived years in

⁶ My research has focused on possible impacts of music-making, not on possible impacts of music-listening. The former is concerned with the production of music and the latter mainly on its reception (Green 2002).

the streets of Kinshasa, and then found that music-making could somehow help them to psychologically heal or weaken their traumas. It is also not by making music that all of a sudden one can become less poor or find a job. Changes in society, politics and economics are needed to change people's conditions at those levels of their lives. I have not seen big changes in the lives of the musicians I studied at the economic level, but I have seen music having a possible impact at the level of them repositioning themselves in their society. Someone who was first known as a 'kuluna' (member of violent gangs)⁷ or as a 'witch'-child⁸, and then becomes a respected musician, has created an important new 'social capital'. Maybe that 'capital' will translate into money later on, but that is not sure at all.

We are not pilots of all the realities which reign and define our lives, and our realities are (fortunately) complex. But this research can provide certain elements that explain, show why and how, music can help rebuild lives within the social context.

At the beginning of the research I was critical and suspicious concerning this, because I was irritated by the exaggerated romanticized and salvationist discourse claiming that music has magical powers. But as I perceived that music is so much put to use as an instrument of social becoming and reintegration of young people, I wanted to study and understand it better.

General questioning. This social development study is interested in producing a description and an understanding of the influence the experience of certain types of informal but structured⁹ music practice and education¹⁰ can have on the social re-positioning of young people in a city such as Kinshasa, where they are often confronted with violence, as victims (such as the street-children), or as perpetrators actively participating in violence (such as the former gang members). In other words, how can music help to (re-)construct lives affected by violence in particular - as victims or as perpetrators -, as is felt by (and expressed in the narratives of) the youngsters themselves, who communicate "being saved by music"?

⁷ see also 6.5

⁸ see also 6.6

⁹ The case studies in this research are examples of informal music learning practices, which Lucy Green described in her *How Popular Musicians Learn* (Green 2002).

¹⁰ This research is studying long-term music training and practice (making of music, not listening to music), which has the aim of allowing participants to end up mastering an instrument and a music repertoire. The research is not looking at time-limited short-term occupational or therapeutic interventions or workshops.

The type of music being played is important in this research. It is possible to make a little bit of music, as one can play a bit of football... kicking against a ball, playing a few notes. In this research groups of musicians have been selected who are into music which requires certain qualities and requirements. The musicians in this study are seriously learning music, and the music they are learning and playing is complex. A question which occupies this research a lot is whether the mastery of music can influence the organisation of young people's lives¹¹. This excludes therefore from this research certain types of music which can be learnt and performed simply, even though they can of course be beautiful and attractive. The reason why such music forms are not taken into account by this research, has no relationship with our aesthetic opinion about them.

The young musicians of the percussion band Beta Mbonda¹² have become in a few years time real 'connoisseurs' of Congolese music traditions from different regions of the country. To succeed in mastering the traditional congolese music repertoire, many hours of rehearsals, discipline and concentration were required. Similarly, the young musicians of the brass band of Espace Masolo also needed a lot of time to master the performing of trumpets, trombones or any other brass instrument. Nothing much will come out of it, if you would try to make a trumpet sound, when you never performed it before. There is a.o. a process of embodiment which has to take place: The body has to slowly adapt and become 'in phase' with what the object - the music instrument - requires in terms of position, breath, and many other bodily requirements, before music can be produced. This takes time.

Even though music skills are very much acquired through osmosis, the musicians in the projects studied here also needed a teacher to find out about the secrets of embodiment. This process is difficult to explain in words. It concerns a series of complex mechanisms which need to be interiorised. This takes time and a lot of exercise and help from teachers. The teacher can play an important role in such complex music training. Certain instruments would allow you to get some results rather quickly by just plucking or tapping a bit, improvising, and imitating what one hears through recordings or sees on YouTube. But such learning processes quickly come to a stand-still. To get any further and reach certain levels of mastery or virtuosity, one soon needs a teacher, who will share with you a tradition of knowledge and know-how in playing a particular instrument. Such transfer of know-how and knowledge by a 'master' is an important element in the

¹¹ see hypothesis 2 (5.2)

¹² find an introduction to this project under 8.3.2.2

learning of performing complex forms of music. One cannot learn everything by oneself.

Instead of hearing their stories from the mouths of the organisers of such programmes, I decided to have the young musicians as our most important collaborators in the research. The organisers and providers of the social music projects are also heard, but special attention and focus is given here to the perspective of the trainees. Arild Bergh and John Sloboda are not the only scholars stressing the need to **focus research on the experiences and points of view of the participants in social music projects:**

Tia DeNora mentions in this respect Sarah Cohen's work as "one of the first to call for a renewal of an ethnography of musical practice, in her insistence that 'focus upon people and their musical practices and processes rather than upon structures, texts or products illuminates the ways in which music is used and the important role that it plays in everyday life and in society generally' (Cohen 1993, p.127)" (DeNora 2001).

This has not so much been a study about changing outer conditions (although I have not been blind for those either), but especially about a certain musical practice which is seen by mentors and practitioners as a possible instrument to construct a different social identity through the strengthening of personal skills such as the capacity to listen, to dialogue, to make connections, to process complex realities, and to view reality as an interdependent whole, all important elements of the act of playing music.

I have not tried to study such shifts in terms of the precise impact music could have, because that is something difficult to measure. Instead, I have focussed on mapping the learning experiences of these youngsters - as well as of their environment - in relation to their repositioning, which is believed by them to have happened thanks to the fact that they have become musicians.

Arild Bergh (2010) and Didier-Charles Gondola (2013) already found that "the more music involves an active role on the part of the musicians (learning and playing an instrument, organizing a band, perform for others), the more that music may play a positive role in building identity and exorcizing the forces of violence" (Gondola, email 29.10.13).

Long-term personal and social change after music engagement tends to occur where the involvement is active; it involves the participant in the structured acquisition and regular exercise of musical skills over a period of time measured in months rather than days. (Bergh & Sloboda 2010)

The interest of this research is in the process of making music - termed by Christopher Small as 'musicking' (Small 1998) - in contrast to music as an object or a product which one consumes or listens to. I am looking at projects involving

active music learning and making, not as in passive music consumption or casual one-off and brief musical workshops or therapy sessions (see also: Arild Bergh in Deliège, 2012).

More than being a study about personal psychological processes, the ambition of this study is micro-sociological and ethnographical, in the sense that it is understanding the experience and perception of the music practice of the young people being studied, in relation to the way they view their position in society, and the way their surroundings look upon their new 'habitus'¹⁴. Although the psychological perspective is also necessary, I am focussing in this research more on questions concerning forms of social organisation and re-positioning. I did not try to identify and quantify causes of collective and/or individual behaviour, nor predict behavioural trends. Instead, my aim was to understand transformational social processes, using ethnographic and qualitative methods of observation (DeNora, 2001). As such, this surely is an example of research which is leading to a series of new questions, even though it also helped to come closer to understanding certain realities and practices.

The ambition of this research is to be able through an interpretative approach and life history research to construct a framework of understanding and conceptualizing which can be of interest to similar practices in different places in the world.

I hope the results of this research will also be of interest to practitioners wanting to introduce social music projects to young people in Kinshasa, DR Congo. This is one of the reasons why I have actively established contacts with organisations that can be considered as local gatekeepers in this field, - e.g. organisations working with street children and youth delinquents (in Kinshasa: organisations such as UNICEF, REEJER, ORPER...) - and with whom I have been actively communicating about the ongoing research.

I did my best to regularly take a 'bird eye's view' position: The reality I studied in Kinshasa and elsewhere will not stay the way it is now. My ambition is that this research will be able to go beyond the here and now. This does of course not mean that I should not have a clear picture and idea of how things are here and now, in order to be able to come to an understanding of the phenomena and systems I am studying. But the ultimate aim and direction of this research has been to make connections with other realities, away from Kinshasa, both in space and in time. The project is to write about the

¹⁴ the notion of 'habitus' is used here, as was proposed by Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1998, Tacq 2003, Lescouret 2008)

possible social impact of making music (SIMM) for youth in difficult circumstances, beyond the situation in Kinshasa: to construct a framework of understanding and conceptualizing which can be of interest to similar practices in other places in the world, leading also to propositions for future research in this specific field of SIMM-like activities.

Music in Kinshasa.

Music is omni-present, appreciated and respected within the Congolese society¹⁷. The final choice to only study young musicians in Kinshasa, was taken (1) because of the fact that music is so present there, (2) because many young people in this large city are challenged by poverty, lack of occupation and violence, and (3) also because I have a strong and large network of contacts there thanks to my work for Music Fund in Kinshasa since 2007. This network has allowed me throughout my 3-year research to be my own local 'fixer'¹⁸. It was therefore no surprise to me that I was able to find interesting case studies for my research in Kinshasa. There are many types of musical expressions in a city such as Kinshasa¹⁹.

Kinshasa, the setting of this research.

I did not suspect though at the start of this PhD-project how important the choice of the setting would be for the research. The particular setting of Kinshasa has not only proven to be appropriate, but possibly even the best possible one... at least the best possible out of those I could choose from amongst the places I knew already sufficiently well to allow me to start such a research at. Studying, as I did, the possible roles of music-making in social work in a place which is in many ways - in comparison to many other places in our world - so extremely complicated for people living there, allowed me to be confronted with situations which distinguish themselves from the grey zones of multiple choices troubled youth may have in other unfortunate surroundings.

Towards the end of my research (January 2016), this situation did not seem to have improved much, although data and statistics differ substantially depending on the sources one consults. Within this context of poverty, corruption by those who govern (politicians, police, army), as well as the highly uncertain health conditions in which the poor majority lives, it is impressive how the people of Kinshasa (the 'Kinois') continue to live with dignity and courage.

¹⁷ also see chapter 4.4 on the importance of music in Kinshasa

¹⁸ person hired to find local advisers and other contacts

¹⁹ The research of and the meetings with Bob W. White and Leon Tsambu (White 2007 & 2008, Tsambu 2004 & 2009) have been of crucial importance in understanding the reality of music practiced in Kinshasa.

Financing of the PhD

The financing of the research itself was assured and there were no strings attached to any of these funds. It was mainly made possible thanks to a 'senior research fellowship' offered to me by the School of Arts of the University College Ghent (HoGent; contract from August 2012 until July 2016) which covered my personal income. The cost of 7 month fieldwork in Kinshasa (international and local travel, housing and food, payment team of assistants, per diems participants, communication, documentation...) as well as the costs involved in having a big part of the recorded interviews (about 80 hours) transcribed, were expenses covered by supplementary budgets obtained from the Rectorat of the University of Ghent (UGent) and from the Ministry of Scientific Research of the Belgian Government. And expenses related to certain output resulting from a follow-up to this PhD-research - such as the publication costs of the book²² (correction, edition and translation) as well as the production costs of Marie-Françoise Plissart's film on Beta Mbonda - need separate financing and are already partly finalised.

"Music Saved Them They Say". The title of this dissertation does not mean that the point of departure of this research was that music by itself could 'save' anyone from anything. Even though they had many reasons for wanting to move on to a different position in society, away from their lives in violent gangs or away from being (or being defined as) 'witch'-children or 'street children', this does not mean that they needed being 'saved'. The salvationist vocabulary of the title of this dissertation does not come from the research team, but from those participating in this research, the youngsters in Kinshasa who are becoming musicians. The aim of this research has been to understand which role music can play in social projects aiming to help young people in their wish for social becoming, or better, for social justice. I thereby took the perspectives and narratives of the participants as my point of departure in order to come to this understanding.

²² See presentation of book project under 15.3

3. BUILT-UP PHD-DISSERTATION

This PhD-dissertation is built up in 2 parts. In Part 1 the methodology of the research is presented, as well as information on relevant literature, the main operational concepts and social and cultural contexts of the research. In Part 2 the findings of the 4-year research in Kinshasa are presented on the possible roles of music in social and community work, as found in the two in-depth case studies.

Part 1 of this thesis starts with a chapter giving background information on the concepts, field-settings, and broader social and cultural contexts which help to situate this specific research (chapter 4) and connects all this to relevant literature.

Then the main research question and the 4 hypotheses of the research are shortly introduced (chapter 5), followed by an overview of the general characteristics of the methodology of this qualitative descriptive research (chapter 6), a detailed presentation of the qualitative research methods and why they were chosen.

I then introduce myself as the practitioner-researcher I am (chapter 7) and explain what this meant concretely when preparing - as well as during and following - the fieldwork in Kinshasa.

In chapter 8 a detailed presentation is given on how the methodology was developed and adapted throughout the 3-4 years of the research, including: information on the case studies chosen and investigated, the set-up of the semi-structured group and individual interviews conducted, some ethical considerations concerning this research, as well as information on the way the data were analysed.

In **Part 2** of the thesis, the findings of this research around the main hypotheses of the research are presented and in detail enumerated and discussed in 6 separate chapters (chapters 9 to 14), starting with a chapter under the title 'Why make music at all?', in which both expected extrinsic as well as intrinsic outcomes of making music are being presented, as reported by the participants in this research. Following are the detailed findings around the 4 hypotheses (chapters 10, 11, 12 and 13), and the overall findings of the research (chapter 14).

Then, at the end of this thesis, several follow-up projects, which are connected to and resulting from this research, are announced and shortly presented in chapter 15.

PART 1: CONCEPTS-CONTEXTS- METHODS

4. RELEVANT LITERATURE, OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS, AND SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

4.0. Introduction

In this chapter a series of contexts of the research - and also of its setting in Kinshasa - are presented. And, where possible, they are connected with existing literature and research. An overview of all the existing literature on research concerning each and every element discussed was not sought here. Instead, I have tried to make clear what I saw as the important currents, and especially which existing literature I have chosen, what I learned from it, and how it has inspired me to develop my own concepts, ideas and theoretical propositions.

This overview of relevant literature as well as of operational concepts and social and cultural contexts is an important chapter which contextualises a lot of the realities studied in this research. I have organised this information into 3 different areas: (1) life in 'troubled' contexts³⁷, (2) the roles of music³⁸, and (3) the specific context of Kinshasa³⁹. This is then followed by an enumeration of some of my considerations (questions and assumptions) preliminary to this research.

Contrary to what can be expected in comparable reporting of research, I have chosen to already illustrate certain elements in this preliminary chapter with a few extracts from the interviews with the musicians I studied in Kinshasa. Normally no extracts from data would indeed be expected to appear before the methodology is described, and I therefor want to refer the reader to chapter 6 on my methodology-design if you wish to know how these data were obtained. The data mentioned here in this chapter will not re-appear later on, because - although important - they are not directly connected to the research questions, hypotheses or results of the research. I have wanted to be able to include them at this early stage in the thesis, because these quotes from the data are helpful in

³⁷ see 4.2 on violence, conflict dynamics and social becoming (4.2.1), on resilience and agency (4.2.2) and on coming of age (4.2.3)

³⁸ see 4.3 on music and violence (4.3.1), on the phenomenon of 'flow' (4.3.2) and on the impact of co-ownership in social music projects (4.3.3)

³⁹ See 4.4 on 'witch'-children and children in street situations (4.4.1), on the phenomenon of 'kuluna'-gangs (4.4.2), on youth and their family background (4.4.3), and on the importance of music in Kinshasa (4.4.4)

contextualising the social and cultural realities of the research.

1. The theoretical insights and analytical tools developed by scholars in the field of development studies - such as Arturo Escobar, Joseph Stiglitz (Stiglitz 2006) and James Ferguson (Ferguson 1994) - have been helpful for the analysis of how Espace Masolo and Beta Mbondo have organized their activities in Kinshasa (Escobar 1995, Escobar 2018). And the social music projects studied here can be described as 'private development initiatives' (Kinsbergen 2014, Kinsbergen & Schulpen 2013), belonging to the so-called 'fourth pillar' in development aid (Develtere & De Bruyn 2009).

2. Especially Arturo Escobar's latest work *Designs for the Pluriverse* on transition discourses has been a background source of inspiration guiding my writing of this dissertation. For Escobar certain forms of music can be seen as announcing possible paradigm shifts (Kuhn 1962) and new fusions he foresees as being able to set in motion a pluriversal force of change towards the different worlds we could be heading towards, thereby citing Jacques Attali's contention (Attali 1985) that *music, more than theory, heralds the new cultural and political orders to come* (Escobar 2018:130)⁴⁰.

2. The point of departure of this social development study and thesis was the finding that even though a lot of social music practices are being proposed and developed in many different parts of the world, apart from a lot of promotional literature on such projects not much research has been developed on the social impact of music-making (SIMM)⁴¹.

3. The choice has been from the beginning to focus the research on the role that learning music and music-making can possibly play in terms of social impact for youth who are involved in violent surroundings - as victims and/or as perpetrators. An important first part of the prospection as well as of the reading was done in preparation of this⁴².

4. Early on in the fieldwork I was confronted with an impressive quality of agency and resilience amongst certain participants in our research, and I concentrated on coming to a better understanding of this aspect of the realities I was studying⁴³.

⁴⁰ *It is (...) necessary to imagine radically new theoretical forms, in order to speak to new realities. Music, the organization of noise, is one such form. It reflects the manufacture of society; it constitutes the audible waveband of the vibrations and signs that make up society* (Attali 1985:4). *Music is a (...) metaphor of the real* (Attali 1985:5).

⁴¹ see for this 4.1

⁴² see for this 4.2.1

⁴³ see for this 4.2.2

5. One of the important intrinsic benefits reported in this research was related to the phenomenon of 'flow', a phenomenon which has already been studied in depth by researchers⁴⁴.

6. Also to understand the possible impact of 'co-ownership' within the context of social music projects interesting preliminary research was found⁴⁵.

7. What made me study the phenomenon of 'witch'-children in Kinshasa⁴⁷ is the fact that one of the two cases studied in Kinshasa - the community arts centre Espace Masolo⁴⁸ - is set up to welcome children who have been living in the streets, and the reality that most of these children and youth have been accused by their own kin to be bewitched,.

8. It has also been meaningful to come to an insight of the realities of family life in Kinshasa. I did not only consult existing research in this field, but also focussed part of our interviews with the participants on information concerning their upbringing, their youth and family backgrounds⁵⁰.

9. An important reason for choosing Kinshasa as the setting of the fieldwork for this research was the fact that music is omni-present there and that it is considered to be a very important aspect of everyday life, and the talk of town. I needed to study previous research and literature on the musical past and presence of the place⁵¹.

10. It is finally also good and necessary at the beginning of this dissertation to line up some of the preliminary considerations, questions and assumptions I had following my professional experience and understanding of music-making as practitioner and organiser in the field before embarking on this research in Kinshasa⁵².

11. This chapter already contains some referenced extracts of the empirical data illustrating the present background of the participants of this study, as well as their previous lives (as members of gangs, or as 'witch'-children). It may feel strange to be reading this before a clear description of the methodology has been presented. as these accounts come from the data collected. I decided to include them anyway in this part of the dissertation in order to be able to offer some concrete illustrations of the social and cultural context this

⁴⁴ see for this 4.3.2

⁴⁵ see for this 4.3.3

⁴⁷ see for this 4.4.1

⁴⁸ find a presentation of Espace Masolo under 8.3.2.1

⁵⁰ see for this 4.4.3

⁵¹ see for this 4.4.4

⁵² see for this 4.5

research was developed in, which is the subject of this chapter.

4.1. Need for research on the possible social impact of making music

It is important that this field is scrutinized and that the discourse around the 'power of music' is replaced by rigorous research, even if, as Sloboda has pointed out, stakeholders may feel that it removes some of the magic they connect with music. (Arild Bergh in Deliège 2012)

A lot of practice is said to be developed in many countries in the field of programmes and projects proposing music to socially disadvantaged youth (involved in gang violence, drugs, children in street situations...) ⁵³.

When approaching this field in order to investigate what my research might focus on, I found that not much research existed which appeared to give clear cut answers to some of the major questions that demanded answers.

Qualitative research was missing which specifically focuses on the understanding and interpreting of what happens in terms of their social repositioning to the young people who profit from such programmes and projects. This may seem unlikely, as a great deal of pre-existing research is available on related issues in the field of youth delinquency, music psychology and sociology, et al.

A good overview of a lot of the - then available (until 2004) - research and literature on the impact/benefits of the arts in general has been brought together in the Rand report 'Gifts of the Muse' (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras & Brooks, 2004) including research on (1) cognitive benefits (development of learning skills), (2) attitudinal and behavioral benefits (the field of research which also interests us here), (3) health benefits, (4) social benefits, and (5) economic benefits.

In these and other works - and more recently also in more recent studies as well as comments by scholars and practitioners through the international network of scholars SIMM - I often came across the conclusion that especially long-term life history research was needed to study the possible influence between music practice and the development of social attitudes and behaviors ⁵⁴.

Especially qualitative and longitudinal researchs were said to be needed and expected in the field (see McCarthy a.o. 2004; Sloboda & Bergh 2010; Baker 2014).

⁵³ I do not know though about research documenting and quantifying this.

⁵⁴ I am not in a position to myself give evidence of the deficiencies in the existing literature, as I did not go about a thorough and overall literature-search myself. I come to this conclusion because others have asserted this in some of the key reviews of the literature mentioned here, and I found that there is a consensus regarding the deficiencies.

As I also myself discovered to my surprise that I could not find much literature on research already done in this field, I took from 2014 on the initiative to contact and bring together scholars developing research in this field⁵⁵. A research profession needs to be developed which focuses specifically on the possible role music can play in social and community work, with academics from very different disciplines developing research (Latour 1987).

The lack of research has nevertheless been very much in contrast with the above-mentioned growing interest in and development of social music practices and programmes in many parts of the world. There is indeed a large field of practice in which music is being proposed to help young people reposition themselves within their societies. These practices are being described in a series of studies, but the impact these practices and programmes have on the young people who are benefiting from them, has - according to a number of authors who did literature studies in this field (McCarthy 2004, Baker 2014) - been the object of only a limited amount of long term research.

For a long time, I have been wondering why this was so, and found at least part of the explanation in the exaggerated retorics itself on the so-called impact of music-making on many different aspects of a person's social life: One of the reasons why this reality is hardly studied, is the exaggerated rhetoric itself. Many people seem to think it is simply not necessary to do research on something which is considered as obvious already. I have encountered such reactions at several occasions towards my own research as well, even from academics. Other scholars doing research in this field have had similar reactions. Salvationist and redemptionist views and discourses on what music can do are omnipresent and have limited the development of research on the possible social impact of music-making⁵⁶. Fortunately, this is the last years rapidly changing. More and more research projects are now being set up in this field.

⁵⁵ Together with some fine academics and practitioners from 7 different countries, I took the initiative to found the international research platform SIMM (www.simm-platform.eu) to help develop and recognize this new multi-disciplinary field of research. After several international SIMM-posia (Ghent 2015, London 2017) the organization SIMM was founded in 2017 with the ambition to help develop research on the potential role the act of learning and making music may play in social and community work.

⁵⁶ According to Geoffrey Baker, *El Sistema Venezuela rests on its salvation narrative, which depends in turn on the definition of young people as "empty, disorientated and deviant" and hence in need of saving* (Baker 2014, p.105); see also his more recent publication (Baker & Frega 2018:2): *El Sistema was aimed primarily at the poor, and as a mechanism for 'rescuing children and young people from an empty, disorientated, and deviant youth'* (Hernández and Urreiztieta 1996:15). However, they present neither quantitative evidence nor personal testimonies to support these claims. None of their many interviewees describe themselves as poor or report having been rescued.

The study Geoffrey Baker made of the 40 years old El Sistema in Venezuela (founded in 1975) has been for sure the closest I have found to mine (Baker 2010), both in terms of its focus (social ambitions of social music projects) as well as in terms of its methodology. Discovering in 2015 the Oxford University Press publication on Geoffrey Baker's critical study (Baker 2014) has been an enormous encouragement for my own research in Kinshasa, which I had started a few years before, in 2012. Baker's study did not only cast serious doubts over many of the claims of social change of this well-known Venezuelan programme, but he also focussed in his research on some of the research questions and findings which have been developed or touched upon within my own study (Baker 2014, 2015, 2018). Even though the music programme Baker studied in Venezuela (large classical music orchestras) and the social music projects I studied in Kinshasa (small bands playing local and traditional music) are very different realities, you will nevertheless find his works many times referenced in this manuscript.

The overall focus of my own research has been to be able to describe and come to a better understanding of case studies of social-artistic projects who - in the exceptional surroundings of Kinshasa - have the ambition to empower young people through developing their musical talents, and whether, why and how this could have a certain social impact on them.

Looking for literature on research done on these questions, I especially found a number of calls for the need for research on the possible social impact of structured practices of music-making and/or education, but little research itself. I therefore in the beginning of my PhD-project concentrated myself on literature on the cultural and social context of the field work I was planning to engage upon in Kinshasa, and I found i.a. a lot of interesting research on children in street situations and on gangs in and outside of Kinshasa.

And finally, in agreement with François Matarasso and Eric Clarke, a critical view is also adopted in this study on the notion of '**impact**' (although I nevertheless decided to continue to use it anyway)⁵⁷. Besides a number of other reasons, this one I take as Matarasso's most poignant one:

Impact is not just an inadequate metaphor for imagining how people experience, and are affected by, the arts. It is a deceptive one, reinforcing unequal power relations that divide societies into those who know and those who don't, those who are acceptable and those who are not, those who fit and those who need to be changed.

Since it is also a completely inaccurate account of what actually happens as a result of participation in the arts, it is dangerously misleading. It encourages

⁵⁷ The concept of '**impact**' is also used in naming the international research platform SIMM we founded in 2017: Social Impact of Making Music (www.simm-platform.eu), of which François Matarasso is co-founder.

politicians, commissioners and even artists in the delusion that because art and culture have profound effects on people those effects can also be commanded. The effects on policy can be exceedingly perverse. (Matarasso 2012)

What matters is that the notion of 'impact' can make one believe that we would be able to easily measure the impact creativity can have on a person's social life. Nothing may seem harder to judge. This does not mean that we cannot study it through qualitative research and try to come to a better understanding of such phenomena. But - by default - I have chosen to continue to apply the notion of 'impact', although in a measured manner, throughout this dissertation.

The participants' views are rarely heard: in most research on music and conflict transformation only artists and organizers are interviewed, and they tend (rather unsurprisingly) to report success. this is particularly puzzling as the participants' lives are meant to be altered through engaging with music. Musicians are seen as impartial, and their quotes are often taken as proof of music's effectiveness. (Bergh & Sloboda 2010, p.8)

Also according to Eric Clarke the concept of 'impact' is problematic:

This way of speaking about music seems to perpetuate a view of music as possessing powers that either do or do not cause it to have 'impact'. But a lot of scholarship and empirical research has emphasized and revealed music's fundamentally relational ontology - that music and musicking are reciprocally constituted by the contexts in which they arise, and the forms, properties and actions that these contexts enable. (Clarke 2018)

4.2. Life in 'troubled' contexts

4.2.1. Violence / conflict dynamics and social becoming

In studying the violent past activities of some of the participants to my research I have not abandoned my moral judgment of violence, but I have tried to come to an understanding of what made them do it. Hannah Arendt taught us that violence is not something outside of us. Like 'evil', it should be seen as something banal, and potentially present in all of us (Arendt 1970). The potentiality of being violent and doing evil to others is present in all of us. In this research, I have tried to avoid two extreme positions: too much empathy which can lead to the bagatellisation of violent behaviour, and too harsh condemnation which can limit our viewing violence in all its manifestations and nuances.

Philémon Mukendi describes the violence of certain Congolese youth as the expression of the troubles experienced by fragile personalities, who need love to flourish, but who experience early and daily rejection, humiliation, brutality and contempt (Mukendi 2009:205).

Using terminology such as 'gangs', 'gangsters', 'criminal', 'deviant' or 'transgressive' behaviour, etcetera, may create misunderstandings, as it depends from which background one reads such terms. Criminologists, sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists... will have their own sensitivities and different perspectives and prefer certain terms to others to indicate such activities. I have had to come to terms with the fact that not everyone can be satisfied in this respect. I hope that reading through this dissertation will make clear how such activities are viewed in this research, beyond the limits of the terminology applied. Important in this context is to make clear that when I write here about 'gansterism', 'criminality'... I consider activities and temporary states of mind and action, not fixed entities, states of being, and surely not as the definition of a person.

Because the reality of 'violence' was at first central to the questioning within this research project, the need to conceptualise it clearly took an important place in the literature research.

Even though direct correlations have not been sought during this research between violence and music, the context of violence was an important element of the realities of the young people in the planned case studies, as victims or as perpetrators, or both. I consulted a number of scholars on the place of violence in our lives and societies.

I philosophize in a multi-causal way about the sources of violence. (Achterhuis 2010:619)

The most important reference of all has been Dutch philosopher Hans Achterhuis' magnum opus 'Met alle geweld' (Achterhuis 2010), in which he gives a dreamt of overview and critique of the many philosophers and other writers who have developed their ideas and understanding about violence.

Jonathan Stock recently gave an interesting overview of the literature on music and violence. He describes how music is not inherently peaceful, and that the relationship between music and violence can take very different forms (Stock 2018)⁵⁸. Music can be used as an instrument of torture (Grant & Papaeti 2013), and it can also enforce violence and war⁵⁹. This is true in Kinshasa, where certain gangs are helped by musicians to incite gang violence (Tsambu 2004). And, what one learns when studying music, could also be put to use to function better in a violent surrounding. Many questions therefor remained about the possible influence of music on the social positioning of youngsters and young adults growing up and living in violent surroundings, helping them to either escape from violence, or, to the contrary, to embrace violence even more, making this research field an interesting as well as complex one.

The theories, concepts and perspectives of Slavoj Zizek (2008) and Filip De Boeck (2005) have in the beginning of the research helped to see violence of youth as being a reaction to a society being itself violent towards its population⁶⁰. Zizek makes a clear and useful distinction between 'subjective' and 'objective' violence: 'subjective' violence being in his definition *"just the most visible portion of a triumvirate that also includes two objective kinds of violence [...]: 'symbolic' violence embodied in language and its forms, what Heidegger would call, 'our house of being', [...] and second, there is [...] 'systematic' violence, or the often catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our economic and political systems"* (Zizek, 2008).

I appreciated reading anthropologist Filip De Boeck on violence, also for the impressive amount of information he provided about this aspect of the lives of the young people of Kinshasa:

Their world makes a continuous attempt not at being chaotic and exotic but at achieving self-explanatory clarity and simplification, to serve as an antidote to the incomprehensible and cruel injustices of the world they are condemned to live

⁵⁸ Other researchers have also examined the ways in which music is implicated in war and conflict, used as propaganda and torture, and intended to incite hate and violence. (Dave 2014:4)

⁵⁹ According to Koen Vlassenroot, Mai-Mai militia groups active in the east of DR Congo also use music and songs to impress those they attack.

⁶⁰ and calling this 'systemic' or 'structural' violence

in. Looked at from the outside, the worlds of these young people are often shockingly self-referential, their horizons astonishingly limited, and their lives self-contained, despite the global bricolage that gives form to the local contents of these youth universes. But, lived from within, this limitation is experienced as a necessary attempt at self-protection. One has to reach deep inside and tap into one's own sources of strength in order to be able to create meaning and transparency amid the opacity of a fragmented world. (De Boeck, 2005:12)

The work of Hannah Arendt (Arendt 1970) and especially Hans Achterhuis (Achterhuis 2010) have nevertheless given me a more precise conceptualisation of violence and its role in the lives of young people trying to find themselves a place in society, not only as 'breakers' but also as 'makers' (De Boeck & Honwana, 2005).

Instead of the large definitions of Bourdieu's 'symbolic violence' or Johan Galtung's 'structural violence', I have adopted in this thesis Hans Achterhuis' more restrictive definition of violence, which is:

Violence consists in more or less intentionally causing or threatening to cause harm to people or objects. (Achterhuis, 2010:78)

Although he pinpointed forms of oppression and violence in society which were in need to be made visible and to be considered seriously, in Bourdieu's perspective - as well as in that of Zizek and of Galtung - violence can be seen everywhere, and as such it becomes a slippery concept and difficult to identify as something precise⁶¹.

Aggression and violence must be clearly distinguished: Aggression is an innate instinct present in both humans and animals, useful and necessary for the preservation of the individual and the sort. In contrast, people often allow the aggressive instinct to derail, which then leads to pernicious consequences (Lorenz 1966). Those 'pernicious consequences' can be defined as 'violence'. When aggression degenerates, not running in the appropriate good tracks, it turns into violence (Fromm 1982).

4.2.2. Focus on resilience and agency rather than on deficit

These abandoned youth have a strong desire to live and get out of this quagmire. (...) Most of them (...) practice small trades, some even pushing ingenuity to the point of saving money to go back to school. (Mukendi 2009:206) Despite the state of intellectual and moral decay in which they are plunged, the young Congolese show a fierce desire to get out of this calamity in order to envision a bright future. This is the case for the millions of children and young people who practice informal occupations. (Mukendi 2009:212)

Sociological research on resilience and agency has captured a lot of my interest and played a central role when preparing -

⁶¹ Silvia De Faveri comes to a similar conclusion in her research on the reality of gangs in Kinshasa (De Faveri 2013:8-9).

and later on also developing - my research (Emirbayer & Mische 1998; Ungar 2008; Masten 2007; Mizen & Ofosu-Kusi 2013; Ungar 2007; Boyden & Cooper 2007; Ungar 2008; Geenen 2009; Bordonaro 2012). One important reason for being so attracted to this literature is how the complexity of reality is often given a place by scholars in this field of research. Here is a wonderful example of this:

Our central contribution is to begin to reconceptualize human agency as a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its habitual aspect), but also oriented toward the future (as a capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a capacity to contextualize past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment). The agentic dimension of social action can only be captured in its full complexity, we argue, if it is analytically situated within the flow of time. More radically, we also argue that the structural contexts of action are themselves temporal as well as relational fields—multiple, overlapping ways of ordering time toward which social actors can assume different simultaneous agentic orientations. Since social actors are embedded within many such temporalities at once, they can be said to be oriented toward the past, the future, and the present at any given moment, although they may be primarily oriented toward one or another of these within any one emergent situation. As actors move within and among these different unfolding contexts, they switch between (or “recompose”) their temporal orientations—as constructed within and by means of those contexts—and thus are capable of changing their relationship to structure. We claim that, in examining changes in agentic orientation, we can gain crucial analytical leverage for charting varying degrees of maneuverability, inventiveness, and reflective choice shown by social actors in relation to the constraining and enabling contexts of action. (Emirbayer & Mische 1998:963-964)

A definition of human agency: *The temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments – the temporal relational contexts of action – which, through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgment, both reproduces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations. (Emirbayer & Mische 1998:970)*

A definition of resilience: *In the context of exposure to significant adversity, whether psychological, environmental, or both, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to health-sustaining resources, including opportunities to experience feelings of well-being, and a condition of the individual’s family, community and culture to provide these health resources and experiences in culturally meaningful ways. (...) Both concepts of navigation and negotiation figure prominently in this definition, distinguishing it from more static understandings of resilience (...). (Ungar 2008:225)*

Research on street children in Latin America also showed they often demonstrate incredible inventiveness and agency in difficult situations, so we have good reasons to not only see such children as victims, but also as actors who do not only act upon their own life course but also upon those of their surroundings (family, friends, neighbours...). Some of Isabel Berckmans’ observations in that region were similar to those I encountered in our research in Kinshasa:

The behaviours parents observed within their daughters pre-running were described as rebellious, awake, aware. At the age of eleven/twelve the daughters changed and became different than their other children. As we looked closer to the stories the daughters were being more conscious about things that went wrong in their families. As girls asked for change in the family household and as they did not obtain it, they disrupted the family system dramatically by leaving home. These girls experienced a lack of social support, however they were still able to change their own circumstances. (Berckmans a.o. 2015:13)

Kristien Geenen stresses the fact that seeing children in street situations only as victims would make us miss out on an important part of their reality:

How do bashege manage to make a home in the streets? (...) The agency of street youth surfaces in an irrefutable manner when we examine their lived experience in the streets. Along the way, they assertively respond to any (and even seemingly hopeless) circumstances they encounter. They actively defy the inconveniences of their surroundings, and there appears to be no end to creative interventions to suit their needs. In consequence, street youth are not to be considered as mere victims (Honwana and de Boeck 2005; Korbin 2003; Magazine 2003; Panter-Brick 2002). An analysis of what causes them to be in the streets, in the first place, makes this point clear. Whatever the reason might be (famine, witchcraft accusations, maltreatment at home or just fun seeking), taking to the streets is often a wilful decision. And even if it wasn't initially their choice to end up on the street, it is often their choice to stay there (Geenen 2006). The agency within street youth's behaviour should be reckoned with as they often assume (shared) responsibility for the way things run. Throughout their use of public space a similar assertive attitude emerges. However desperate or unattractive a place appears to be, in their hands it turns into a malleable entity. (Geenen 2009:358-359)

Also Michael Wessells shares from the research he did amongst child soldiers demonstrating some extraordinary examples of agency and resilience, and he invited me to stay in my research away from seeing children and youth who have gone through harsh childhood experiences only as victims, calling this the 'deficits approach' (meeting 04.04.12, emails 2012-2015):

It is a minority of formerly recruited children who experience clinical issues. This point is often overlooked in simplistic media and other portrayals of former child soldiers as traumatized or even as a Lost Generation who can presumably never recover. In fact, the majority of former child soldiers exhibit significant resilience and cope positively with their situation. (Wessells 2009)

Henrik Vigh describes how the urban youth in Guinea-Bissau he studied *tactically manoeuvre within the social ties and options that arise* (Vigh 2010:1/21). He calls this phenomenon 'social navigation', whereby they *direct their life through a shifting and uncertain social environment towards better possible futures and improved life chances* (Vigh 2010:9/21). This has for me also been a very useful concept in understanding the music-making young persons in Kinhasa.

Like Mark Twain, my interlocutors navigate dangerous waters. With their capacities stretched to the utmost, they seek to strike the right trajectories through the murky waters of both predictable and unpredictable social turmoil. (Vigh 2010:10/21)

What we see when focussing (...) through the lens of social navigation, is that rather than acting as if their social environment and everyday life is fundamentally a constant, they act in relation to a reading and interpretation of its fluidity. (Vigh 2010:14-15/21)

It is good to end this overview of literature on agency and resilience with this critical, intriguing and interesting comment by Lorenzo Bordonaro:

If children are today conceptually acknowledged as 'social agents' they are not for such a reason more free or allowed to participate in society to a greater extent. What I am suggesting is a move from the sociological acknowledgment that children are agents, that they have capacity for agency, to the political questioning of what their status in society is and what kind of agency do children

and youth are expected to reveal (Archard 2004). This implies important changes in society and in mainstream morality, a radical transformation of children's position within it, and a redefinition of the political and civil status of children and young people in society. (Bordonaro 2012)

It is indeed an important question how children and youth can make a difference in a society which does not necessarily allow them to actively participate at an early age in decisions concerning them or their future in that same society. Social inclusion is something which is in many countries rarely put into action towards young people, even though they may in many cases play a crucial role in making things work out for themselves as well as for their families (De Boeck & Honwana 2005)⁶².

Related to this reflection on the need for social inclusion of youth, it has also been of great interest to this research to consult the rapidly developing practice and research of **Positive Youth Development (PYD)**. Margaret Barrett and Nigel Bond explain that research has shown that:

Young people engaged in challenging, complex and intrinsically rewarding behaviours, for example, learning to play a musical instrument, are more likely to view these activities as providing a sense of achievement, freedom, and self-determination (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004). Furthermore, young people are also more likely to persevere with such behaviours. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), individuals engaged in activities they believe provide a sense of autonomy, competence and social engagement have an increased tendency for self-determined behaviour and are less likely to engage in at-risk behaviours. Positive Youth Development (PYD) is an emerging area of practice and research that applies a strengths-based perspective to the promotion of positive outcomes for young people (Bowers et al., 2010; Damon, 2004; Sklar et al., 2007; Tebes et al., 2007). (Barrett & Bond 2015:37-38)

Field note 25.07.14 - EM-NA is a girl who became a musician in the brass band of Espace Masolo. She was considered by her family as a 'witch-child', and at the age of 7 years she fled her parental house into the streets of Kinshasa. She was not the only child though in her family who was accused of witchcraft, although she was the only one who decided at such a young age to find another life elsewhere. EM1-NA is an example of a street child who shows agency and strength by leaving the family house and go into an insecure and unknown life of the streets. EM1-NA was crying again when I spoke about the difficult times with her stepmother and her father. There are difficult things there. Traumas. But I do not see this fragility as only a sign of weakness. She clearly experienced difficult things, but she allows her tears to flow, and it comes across as a sign of strength.

This child who fled her family took her life in her own hands. At the age of 7 she had the strength to say, "I do not want this situation, I'm leaving", and she left her family for an unknown destination, trying to survive in the dangerous surroundings of the streets of Kinshasa, where she was raped and went through many other harsh experiences.

To be accused of witchcraft and to be rejected at such a young age by one's own mother, father, grandparents... is something I

⁶² *It is part of the African doxa to see young people as strong and resilient; they are often portrayed as survivors who actively grow on their own even under difficult conditions. In these societal constellations, children and youth are synonymous with wealth because of the contribution they make to the productive work of the family. (De Boeck & Honwana 2005:4)*

often heard of in this research and I had difficulties imagining how hard this must have been for them. They had to doubt a lot about themselves. In the literature I find that many such children also believe it was true what they were accused of, being bewitched, and that they often behave in accordance, like bewitched children, create gangs... (De Boeck 2005).

But most of the young people in our study did not see themselves as being bewitched at all, telling us they wanted to prove they were not, by surviving into the streets and afterwards, doing other things of worth to show their families that they had nothing to do with what they were accused of.

I have continuously been confronted with impressive examples of resilience and strong agency amongst the participants of this research in Kinshasa.

Among the young people of Espace Masolo I have especially heard youth who - although their childhood experiences as 'witch'-children and street children were often harsh - were proud of where they were now, or of where they were heading towards.

To be confronted with so much strength and courage within very young children was impressive. Those who have the incredible guts to go live out in the streets are not piteous, even though what happened to them is often sad. They prove on the contrary to possess strong personality and agency at a very young age, something which was a finding in a series of other studies I consulted:

There is some evidence that street children are actually healthier and possibly less stunted than their contemporaries living in slums, although this may be due to the strongest and most active children being the most likely to have the courage and energy to attempt street life (Panter--Brick 2003, this issue). (Ennew & Swart-Kruger 2003)

Felsman (1989) found that 97 per cent of his sample of Colombian children in street situations had actively abandoned their households due to a non-conducive family environment. Further, street life helped in the development of children's resilience and street-living children had better mental health than their counterparts in families. (Conticini 2007:204)

I quickly understood that many of the young musicians of Espace Masolo in this research were examples of young people who already had strong capacity for resilience and agency before starting their music training.

Here are some of the participants in this research expressing themselves on aspects of their personality which relate to these capacities:

BM-CL tells about stomach aches he has due to the fact that he thinks a lot about how he can change his situation for the better.

BM-CL shows strong political knowledge and commitment. He participated in political campaigns of several politicians.

BM-DO has strong social commitment: he created an association of volunteers to work in the streets of his neighbourhood.

EM1-CK says he felt different from the other children in the streets, and later also different from the children in the shelter. What gave him this strength and agency? In reply EM1-CK speaks about 'Droits de l'Enfant' (Children's Rights) and about Human Rights, and says "I am as all other people".

BM-IB sees himself as someone who always took things in his own hands. BM-IB at a certain moment understood that he had to take things in his own hands, as his parents were incapable.

BM-KU thinks it is important - and wants himself also - to share with others. BM-KU sees himself as a leader.

EM1-CL is such a courageous young man, always with a smile. He lived through so many difficult things, but tells everything with a smile. I ask him where his strength comes from and this generosity which he has in himself. To that, CL answers me that he laughs.

EM1-DO knows what she wants. She brings in money and food to her family.

EM1-MA is organising himself better and better, and wonders whether he would have been capable of this, had he not gone through all the difficulties he went through. Not sure, he says.

Now (April 2014) EM1-NA is considered as the most important person in her family (sic educator shelter) and this gives her a lot of pride. EM1-NA knows what she wants in life, and she wants to decide.

When EM1-RL was chased by his grandfather, and then organised himself not to have to stay long in the streets, by finding the woman who took him into her house, and later by going to a shelter.

EM1-RO says he has no interest in leadership because leaders are 'in danger', because 'exposed'. EM1-RO says he prefers to work in the shadow. EM1-RO wants to become a good father for his children. EM1-RO dreams of starting a house for street children.

EM2-ES seems to be a very determined and stubborn young lady.

At the age of 16, EM2-EX started selling water and saving money (!) through the informal banking system in the streets of Kinshasa, called 'cartes': for example 31 x 1000 Francs are given to a person who keeps the money, and takes for himself 1000 Francs.

EM2-CH, you give me the impression to be someone who is very sure and decided about things. Have you always been like that? EM2-CH: Yes, that is always the way I do things. It is my habit. I like to take decisions in certain situations.

Hearing their stories, especially those of the youth who have been accused of witchcraft, I became more and more astonished and started to wonder what had happened to these youngsters who later in their lives became musicians. What they were describing in terms of their early life stories was so much in contrast to their realities now. What happened to them? Where they were when in our research was so much remote from the realities they went through in their earlier lives.

Typical for many of the youth in our study is their capacity to be flexible. They constantly navigate between perspectives and occupations⁶³.

Henrik Vigh defines such navigation as motion within motion rather than dependent on the use of maps (Ingold 2000). Navigation as a process combines mapmaking and wayfinding as we simultaneously navigate the immediate and the imagined, i.e., the next hurdle as well as the many imagined to come, in our movement towards a distant goal. (Vigh 2010:19/21)

Educators at the shelters which host children from the streets also let us know that their children are doing well at school in comparison with other children who are living in their families. So, children who have street experience can seem to have an asset others lack. They lived through hard and harsh

⁶³ Henrik Vigh calls this 'social navigation'

experiences, but they earned an adult maturity at certain levels of their personality, even though they were children after all, who also needed to be able to play. Educators in these shelters testified about the high level of psychological resistance they find in these children: Confronted and subjected to serious tensions and difficult situations, these children resist terribly well and are creative in finding solutions. For this reason, one educator called these children 'commandos'.

Children who have lived in the streets of Kinshasa are seen by their educators as being more apt than children who live in families to survive in difficult circumstances. They often at an early age understood that they had to take things in their own hands, as their parents were considered as incapable of this. They find solutions to their problems which may not always be recognised as such by educators and social workers (Michael Ungar and his teams write about 'hidden resilience'⁶⁴). While a child from a family might in a similar context die, children in street situations will find food to survive.

Still, youth who have gone through difficult early life situations, are somehow damaged. Typical for many of them is that their reaction time is shorter than the time of reflection. If they are upset by something, they will tend to react quickly and even violently. Most youth mention this as something they wish to change in their personality. Such reactions can be understood as resulting from the traumatic situations they have lived in the street, being always ready to react...

The story of EM2-ST is an astonishing example in this context⁶⁵. He has traveled big distances from Tshikapa via Kikwit to Kinshasa, from one family to another, being refused all over, and he tells us all of this with a smile. He shows a lot of strength.

EM2-ST's story is impressive and makes one think of Phillip Mizen and Yaw Ofosu-Kusi's revealing study examining the migration of children to the streets of Accra, Ghana's capital city:

⁶⁴ *Children lacking resources and others who refuse service may manifest troubling behaviours typically diagnosed in child welfare populations such as self-harm, truancy, delinquency, and drug abuse. (...) In many instances such problem behaviours are contextually and culturally relevant expressions of resilience, a hidden resilience overlooked by care providers. Children who thrive make do with whatever is available to them, and what they perceive as useful to sustaining themselves. A child may not attend school, but that does not mean that he or she does not find a sense of self-worth, competence, maturity, and self-efficacy through contribution as a member of a street gang or child labourer. This is not an argument for blindly accepting children's and families' decisions as socially valid. (Ungar 2007:2-3)*

⁶⁵ What happened to EM2-ST - and what he made happen himself - can be found described in the shortlist of quotes from transcriptions in attachment 17.1 (under ref-12751 and ref-12755).

Unaccompanied Gujarati children migrate long distances in search of work (...) without any parental pressure on the migrant to leave, and without any parental involvement in decision making. (...) These children do indeed account for their departure in terms of individual choice, self-determination and the absence of external constraint or direct force. Furthermore, it is also clear that in order to leave their households the children must demonstrate considerable ingenuity and fortitude. Nevertheless, (...) we argue that this emphasis on the capacity of these children to choose to do, even under the most difficult of circumstances, requires significant qualification. By turning attention to the children's understandings of their own vulnerability, we explore how this plays a direct part in their decisions to leave their households. (...) the orthodox view of the child 'as a defective form of adult, social only in their future potential but not in their present being', what exactly it is that is being rallied around is never made fully apparent. (...) the 'new paradigm': children as the creators of meaning and as players in the making of their own history. (Mizen & Ofosu-Kusi, 2013:365-367)

Yet another example of agency, is EM2-EX who is 'shelter-shopping', going from one shelter for street children to another, depending on what he is looking for⁶⁶.

Ann S. Masten suspects there is good reason to believe that music could have potential roles in resilience, because music has been seen to have an impact in regard to training executive function skills (emails 2013).

Although it is as such not clearcut from this research, I have suspected the youth who chose to become musicians to be youth who were having special preconditions - such as were observed in the research of Michael Wessells and Isabel Berckmans (Wessells 2009, Berckmans 2015) - which allowed them to succeed in this difficult enterprise of mastering an instrument and musical repertoire.

4.2.3. Coming of age

During this research I have come to understand that besides the role music-making can play in the social repositioning of young people, the coming of age⁶⁷, creating a family, having children, can also be an important reason for some to stop their activities in gangs or live out in the streets, and I found references to this in several studies.

Kristien Geenen also shares how the element of coming of age comes back as an important element in her own as well as in findings of other studies in the field: "Yet some bashege⁶⁸ strive to lead a more 'normal' life as they grow weary of

⁶⁶ Arguably, once they have left home, children pay at least as much attention, and probably more, to the development of social relationships as they do to economic opportunities. In turn, supportive social networks can improve (in most cases unintentionally) children's access to better economic opportunities in the future. They constantly seek to reduce their emotional vulnerability by developing social connections and friendships, rather than pursuing purely economic opportunities. In addition, as reported by social workers, even when the drop-in centres for children in street situations provide them with food, shelter and a basic income, many children 'run away' and return to the street. (Conticini 2007:211)

⁶⁷ Even though the existence of an age-crime curve is not as such contested, different approaches to understanding and then implementing it in juridical practices continue to be discussed within the field of criminologists (McVie 2005)

⁶⁸ 'basheve' or 'shege' is a term designating children in street situations in Kinshasa

sleeping in the streets. This generally happens after bashege have reached an adult age or have become parents." (Geenen 2009:362)

Also research on 'desistance' - interested in the institutions that may promote change (family, marriage or partnership, parenthood, work, prison) (Cid & Marti 2012:604) - is suggesting that "some pathways to narratives of desistance may more easily be activated by more mature persons" (Cid & Marti 2012:615).

The participants in this research are young and older adults (between 16 and 41 years old), so they have come of age and many already have families to take care of (7 out of 31 have children). The coming of age, creating a family, having children, has also been an important reason for some to stop their activities in gangs.

The musical activity of the former members of violent gangs may have been an activity that may have allowed them to go from point A to point B. But it may also very well have been that these young people just had reached the age to move on. Because one does not stay 'kuluna' the rest of one's life.

A strong moment for me was the day my wife told me she was pregnant of our first child. (ref-06691)⁶⁹ I hope that in the nearby future I will succeed to build up something for myself as well as for my wife and children. I am more and more concerned about succeeding in assuring well-being for myself and my family. I see others succeeding where I do not: they have a home, a car, affairs, food... Of course some of them are bourgeois from birth. They profit from the wealth of their parents. We have to earn everything ourselves. Concretely want to one day have my own plot of land and house, enough money to take care of my family and to make sure my children can go to school. (from life story interview with BM-GI, 08.12.14, ref-06726)

Research has shown that cultural elements such as initiation, organisation in age classes, club- and gang-life, etcetera, were created to channel certain transgressive activities of adolescents in a positive way. For most young people it is only a temporary phase. So the question arose whether the young musicians had not simply reached a stage/age in which they wanted to end their violent activities and were actually looking for a 'trigger'. For some that trigger may be music, for others a new love, finding a good job, military service, voluntary joining the army or something else. It became clear in the research that their 'criminal' activities are only representing a period in their development. Music was then not the 'saving angel', but a 'trigger' to make a new move.

It is amazing to see what some of these young people were able to make happen at their early age of 16 to 20 in terms of

⁶⁹ These reference numbers refer to extracts of transcriptions of recorded interviews (individual interviews, focus groups or mirror interviews) or research-team meetings.

economic independence⁷⁰, although at the emotional level, one can still be a child at 21 years, needing much psychological care and love, especially when one has lived through the traumas of being accused of witchcraft and having to survive life outside of one's family.

The fighting boys are all young boys in that they are not married (marriage being a social marker of adulthood), and often when a fighting boy prepares to marry he withdraws from the fighting group. (Pype 2007:252)

Today I prepare my life and imagine I will give birth, and do not want my children to suffer the fate that I have suffered.
(from individual interview with EM1-MA, advanced musician at Espace Masolo, 18.12.14, ref-06921)

The day one becomes a parent, one then has to be able to take care of the child. Being a parent also means having some money for when the child gets sick so one is able to provide health care, and so on. Most participants in this research report now being very occupied by such concerns.

Another possible reason to stop being a member of gangs has been that each time they had been imprisoned, their family had to pay money to get them out of prison again, and they wanted this to stop.

"I myself am coming from a hot neighbourhood in Kinshasa, Matete, where I was into (fighting) sports. We only knew one way to solve a problem, and that was through a good fight. I even saw people die in fights in front of me. When I then created my group of musicians in Matete, several boys who were active in these gangs, but also had artistic talents, joined. I personally believe that a lot of the criminal and violent activities of gangs are related to the fact that these youngsters miss activities to do. It is a lack of occupation which makes people to find refuge in anger, aggressions and violence. Also in Europe, violence is often to be found in neighbourhoods where people do not have work. He who is has a job and is very busy from early morning on, he will go to sleep early as well. After eight hours of work and more in transportation from home to work and back, he is tired and has no time nor energy to do anything else. As musicians we have no time for other things. We have to rehearse a lot. When one becomes an artist-musician everything changes. A musician has no time and no clock. He has to work 24/24. I personally even sleep with my guitar. I also always have a recorder nearby. Whenever I have an idea for a song, a melody, I record it. For a musician days are not from 9 to 5. Instead it goes on 24 hours on 24 hours. He things about it so much, so he has no time to think of violence." (mirror interview⁷¹ with musician Felix Wazekwa, 04.05.15, ref-13406⁷²)

⁷⁰ The official age of adulthood in the DRC as well as in Belgium is 18. With everything the participants in this research lived in their young lives, they might be more adult, but also more fragilised as well. The age of adulthood is to be evaluated in relation to different criteria.

⁷¹ find out more about the place of 'mirror interviews' in this research under 8.3.7

⁷² the reference number allows one to find the exact place of the extract in the transcriptions.

4.2.4. Poverty

The long-cherished premise that poverty can be ascertained according to uni-dimensional measures is increasingly contested and countered. Multidimensional definitions of poverty are now being advocated and accepted, thereby gradually moving away from definitions resting solely on income or consumption shortfall (e.g. the World Bank's demarcation of US\$1/day for the poverty line, which still dominates much poverty-related policy). Development researchers and practitioners have encouraged the employment of more contextually specific definitions of poverty in which the social and political rather, or as well as, the economic dimensions of the phenomenon are stressed. (Boyden & Cooper 2007:6)

Many people in Kinshasa are desperate because of the poverty they have to endure. People easily die, because they cannot be treated, by lack of the means to pay for medical care⁷³. People lose members of their families, fathers die, mothers die, children die. And when one of the parents dies, poverty becomes worse. Then families can less and less take care of their children. When parents form new families, more children arrive to be taken care of. There are then often too many children in one family. Survival is at stake here.

Although poverty is for sure not the only reason for children to leave their families or young men to become members of violent gangs, similar findings concerning the impact of poverty on family life come out of research in Bolivia (Berckmans et al. 2015)⁷⁴.

Economic poverty is never a sufficient cause for street-ward migration and there are several thousand boys living below the poverty line that do not migrate to the streets. As in several other contexts, non-economic factors play a decisive role in children's decisions to move to the streets (...). A crucial motivation for street migration in Mindelo is violence and corporal punishment within the family. (Bordonaro 2012:417)

Poverty and abject poverty have contributed to a loss of social ties and intrafamilial violence. Many second generation migrant children living in poverty became street-involved, due to the difficult living situations they found themselves in at home. (Berckmans a.o. 2015:3)

It is population density under conditions of poverty, causes stress and aggression, not crowding as such. (Fromm 1982:155)

Poverty was by the participants in this research often named to be the main cause for their families imagining that some small child can be the cause of their problems. I did not double-check this, but we were told by the social and community workers that 'witch'-children were not or hardly to be found in some of the less poor areas of Kinshasa. The concentration of these children was said to be very high in the poorest and most populated areas of Kinshasa such as Kimbanseke or Masina.

⁷³ During the 3 ½ year fieldwork, 3 of the 32 participants in this research died (2 members of BM, and 1 of the more advanced musicians of EM). They died of illnesses one does not die of in the part of the world I was fortunate to be born in. Because of being poor they did not have the means to get proper medical care.

⁷⁴ It was found in other research that children living on the street have a variety of economic backgrounds ranging from severely poor households to well-off households. (Conticini 2007:208)

Researcher-criminologist Baudouin Bungu together with a team of fellow researchers of the Centre de Criminologie et de Pathologie Sociale (department of criminology) at the Faculty of Law of the University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN) made a study of several years infiltrating 'kuluna' gangs in different parts of the city of Kinshasa. This research was part of a larger interdisciplinary research on the relationship between poverty and criminality in Kinshasa. The research was done between 2010 and 2012 and results were presented in 2013⁷⁵.

A 2006 report from Human Rights Watch posits that the true reasons for the rise in the number of child witches are economic rather than religious. This report notes: *"It is rare that children who live with both biological parents are accused of sorcery. In interviews we conducted with accused children, every one of them had lost one or both parents and had been living with extended family members who were facing extremely difficult economic problems. (...) in: Human Rights Watch (4 April 2006) What Future?: Street Children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Goggins 2012:4-5)*

Finally, throughout this research I have been reminded of the problematization of poverty by Arturo Escobar, for whom development amounted to little more than the West's convenient 'discovery' of poverty in the 'third world' for the purposes of reasserting its moral and cultural superiority in supposedly post-colonial times (Escobar 1995:21-54).

4.3. The roles of music

4.3.1. Musicians and violence

It would be tempting to want to believe what the famous musician Felix Wazekwa shared with us during one of the interviews we had with him:

A musician is per definition someone who is very sensitive, as well as very susceptible. Because of this touchiness and sensitiveness, he is very easily impressed by everything that happens around him. I really think that artists, more than anyone else, wish things to go well in this world. Our profession cannot exist if there is no peace, when there is violence. When I have a concert and I hear that there has been shooting somewhere, automatically my concert is spoilt. A musician, an artist, does not like disorder around him. But if disorder persists, he will try to find words and music in order to sensitize people around this disorder. I therefore do not see the artist as being seriously involved in violence. For some it could of course be an innate disfunction. I even believe that music can soften someone who is violent. He will become less violent. (mirror interview with musician Felix Wazekwa, 04.05.15, ref-13404)

⁷⁵ I unfortunately could not obtain the report of the research Baudouin Bungu and his team did for the Law Department of the University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN).

Professor Leon Tsambu (who worked within our team when I started the research in 2012-2013) did a research on popular music groups ('musique typique') of Kinshasa, such as Werrason, Koffi, a.o., and found a lot of violence within these groups. Musicians fighting within groups, and amongst groups, violent textes, ugly manipulative power relationships between the heads of the groups and their musicians, exploitation of young girls, etcetera (Tsambu 2004).

And there are 'gang rap' and 'mafioso rap' from the United States, and the Mexican 'narcocorridos' (songs that glorify mafia bosses), infamous examples of music which difuses texts inciting or glorifying violent behaviour..

The question whether musicians are less violent than non-musicians was asked to almost all of the participants of 2 of the 3 groups in this research. Their answers seem at first to contradict their claim that music was supposed to have 'saved' them. Musicians were not considered less aggressive than non-musicians, but they were believed to be less violent. Many consider themselves to still be too aggressive and are resolved to be more in control of their aggressivity in order to reduce it (see quote above). They tell us they continue to be agresive (towards their family-members, wives and other people).

The participants in this research in Kinshasa had different thoughts about the question whether musicians are or are not less violent than non-musicians:

1. Musicians are only less violent in public:

To get angry is human, and musicians are human. But a musician is worried about keeping a positive reputation, and he will therefore control himself and try not to be violent. (BM-CI)

Musicians are not supposed to be violent: they are not because this does not fit their public image. (BM-GI)

Musicians are not violent, but they can beat their wives. Publicly they avoid fighting, at least most of them. (BM-KU)

"I was a gangster, so now I have to keep my dignity and stay calm, even when people are not acting rightly." (BM-IB)

Except certain isolated cases - musicians are in general not violent in their public life, but in their private lives they can be. (BM-MW)

2. Musicians are less violent:

Musicians are more reserved and calm than most other people. People look up to musicians and so they need to be respected. Musicians are examples, models, and that is why they do their best to be modest and calm. (BM-DO)

Music helped me to become calmer. (EM1-RO)

3. Musicians are not less violent:

Certain musicians are criminals and violent. (BM-VA)

Depends from person to person, and from character at birth. So, musicians are for this reason not less violent than non-musicians. (EM1-CL)

Some musicians are violent, others are not. (EM1-CV)

Within the music group we are in, we do not experience much aggression or fights. (EM1-RO)

4. It depends on the type of music:

Many musicians are violent in pop-music, but not in traditional music surroundings. Musicians can fight over women though. Beta Mbonda musicians are less violent than musicians from the 'musique typique' world.. (BM-CL)

There is violence in the texts of ndombolo music, inciting to attack other orchestras. So there is also violence within music and musicians, although apart from the texts there is no violence amongst ourselves in the ensembles we perform with. (EM1-CA)

Some are violent (hip hop, kuluna music...) and others are not (classical music, brass bands...). (EM1-CK)

Some texts of music are violent. (EM1-DO)

It depends of the style of music: rap music is often rancorous (rancunier) towards society, politics, government... and often violent in its texts. Some rappers even got killed fighting in the US. Also texts in ndombolo music often contain violent or aggressive messages. (EM1-GL)

"I am still too quick-tempered, and I need to work on getting this more under control. Especially towards my wife. When I talk with her and she does not immediately listen to me, I feel like hitting her. I pray to diminish this type angry reactions. Also, when I am with friends who invite me to participate in an action of vengeance, I easily participate, without thinking first. I need to get rid of this tendency." (from life story interview with BM-GI, 08.02.14, ref-06742)

Most of the participants to our research did not think musicians are particularly less violent. We are all human. We can get angry with our family members, our wife, children... Only, musicians have the public side of life which makes them be more careful about how they act in public. They might be calmer in public in order to make sure their image is not tarnished.

Music in and of itself can go both ways, in fact multiple ways. It is indeed an instrument that can be made to play so many tunes, roles, and functions. In fact, the disposition of young people (whether they want to escape violence or enforce violence, whether they want to be makers or breakers, to use the title of De Boeck and Horwana's edited volume) determines the type of music they want to play and how they want to play it. The level of involvement also determines the outcome of musicking. In my own research on the "tropical cowboys", I have witnessed the multifarious usages of music among the Bills. They would use music to heal, to fight, to entertain themselves, to educate, to love, to mourn, and, finally, to escape reality. The more music involves an active role on the part of the musicians (learning and playing an instrument, organizing a band, perform for others), the more that music plays a positive role in building identity and exorcizing the forces of violence. (...) and focusing on the young people themselves and giving them more agency (...) could also go a long way in helping you calibrate your research. (from email from historian Ch. Didier Gondola, 29.10.13)

Sexual violence and prostitution also have been an integral part of the reality for many of the youth who spent time living in the streets of Kinshasa. Especially the girls in this research have been victims of this. Some of them were raped at an early age (at least one already at 7 years, others between 10 and 13 years old). I knew about this reality before I started the research and for this reason invited the female sociologist Jeudi Bofana as member of my research team.

Achterhuis stresses the role mimetism and recognition play as two important factors for the occurrence of violence. Could these factors also be important factors in the rejection of violence?

Did the members of Beta Mbonda kill anyone during the time they were 'kuluna'? Their mentors are sure they have not:

"No, I know them well. I live in the same neighbourhood as they do, amongst them. I would know. There were many fights amongst gangs, yes, but nobody was killed." (interview with BM-AL, musician and founder of Beta Mbonda, 10.07.14, ref-03419)

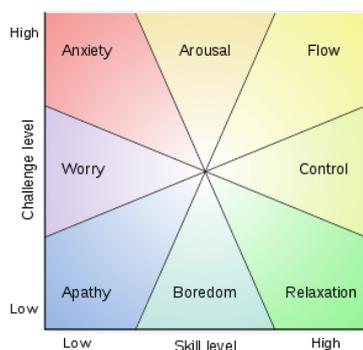
4.3.2. The phenomenon of 'flow'

The phenomena of 'flow' which I encountered as an important element motivating the young men and women in Kinshasa to keep on working on their music-making activity⁷⁶, is something which Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and his international teams of scholars have studied at length and in depth. Csikszentmihalyi has named it 'flow' and describes it as a state in which people are so involved in an activity, that nothing else seems to matter anymore. The experience of the activity itself is so enjoyable, that people will do it, even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi describes the phenomenology of enjoyment, which he calls 'flow', as having 8 major components:

(1) the experience usually occurs when we confront tasks we have a chance of completing. (2) we must be able to concentrate on what we are doing. (3) and (4) the concentration is usually possible because the task undertaken has clear goals and provides immediate feedback. (5) one acts with a deep but effortless involvement that removes from awareness the worries and frustrations of everyday life. (6) enjoyable experiences allow people to exercise a sense of control over their actions. (7) concern for the self disappears, yet paradoxically the sense of self emerges stronger after the flow experience is over. (8) the sense of the duration of time is altered; hours pass by in minutes, and minutes can stretch out to seem like hours. The combination of all these elements causes a sense of deep enjoyment that is so rewarding people feel that expending a great deal of energy is worthwhile simply to be able to feel it. (Csikszentmihalyi 1992/2002, p.49)

Csikszentmihalyi's studies have been our main reference for the important hypothesis 4 of this research, especially how he stresses that to obtain the experience of 'flow' there must be a balance between challenge and skill. This phenomenon is and has been of great concern in our specific field of study on music-making projects with social impact ambitions (see figure):



⁷⁶ see chapter 9.2.3

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi also made an interesting link between the possibility of experiencing the 'flow' and the presence of juvenile delinquency:

Much of what we label juvenile delinquency - car theft, vandalism, rowdy behaviour in general - is motivated by the same need to have flow experiences not available in ordinary life. As long as a significant segment of society has few opportunities to encounter meaningful challenges, and few chances to develop the skills necessary to benefit from them, we must expect that violence and crime will attract those who cannot find their way to more complex autotelic experiences. (Csikszentmihalyi 1992-2002:69-70)

4.3.3. Impact of co-ownership in social music projects

The questioning around the importance of co-ownership⁷⁷ came about later during the research because I was confronted with the importance of this reality through the concerns the participants of the research communicated to me and started to consult literature and research on questions of democracy in music, such as heterarchic versus hierarchic forms of organisation and other scenarios of co-ownership.

Reading Belgian political scientist Chantal Mouffe's book 'The Democratic Paradox' in which she describes - and vehemently defends - the inherently conflictual nature of democratic politics (Mouffe 2009) has marked my way of looking at questions of organization within the projects studied in this research in Kinshasa.

The interest in democracy in music-making and -education is growing. Patrick Schmidt's article 'Democracy and Dissensus: Constructing Conflict in Music Education' (Schmidt 2008), Nancy Love's book 'Musical Democracy' (Love 2006), and also information on the international symposium on 'Finding democracy in music', organised in September 2017 by scholars Robert Adlington (University of Huddersfield) and Esteban Buch (EHESS, Paris) (<https://democracyinmusic.org>) have been some of my sources.

The notion of 'heterarchic' versus 'hierarchic' types of organisation was introduced to me by Henri Van Praag (Van Praag 1985), who taught me at the International University of Lugano. It was developed in detail by Carole Crumley (Crumley 1995).

My understanding of 'co-ownership' - as developed in this thesis⁷⁸ - fits Hannah Arendt's definition of 'power' which needs to be shared: "Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains

⁷⁷ see chapter 12

⁷⁸ see chapter 12

in existence only so long as the group keeps together. When we say of somebody that he is "in power" we actually refer to his being empowered by a certain number of people to act in their name." (Arendt 1970:44)

4.4. The specific context of Kinshasa

The reasons for undertaking this research in Kinshasa are a mixture of intellectual/theoretical (i.e. a particular environment and type of project sought), as well as practical (the level of access that I had already established).

In reading about the specific social and cultural context of Kinshasa, I have as much as possible prioritised reading research and literature by Congolese and Congolese expatriate researchers⁷⁹.

Some fiction was also helpful for me in discovering or recognising realities I came across in Kinshasa.⁸⁰

The Congolese amongst whom I did my research were living in similar conditions as the ones which Silvia De Faveri describes in her 2013 PhD-thesis:

"At the time of my research, Kinshasa was the city in which the highest worldwide percentage of people lives on a daily income lower than one dollar a day (De Boeck 2011). It had an unemployment rate of 73%, and a life expectancy of 50.4 years for women and 47.2 for men (UN Statistics Division 2013). According to statistics, 4.3% of the Congo's population was HIV positive (UNAIDS 2009) and the infant mortality rate stood at 109.4 per 1000 births in 2011 (UN Statistics Division 2013). In 2012, the Congo regained the last place (out of 186) in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index." (De Faveri 2013, p.6)

4.4.1. 'Witch'-children and children in street situations

In Congo, religious television channels run weekly shows where child-witches are identified during public mass meetings, and the persecution of witch-children in the streets of Congo's towns and villages is becoming common. This unprecedented demonization of children bespeaks a deeply rooted sense of social crisis. (De Boeck & Honwana 2005, p.10)



⁷⁹ Ndaywel 1987, Gondola 2002, Mukendi 2009

⁸⁰ the finest example of such literature is Bofane's 'Mathématiques congolaises' (2008).

The work of anthropologist Filip De Boeck and David Goggins has been most instructive and formed the starting point concerning background information about the different elements and contexts related to the lives of children in street situations in general, and the so-called 'witch'-children of Kinshasa in particular¹⁰⁰, although reading some fiction was also very useful¹⁰¹.

I have preferred in this thesis to mostly adopt the term 'children in street situations'¹⁰² Alessandro Conticini and David Hulme and other scholars lately employ instead of the more common expression 'street children'¹⁰³.

Already during my master-studies¹⁰⁴ I was very interested in the work of historian Philippe Ariès, who developed the finding that childhood is a relatively recent invention of the West. But reading Filip De Boeck and Alcinda Honwana's 'Makers and Breakers' (2005), as well as the work of other scholars developing similar understandings (Gondola 1999, Wessells 2012, Derluyn 2012, Goggins 2012), helped me to come to a better contextualization and understanding of the realities of youth in Africa and in the Congo, where I had decided to do my research.

The streets are not a child-friendly place, even though children who go live in the streets are often strong¹⁰⁵.

Important to mention here is that I fully adopted the recent shift in human sciences (Ennew 1994; Mizen & Ofosu-Kusi 2013) from seeing children in street situations as *'psychologically (and irretrievably) damaged, unable to form relationships as the children they are, and definitely destined for emotional, social and economic failure as the adults they will become (Ennew 1994:409-410), towards the view of [street] children*

¹⁰⁰ It is in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and especially in the capital city Kinshasa, where this phenomenon has become a particularly serious problem in recent years. (Goggins 2012).

¹⁰¹ such as Ben Okri's 'The Famished Road' (Okri 1991) and Jean Bofane's 'Mathématiques congolaises' (Bofane 2008)

¹⁰² A child in a street situation was defined as a child who provides for his/her daily basic needs without the support of the household or other guardians, and who actively finds on the street his/her main caregivers. (Conticini 2007:206)

¹⁰³ There are a number of reasons for their preference: Arguably, when referring to children as 'street children', we implicitly associate the negative characteristics of the street environment with their childhood, conceptualizing them as belonging to the street and assuming an approach which is both offensive (Dallape, 1996) and incomplete (Aptekar, 1988). Further, the 'street children' concept is a static definition unable to recognize the capacity of these children to move among different social environments (Lucchini, 1996a). (Conticini 2007:201-202)

¹⁰⁴ Master in Politics of Education, Université de Paris VIII (1983)

¹⁰⁵ One can deplore the street for not being a safe environment for children, but those who migrate to the street might be viewed as children only in terms of their biological age. They have already lost their innocence and they are ready to be 'adults' in their own right and live without the supervision of parents or guardians. (Conticini 2007:222)

who are capable social agents who construct meaning and subvert power' (Mizen & Ofosu-Kusi 2013:365).

Michael Ungar who studies children in street situations found that "children who thrive make do with what they have" (Ungar 2007:14). I have proposed to call this a form of 'positive fatalism' (Pairon 2016).

Stéphane Hessel wrote in his autobiography *The power of indignation* that the arts "are proof that there is a realm where we can flourish, and where we are no longer at the mercy of the forces against which we struggle, and with which we fight. It is another realm. That of art, and of the imagination. In other words, something that does not relate to a specific material reality, but transcends it, and leads us to a state in which we can dream." (Hessel 2012).

Almost all of the young brass band musicians in our research have been at an early age accused of witchcraft and fled their families into the streets of Kinshasa as so-called 'witch'-children¹⁰⁶.

I did not speak with many families, although I was also interested to find out how they think about how their offspring experienced this situation. I did have a series of meetings though with educators in shelters for street children, and they could inform us about the families and parents of children formerly accused of witchcraft.

With the young brass band musicians themselves I had many hours of individual and focus group interviews, and thereby collected an impressive amount of testimonies on their previous life experiences with their families, in the streets of Kinshasa, and in shelters for street children, before they started their music training at the community art centre Espace Masolo.

All these interviews have been transcribed and are provided as a separate document to this dissertation. They may be of particular interest to scholars doing research on the street children and the so-called 'witch'-children of Kinshasa.

Not all children in the streets of Kinshasa are so-called 'witch'-children. There are also many children who are in the streets because of the precarious situation at home, and a lack of guidance of the parents.

But almost all of the participants in our research who were street children before and became brass band musicians with

¹⁰⁶ see also chapter 3.2.3 on relevant literature

Espace Masolo, belong to the category of the so-called 'witch'-children of Kinshasa: They have at a young age (between 6 and 10-11) been accused by their own family of being bewitched, and then decided to flee their homes to live some time in the streets. That is the reason why the terms 'street children' and 'witch'-children have become interchangeable in this dissertation.

This is not the place to comment on the reality of the phenomenon of witchcraft. The most significant thing is that millions of Congolese attribute great evil power to witches. (...) This phenomenon gives rise to the image of a society in which man no longer has confidence in himself or in his ability to succeed, to earn, to be the master of his life. (Mukendi 2009:117)

'Witchcraft' was a delicate subject within my research team though, because my Congolese colleagues made me clear that they disagreed with me concerning the reality of witchcraft: I do not **believe in witchcraft**, and they did. They believed that some children might have been witches at a certain point in their lives. Many African people believe in witchcraft, so the beliefs of my colleagues in the team corresponded with what most Congolese people I know believe. It was one of the occasions in which I was confronted with how disconnected I was from their world, as I cannot myself imagine the existence of witchcraft.

Interestingly enough, all of the professional Congolese people working with the 'witch'-children in shelters for children in street situations and within the social artistic projects of Espace Masolo affirmed also not to believe in the existence of 'witch'-children. Those who work with these children and youth told us they never saw any sign of witchcraft.

The youth in our research refused to accept to be accused of witchcraft. Most of them considered witchcraft an excuse for 'bad adults' who wanted to get rid of them.

We were clearly dealing with children who have a strong personality and most of them could fight against the accusations. But there must be other children who are much more fooled. If you are 6-7-8-9-10 years old and you are told: "You are bewitched." I imagine a lot of children will then just believe it. And indeed: in this research we had several of the accused children who told us they were relieved when a priest or someone else told them they were not bewitched. This means that they must have seriously wondered whether the accusation could be true.

The sheer number of children in street situations in Kinshasa is considered to be high (nobody knows exactly how many children live in the streets though), and this was explained by the growing number of small children who are being accused of witchcraft and have to - or decide to - flee their homes

(Goggins 2012). Filip De Boeck refers to a BBC report from 17.01.03 giving figures which the NGO Save the Children communicated in 2000: an estimate of 2000 children were then supposed to be the subject of witchcraft accusations in Kinshasa, an estimate which had been reviewed upwards to 20000 children (De Boeck 2005, p.190).

The main ambition of the community art centre Espace Masolo, and of the shelters for children in street situations with whom Espace Masolo closely collaborates, is to reunite these children and youth with their family. They do not necessarily always succeed in this, even though they try hard. They do these efforts of mediation in order that the children and adolescents can find family warmth. This must be a very difficult task, because we were in this research confronted with many examples where not much warmth seemed to be found within families.

Besides accusations of witchcraft, another reason for conflict reported by the participants in our research is that the child did not work well in the family or thought s/he was doing too much work. The child must do the laundry, the dishes, all the little jobs in the house. At a certain moment the child revolts and flees.

Children sometimes go through harsh treatment within their own family, and often do not themselves agree to go back to the family.

Often, the children are sent out into the streets because of separation and/or recomposition of the family. When a father marries again after a divorce or after the death of his first wife, his second wife might not accept his children of his previous marriage. Confronted with the death of one of his parents or confronted with conflicts within the family after a divorce, the child might also him/herself choose to leave the family and go live in the streets. There are also examples of parents who just cannot materially or psychologically cope with raising the children, outside of any death or divorce situation. Also, in such circumstances, the children can be frustrated and want to leave their home.

What is often mentioned in the literature on the phenomenon of witchcraft accusations of small children, is the presence of conflicts with step-mothers or step-fathers as a reason behind such accusations¹¹². In a number of cases this was also mentioned by the youngsters in this research, but in this

¹¹² Also in other research on children in street situations *step-parents were indeed often discussed as sources of insurmountable tension accompanied by a marked deterioration of the care they were able to enjoy.* (Mizen & Ofosu-Rusi, 2013:376)

particular case study it was not noted as a major cause behind accusations.

The life story overview of EM2-ST is exceptionally instructive on what happened to some of these children¹¹³.

Every youngster corresponds to a different case, a different situation. The case of one is not necessarily the case of the other. But in most cases, these children have serious problems, which the educators and social and community workers must attend to. They take a lot of time listening to them, to try to understand the weight of the problems these children and youth carry.

In this research we did not have youth born in the streets. They were all born in houses in their families. Later there were problems in the family and they left their family, or sometimes they were obliged to leave. Most of them made this decision to leave themselves though. And after that they had to take many more decisions in order to survive in the streets, to survive the violence and the unhealthy situation of life in the streets. In fact, these young people - who are young adults now - have a lot of maturity and are strong personalities. Besides that, they also have their injuries and their traumas vis-à-vis their parents and family. Still, the work of the accommodation centres and also of the art community centre and the brass band, is focused on reunifying the children with their family, even though this is in many cases complicated and demanding.

In the interviews I had with these youngsters, it was often the child who said "I left". S/he made a decision to leave, not the family chasing them. Sometimes several children in the same family were accused of witchcraft, and only this one made the decision, saying, "No, I am fed up with this and want to leave." This means that those who ended up being trained as musicians were already personalities with strong agency and resilience before they arrived at the training¹¹⁴.

In DR Congo a presidential law exists prohibiting accusations of sorcery. The community arts centre Espace Masolo made a music theatre performance in collaboration with BICE (Bureau International Catholique de l'Enfance: <http://www.bice.org>) to sensitize priests, pastors and parents. A psychologist showed how all the different arguments and signs in favor of sorcery could be explained scientifically instead of via sorcery. They were also accompanied by a magistrate who explained the law.

¹¹³ see quotes ref-12751 and ref-12755 in appendix 16.3

¹¹⁴ see also chapter 4.3 on 'agency' and 'resilience'

The law which allows the state to punish parents and priests who denominate children as being witches exists, but this law is not followed up.

Although the main reason behind the phenomenon is said to be economic and not religious (Goggins 2012), **Pentecostal churches** are often accused of allowing or even stimulating the growth of witchcraft accusations. It is nevertheless an exaggeration that those churches somehow create the phenomenon of the witchcraft accusations of children. Even though it can be seen as an important part of the business of Pentecostal pastors¹¹⁹, they also offer a space of redemption and healing.

Certain churches impose long fasts on children accused of witchcraft, sometimes lasting for weeks or even months.

The **ceremonies of exorcism** - called 'deliverance' - by the churches can be violent, involving beatings, sprinkling of blood, olive oil or vinegar in the eyes, and even burning them by putting a tire around their body.

Because of these practices, I often heard young musicians in our research avoid the Pentecostal churches and preferring to attend Catholic churches where witchcraft was thought not to be accepted or believed in.

The 'witch'-children flee the sometimes life-threatening practices of exorcism practiced by family or churches, including attempts to burn the children alive, using tyres and gasoline (see also: De Boeck 2005:194). Some of them really had to flee for their lives.

"My older brother was also accused, but he already ran away. I stayed. They took me. I still have a scar on my back from what they then did to me: They sprayed gasoline on my back. I was about 8 years old then. They sprayed gasoline on me and then put me on a fire. I then fled with the fire on my back. I climbed the wall, and fell into a big hole there. They started throwing stones and bottles at me. I continued running away. I turned myself in the sand to try to put out the fire. Then I went to a market, and I slept." (from life story interview with EM-GL, 11.12.14, ref-07164)

The most courageous of the children accused of witchcraft, and those having other types of conflicts with their family, leave the family house and go live in the streets of Kinshasa. Some like it there - at least for a certain period - but most are happy to leave this life again and go live in shelters for children in street situations, where they are safe, get food and are proposed training and schooling.

¹¹⁹ Preachers see witch-hunting as a business (...) and more than 2,000 churches practice deliverance in Kinshasa alone. (Goggins 2012)

It is difficult to imagine how they have been able to rebuild something for themselves after their own family rejected them and told them that they were a Satan. They must somehow have been already strong¹²⁰, because they have experienced painful things, and ended up on the streets at an early age.

They were innocent of what they were accused of, and they had the courage to take their lives in their own hands. They had the power to say to themselves "I do not want this for myself. I am going to save myself. I want to live, so I am going into the streets."

When leaving their homes, they could not know how life in the streets would be. But in certain cases they liked it and stayed a certain length out in the streets, and I was informed that to reintegrate children who have started to like the life in the streets is not always easy.

Girls are a prey out in the streets of Kinshasa¹²¹. In the streets, girls were often members of gangs, called 'stables' ('écuries'). Regular fights took place amongst gangs, and sometimes they would get injured. The older ones in the gang could push girls into prostituting in order to make money for them. If they refused, they would be beaten.

But girls are often reported by educators to want to stay longer in the streets, because they are said to have certain facilities that boys do not have for their survival.

Girls expose themselves to prostitution, even at early ages of 12 or 13 years. Although Phillip Mizen and Yaw Ofosu-Kusi find in their studies of children in street situations in Ghana that prostitution can often be "a conscious livelihood strategy rather than a necessarily forced endeavour" (Mizen & Ofosu-Kusi, 2013:364), prostitution was in our case study for sure not in all cases chosen by the girls themselves. In the streets life for girls can be a hard competition for who is going to get most of the gigs and most of the money out of prostitution.

For that reason, opting for closed centres in which to welcome children in street situations is preferred to open centres. The closed system is expensive but it totally protects the child. Because girls in the streets - even under the age of thirteen - live essentially from prostitution, it is not workable to stay in an open environment. Educators of shelters are much more demanding towards girls in comparison

¹²⁰ also see 4.5 on 'agency' and 'resilience'

¹²¹ This is also true for boys though, because cases of homosexual prostitution are recurrent.

with boys. They are much more worried about the security of girls, because besides the fact that they can prostitute themselves, they are also exposed to the possibility of being raped (something several girls reported in our research).

"I was at one point together with other children in the streets doing 'coop' (selling things) and into prostitution. But at the shelter they told me that girls could not leave the shelter, only with special authorisation. For girls they are much stricter than for boys, because girls are a lot into prostitution. I felt like being imprisoned in the shelter. So I spoke with the educator and told her: "Listen, I live from prostitution. I need the money to cover what I need to buy." After talking with her, I went to my room and asked myself plenty of questions, and wondered whether I would be able to stop this life in prostitution. Following that I decided to stop prostituting myself, thinking that what I could learn thanks to the shelter and the training centre (Espace Masolo) I would be able to earn my life in a better way, instead of destroying my body in prostituting myself for often very little money. I stopped completely." (from life story interview with EM2-AM, 23.04.15, ref-12180)

All educators report that to accompany girls is much more difficult than to work with boys. The girls often go in and out of shelters, and the reasons for this are multiple, but often related to the prostitution they develop out in the streets. A low percentage of the inhabitants of such shelters are girls (around 10% only), and this is not corresponding to the percentage of girls out in the streets.

The same goes for the musical training and activities proposed by Espace Masolo, where girls are also considered to be the least stable category. The boys are in the majority in the brass band. Even though boys may also stop and flee, the proportion of girls fleeing from shelters and dropping out of the music training at Espace Masolo is much higher.

A girl at home may eat maybe once a day if she has 200 francs. But a girl in the streets can in one night have sex with 1 or maybe 2 men, and she can then make up to more than 8000 Francs. Such a girl is not at ease back in her family. She took the taste of sexual relations, and the desire to have money. At home and in a shelter she will have almost no money, while in the street she will have much more, thanks to prostituting herself.

Knowing this, it is all the more impressive to see how certain girls in our research have succeeded to quit prostitution and the easy money they could earn with this activity anyway, and instead chose for the difficult and demanding path of learning the skills and profession of musician. A close and longterm psycho-social follow-up was needed though for this, which people such as the artists and educators in this social-artistic project have been giving to these children.

Felsman (1989) found that 97 per cent of his sample of Colombian children in street situations had actively abandoned their households due to a non-conducive family environment. Further, street life helped in the development of children's resilience and street-living children had better mental health than their counterparts in families. (Conticini & Hulme 2007)

Children in street situations in Kinshasa call children who are still in the family '**belices**', because they see them as colonized by their parents, like the 'Belgians' who colonized the Congo.

"We do not like the 'bélices'. We are even angry against them and do not like to see them, because they live 'normally'. They have parents who take care of them. And some of their parents are Ministers, who do not take care of us." (from life story interview with EM2-GR, 27.94.15, ref-12571)

These youngsters who quit their families and lived outside, in the streets and then in shelters, have been and continue to be brave. They are often reported to be more enterprising, more resilient, more imaginative than the children who are in homes. In comparison with the strength they have, the children who are living with their families do not have it. That is at least what they often proudly communicated within this research¹²².

"They do not like to be called 'street children'. They are ashamed of this. When they are starting to be considered as people like anyone else, then this is something which is of utmost importance to them. EM1-CK for example once told me that he was always ashamed of being a street child and that he hated children living with their families. The street children call them 'belices' (comes from 'belges'). But since he is with Espace Masolo, went on tour with us to Europe, met with so many people through the brass band, and talked about this with the youth in his neighbourhood, who were amazed to learn about all the experiences EM1-CK had which they could only dream of. Then he started to see himself as so much richer in experiences in comparison with these other children. The others now respect him and his anger towards them disappeared. Realising that there are so many things he knows that these 'belices' do not, and this made him feel proud." (from interview with Malvine Velo, co-founder of Espace Masolo, 23.07.15, ref-16380)

The children and youth who lived in the streets may have gone around all night to pick up bags for resale in the morning. Or all night they may have picked up embers to sell in the morning, and then just had a little something to eat. And the morning before that, they may have cleaned up the market for the women and men who come to sell there, and all that.. While a child who is at home, s/he sleeps, wakes up, and finds his breakfast at home. S/he has a bed, and goes to school. Even if s/he does not go to school, s/he stays at home. The former street children in our research did not have that, but this is as such not unusual for many children in Kinshasa (De Boeck & Honwana)¹²³. It is what they call their 'normality'¹²⁴.

¹²² Also in Hecht's influential study of Recife, north-east Brazil, where street children 'forge their own sense of identity based on their own interpretation of how they differ from other poor children who nurture the home' (Hecht, 1998: 94). (Mizen & Ofosu-Kusi, 2013:368)

¹²³ In Africa, very few children and young people enjoy the luxury of being taken care of by their parents or the state until they reach the age of eighteen. Many are expected to work and assume social responsibilities at an early age. They participate actively in productive tasks, paid labour, household chores, and taking care of younger siblings. Children and youth learn by participating in social and economic processes. (De Boeck & Honwana 2005, p.4)

¹²⁴ The word 'normal' was used astonishingly often during the interviews.

4.4.2. The phenomenon of 'kuluna' and the 'Opération Likofi'

Contrary to street children (called 'shegues' in Kinshasa¹²⁵), 'kuluna' do not live in the streets, but in homes, mostly with their families.

It was especially criminologist Baudouin Bungu who informed me at length about his research on the 'kuluna'-gangs.

'Kuluna' is the name given to a category of gangs in Kinshasa, attacking the population with cold steel, with the aim to rob them. This phenomenon appeared in the middle of the first decade of the 21st century and developed rapidly into worrying proportions. They use machette knives and similar arms and often have police officers as accomplices. These gangs are composed of young men doing assaults against individuals in order to frighten them and then strip them of their property. They have sometimes also inflicted physical injuries to their victims, and in some rare cases even death.

The word 'kuluna' probably comes from the Portuguese term 'culuna', meaning 'cortège'. It is a concept coming from the world of nearby Angola's diamond workers and dealers, who use the word 'culuna' to refer to cohorts of militias who attack diamond workers, steal their diamonds, inflict bodily injuries to their victims, or sometimes even kill them during such operations.

"Our targets were first and primarily gangs from other neighbourhoods. Then there were also rivalries amongst us. All this was often related to women: Revenge towards other gangsters who dared to flirt with our wives or girlfriends." (mirror interview with Yannick, former 'general' of a 'kuluna' gang, 11.04.14, ref-01838)

The 'kuluna' went through an evolution. In the beginning they were not violent, but groups that were concurential in terms of their clothing and weekend activities. Then bit by bit, in order to get the means to make all this possible (buy clothes and pay for parties), they started to become more violent in order to get what they wanted. 'Kuluna' would only injure people who would resist the 'confiscations' of their belongings, in order to get what they wanted.

The former gangsters in my research changed identity by becoming musicians. Their previous identity as members of gangs gave them a reputation of being people to be feared. Now

¹²⁵ The shege of Kinshasa: is a cultural loan word. Derived from Schengen, in the urban Congolese imaginary it denotes the condition of the clandestine migrant in the West or in Congo itself. (...) This appellation - which in 1993 was used to denote phaseur, street children, drug addicts and unemployed or homeless persons - has been extended to refer to all Kinshasa youth born since independence. (Biaya 2005:217) But, according to street youth themselves, shege comes from Che Guevara, whose 'revolutionary and rebellious image' inspires them. (Geenen 2009:348)

they are proud of their new reputation and identity as artists who are to be respected. Psychologist Steven Pinker showed in his work the importance of reputation for people in a society such as Kinshasa (Pinker 2011). Charles-Didier Gondola is stressing this as well in his study of the youth gangs in Kinshasa in the 60s (Gondola 2013). The former 'kuluna' in our study are as the 'yankees' and 'bills' were in Kinshasa in the 60s: also concerned about not being considered 'yuma' (a pejorative term that evokes all anti-male attributes), as men lacking courage, and above all lacking class. Their new identity of musicians and the reputation which comes with it thanks to their public performances, makes sure that such defeat can be avoided.

When you have nothing, what do you do? We started to get what we needed through crime, by attacking innocent people. And we put ourselves more and more into crime. We got used to it and started to do things that are unimaginable. But we were also instrumentalized by certain people. (intervention from musician BM-GI during focus group with the ensemble Beta Mbonda, 21.04.14, ref-02126)

Although the presence of violence in Kinshasa is often spoken of, I did not experience violence in the city of Kinshasa as being omni-present¹²⁶. When I was once attacked by a street gang of young men, it was not in the part of the city where I spent most of my time, the popular part of Kinshasa called 'cité'. Police and soldiers can attack and sometimes kill innocent people though. The police force and military are badly paid and often live from racketeering the population of Kinshasa, in total impunity. Gangs of youth - called 'kuluna' - have been in certain parts of the city and for many years a serious problem though, attacking and injuring people, as well as fighting with other gangs. Some gangsters are collaborating with police and some even become police officers, so both worlds can be intertwined. During clean-up operations such as the 'Opération Likofi' police kills members of gangs without any form of justice.

Leon Tsambu (who worked within our team when I started the research in 2012-2013) did research on popular music groups ('musique typique') of Kinshasa, such as Werrason, Koffi, a.o., and found a lot of violence within these groups. Musicians fighting within groups, and amongst groups, violent textes, ugly manipulative power relationships between the heads of the groups and their musicians, exploitation of young girls, etcetera (Tsambu 2004).

Baudouin Bungu has been an important resource person for my research. Mr Bungu and I regularly met and discussed about the reality of 'kuluna' gangs and what may make 'kuluna' engage in

¹²⁶ And, contrary to the general impression media give us about the state of affairs in our world, violence is nevertheless on the retreat in our world. This has been well documented by Norbert Elias and reported upon by Hans Achterhuis (Achterhuis 2010) and Steven Pinker (Pinker 2011).

breaking with their lives as gang members. I also invited Mr Bungu to attend a focus group with the former 'kuluna' who are now musicians of the ensemble Beta Mbonda.

Besides the research criminologist Baudouin Bungu did on 'kuluna' gangs, he was also involved in another research project focussing on the relationship between the police forces of Kinshasa and the 'kuluna' (Bungu 2013).

Music can be according to researcher-criminologist Baudouin Bungu an element that brings these youngsters to make a break - in combination with other reasons for breaking - with their lives as 'kuluna'. One such factor can be the pressure coming from their family. According to Bungu not all succeed to make a final break, and some go back to their former lives as 'kuluna', because it allows them to make a living easily. Only few 'kuluna' went to school, because their parents could not pay for it. Some areas in the city were in the period of this research considered particularly dangerous, for example the municipality of Kingabois. Names for gangs of kuluna are: 'écurie', 'ceinture', 'club'... Often there is a close relationship to sports clubs in which youngsters learn combatting sports.

The 'kuluna'-gangs were hierarchically organised, with a 'general' at the top, and clear rules of engagement of what one can and cannot do.

Being a 'kuluna' is an 'activity' which very much defines the identity of these youngsters. Becoming a musician can - according to Bungu's research - especially be of importance to helping to create new and strong identities.

To get in touch with the gangs, Congolese researchers had to pass via a 'parrain' (godfather), an intermediate person. In the research terminology such persons are also called 'sponsors': mostly a person who is part of the police or some public institution or other (DeWalt & DeWalt 2011). 'Kuluna' talk about their 'réseautage' (networking). They see themselves as a sort of 'nébuleuse' (nebula, an extended network) with many intermediary contact persons (interfaces).

As became clear also in our research, these forms of youth crime started as clashes between gangs for reasons of honor, often related to conflicts around love affairs between boys and girls, and fights between gangs could also be contests related to the proliferation of martial arts clubs (judo, boxing, karate...). Gang fights could in certain cases even be caused by conflicts concerning musical adversity (gangs related to opposing music bands), because Kinshasa is dominated by sports and music. More and more such gangs of

youth were born in almost all municipalities. They commonly called themselves 'stables' ('écuries'). After a while though, violence was also used for purely lucrative aims. Violence or the threat of violence was employed to extort the property of citizens.

The young men who became members of such violent gangs came from deficient families marked by the separation or divorce of the parents, poor condition of child care, loss or lack of parental authority, lack of financial means for schooling and professional training, unemployment, and above all by the accentuated impoverishment caused by the continuing deterioration of economic life in the DRC. All these elements will come back in the findings of this research.

Still, this is not how things go in principal with the 'kuluna'. They will first ask their victims to give them the goods. Only when a victim resists, will they use the weapon they are carrying, and then not using the sharp sides of it. And even then, such cases are rare. They tell me that during the day they could not find activities which would allow them to make a living, so in the evening they allowed themselves to be 'kuluna'. One even told me that he did this in order to help his mother to make ends meet, and feed the little ones at home. For many youngsters being in the 'kuluna'-activity was considered as a way to make a living, not to go kill or injure people. In the group I studied nobody admitted to having killed someone. They admitted having injured people, yes. Never any of them had used fire weapons. They also do not see what they do as stealing. Also as a lawyer I cannot see it as stealing, because stealing is taking something from someone against this persons will. Here, they ask someone to give something. They only make their victims afraid if they do not want to give the goods. Also, these youngsters were not the whole day busy doing their 'kuluna' activity. Maybe it sometimes only took 10 minutes of their time, at night, and afterwards it would be finished and they would be gone to bed. They have no remorse, because they do not see themselves as thieves. They say that the state does not exist, and therefor they need to make ends meet ('se débrouiller'). (...)

I was in direct contact with about 20 'kuluna', but collected information about a total of about 30 (the others being informant for those I could not meet with). So, when they quit school they needed another occupation. That is how they got involved in the activity of 'débrouille' (little jobs making small amounts of money here and there). Most of them were busy selling 'la mitraille' (recuperated metal; nothing to do with weapons) to metal foundries, something typical for the neighbourhood in which I did my research. But this activity did not allow them to earn much. And as their father is absent or does not earn any money, their mother only a little, they feel they need to contribute to the financial needs of their family. This is how they ended up becoming 'kuluna'. We distinguish 3 forms of 'kuluna' activity. There is (1) the one which is known in the form of extreme violence between 'kuluna' groups. This form has nothing much to do with those 'kuluna' who only aim to snatch. (2) The second form of 'kuluna' activity is what they themselves call 'torchon méchant'. Afterwards I understood that the word 'torchon' comes in fact from 'extortion'. They distinguish between 'torchon simple' and 'torchon méchant'. The 'torchon méchant' is to camp somewhere and then to snatch, grab and enrapture ('ravier') goods of value from passers-by (telephone, jewels...). They grab and then leave quickly. A third form of 'kuluna' is the 'postura': they arrive in group with 'machettes' and sticks. They give the impression they want to attack, which makes everybody flee abandoning everything behind, allowing the 'kuluna' to just take what they want, and then disappear. When I discussed with them, they told me that their first intention is not to do bad things to their victims. They do not use fire weapons. The weapons they use (machettes and sticks with nails in them...) are old, not new." (from mirror interview with Baudouin Bungu of UNIKIN, 11.07.14, ref-3460+3462)

Thanks to my contacts and in person meeting with Congolese historian Didier Gondola, as well as reading his work in this area, I have also been able to inform myself well about the historical context of youth gangs in Kinshasa. Today's gangs of 'kuluna' are not an entirely new phenomenon in Kinshasa. Before them, gangs had other names ('banana bolafa',

'yankees', 'bills', 'bakuluna', 'bato ya pomba'...) and are in the literature said to have had a lesser use of weapons (Gondola 2013)¹²⁷. I have had to disappoint Didier Gondola though when I made clear to him that I did not in the context of this dissertation plan to dwell on the past.

Urban crime had in the years preceding my research developed in the Congolese capital, and all my Congolese friends complained about it. The research of criminologist Baudouin Bungu and his colleagues of the Faculty of Law at the University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN) nevertheless showed that the extent to which the phenomenon was conceived of by the population did not necessarily correspond to its reality, which was much more limited as well as less violent than imagined.

John Paul Lederach asks the pertinent question of how to transcend cycles of violence while still being in it and argues that what he calls 'moral imagination' can allow to transcend violence. Transformation and transcendence from one habitus to another, asks for strong capacity of imagination. And imagination is the art of creating what does not exist (Lederach, 2005, p.28).

'Desistance' is the term used in criminology for the process which causes termination of criminal activity (some prefer the terms 'transgressive', 'anti-social' or 'offending' behaviour). Factors which have been identified as important in leading to desistance from crime are: (1) transformation¹²⁸ of self-perception and identity, (2) maturation and aging, (3) new or existing partner relationship and family formation, and (4) stable work (Laub & Sampson 2001; Cid & Martí 2012). I have checked these factors during this research and found several (4 out of 5) to have played an important role in bringing the young men to leave life with gangs and move to a more conventional lifestyle. Criminology seems to have been more interested though in finding out why individuals start in crime, and much less interested in finding out what makes them stop committing crimes (Anderson & Overly 2010), so more research is needed in this specific field.

In this research I have interrogated our participants about the 'turning points' (Laub & Sampson 2001) as well about the 'returning points' (Cid & Martí 2012) in their lives (see the 'Life Story Interviews' I took with them).

Returning points are different from turning points in two respects. Returning points are pre-existing rather than new social bonds. In addition, the mechanism

¹²⁷ Apart from the fine work of Didier Gondola, there is also the interesting research and literature on the history of youth gangs in Kinshasa, written and published by Tshikala Biaya (Biaya 2000; 2005).

¹²⁸ Arturo Escobar uses the term transition rather than transformation (Escobar 2018:248n1).

that produces the motivation to change is compensation for the supportive role of the pre-existing relationship rather than maintaining a new relationship. (Cid & Martí 2012)

In November-December 2012 and January 2013 the police of Kinshasa started what they called the **operation 'Likofi'** (Lingala for 'punch' or 'blow'), decreed by the Congolese Government. This event became a new and important element in the research, as it took place only a few weeks before I started a period of intensive fieldwork. Suddenly, the provisional title **"Music Saved Them They Say"** became reality for the former 'kuluna' (!), because: The fact that these former members of violent gangs had by then become musicians, and they were known as such in their neighbourhood - and by the police force - had saved their lives!

We were protected from attacks by the police, because we were already in music. Otherwise we would have been victims as well. We had been in this world of 'kuluna', but not anymore, because we changed sides by becoming musicians. (intervention from BM-KU during focus group with Beta Mbonda, 07.04.14, ref-01146)

This is also the case of Nono, a 'kuluna', who at times gave up, but always started again. He was identified and arrested several times for theft. One morning, he was ambushed by the police, he ran to hide in a hole, the police killed him on the spot. They took the body and brought directly to the cemetery, after calling his mother to accompany them to the cemetery to bury the young. These kinds of acts affect us enormously. We were bad hearts with a very violent spirit, as you see us. Today this is no longer the case. We even do an awareness campaign so that other 'kuluna' who are still in crime, come out and to join us. We currently have young people in Beta Mbonda who are learning music. (intervention from BM-YA during focus group with Beta Mbonda, 07.04.14, ref-01153)

The operation 'Likofi' to clean the streets of violent gangs caused an unknown amount of deaths. MONUSCO, UNICEF and Congolese NGOs denounced these extrajudicial executions. This operation 'punch' of the Congolese police took place in the capital. After the launch of this repressive security actions to reduce urban crime in Kinshasa, many 'kuluna' were missing. According to UNICEF and the UN Mission in Congo (MONUSCO), at least twenty offenders, including 12 minors, were killed in the first days of the operation Likofi. The testimonies received during our research confirmed examples of such killings.

Local populist television stations such as 'Télé Molière' spread fear amongst the population by continuously showing and magnifying each and every attack by youth gangs in the streets of Kinshasa. I invited this television station to come and film the former 'kuluna' who had become musicians, but they were not interested. Such media succeeded and continue to succeed to sow panic and a generalised feeling of insecurity amongst the population. As a result, the population of Kinshasa especially remembers the worse things that did happen, such as those who were killed and the victims who were badly injured.

And so, the majority of the population was also very much in favour of the Opération Likofi, the violent intervention of the police, and did not agree with the critical reactions from internationals and human rights NGOs in the DRC. Most of my Congolese friends in Kinshasa considered this operation as needed in order to protect the people of Kinshasa from the monsters these 'kuluna' were in their eyes.

Following suggestions of some of my Congolese friends, I then decided to meet with General Kanyama who was in charge of the Opération Likofi. I was introduced to him and met him in April 2014. Before meeting him, I asked the young musicians of Beta Mbonda what I should tell him. They all begged me to ask him to come to their neighbourhood so they could play for him and show him that former 'kuluna' had become musicians and respectable citizens. Mr Kanyama announced to me that he could possibly come to see them on a Sunday that month. The whole neighbourhood went crazy with the news that the General Kanyama would come to see and hear the musicians of Beta Mbonda. Unfortunately, he did not come. I decided not to contact him again about this. My supervisor asked me not to, as this would have me intervene too much in the lives of the young musicians I was studying, and that this could therefore fragilise my research.

This part of the research has been an interesting one though, because the request of the musicians of Beta Mbonda towards the General, and then the reaction of the local population to his intention to come, gave me interesting information about the musicians, as well as about their surroundings.

In that early period of the research I had of course taken the Opération Likofi as an event which I discussed in detail during focus group sessions with the musicians.

What I heard from them then has given valuable information on their states of mind. They told me about their friends who had been killed by the police, of others who had fled, about the sadness they had about losing dear friends and about being confronted with harsh situations like corpses who were refused to the families and burials which could not take place, etc.

Then, at the end of all these difficult stories, I asked them about their opinion concerning such police operations, imagining that they would be negative about it. But my surprise was big when I heard them (all of them) say that - although it was awful - it had been necessary.

The Likofi operation was good despite the fact that they killed. Now, people are circulating and participating in festive activities at late hours without being worried. Before this operation, the 'kuluna' were killing people, even for insignificant amounts. Before the arrests of 'kuluna' by the police were less effective. Crime persisted because they stopped you and then released you. On the

other hand, the current repression has retracted several 'kuluna'. Some of them have fled the capital, but there are also those who gave up. We have many friends looking for work now or work as street vendors. In summary, it was a good operation that helped a lot of people. (intervention by musician BM-MW during focus group with Beta Mbonda, 07.04.14, ref-01145)

They referred to themselves and to their own need for security, saying that they themselves now also felt more secure in their neighbourhood, thanks to this Opération Likofi. In fact, they were saying what almost all people I met in Kinshasa told me: I only met one person in Kinshasa who was against the Opération Likofi.

Following the Likofi operation in which police arrested and killed people suspected of being members of violent 'kuluna' gangs, those who were still 'kuluna' back then stopped treating the musicians of Beta Mbonda as 'yuma' (weaklings), as they did when they became members of the ensemble. Their former friends in crime changed their minds because they saw that during the raid of the police the musicians of BM did not have to worry, while all the others were wanted, a lot of them arrested, and some of them killed out in the streets. Music somehow 'saved them'.

The reason why they became 'kuluna' often was their entourage. They copied behaviour of friends, but there was also the need for money. They gambled, playing card games for money. They first started to steal money in their own families, and then started to attack other people.

According to Bungu 'kuluna' should especially be understood as a time-limited activity, something one does not exercise all day long. Baudouin Bungu pointed out that the activity of 'kuluna' is a 'shida' (Swahili-Lingala), an opportunity to find money. They try to rip something of someone, and then end up somewhere to share the loot.

Bungu describes the activity of 'kuluna' as something which evolved in stages: (1) Fights between different gangs, and before that there were the fights between different sports clubs (martial arts). It was at the beginning effectively a neighborhood defense against other gangs or sport clubs. (2) Then later on it turned into stealing campaigns. The 'kuluna' had become a 'shida' for them and also for the police, who wanted and tried to profit from this lucrative activity.

"We met out here in Barumbu. Here in this street we had our head quarters where we took drugs and made our decisions for our actions. We also started to steal and 'confiscate' objects and money from this street out. It started around fights about girlfriends. If one of us would fall in love with a girl from another municipality or quarter of the city and the guys around her would not agree with this, there would be a fight over this. And then the fights would not end. Each fight would lead to another one in reaction, vengeance, towards the previous one.

The phenomenon quickly got out of hand. More and more gangs started to fight and confiscate in other neighbourhoods. We decided to react and defend our neighbourhood against such intrusions. Becoming a 'kuluna' was not necessarily a decision, but often - as in our case - a way to defend oneself and the neighbourhood. We already existed as a group of friends before starting as 'kuluna'. We got into the fights armed with iron bars and glass bottles." (from life story interview with BM-MW, 12.12.14, ref-07476)

"We needed money to survive, and we decided to also start to confiscate things on our fighting trips, and sometimes also hurt innocent people. We always did this outside of our own neighbourhood. But gangs from the neighbourhoods where we operated, would come into our neighbourhood out of revenge. Police was not at all efficient in acting against the kuluna. This was partly related to the fact that police and military was often closely related to kuluna, arresting a 'kuluna' but then obliging him to give part of his loot to the agent (LP: my translator translates it as a 'dividend'). So we were not at all afraid of police or soldiers, because we were somehow collaborating with them." (from life story interview with BM-IB, 12.12.14, ref-07398)

"The gangs of Kinshasa started to attack everybody in the streets, also the population. And out of revenge, we then started to do the same thing over there in their neighbourhoods. The others started to fight everyone, without focusing only on gangs in our neighbourhood. If they could attack innocent people in our neighbourhood, we decided that we could do the same thing over there. Many people in our neighbourhood even encouraged us to do this, in a way to defend our neighbourhood. They took many things, even chairs in bars. The older ones in our neighbourhood encouraged us to take revenge." (from life story interview with BM-MW, 12.12.14, ref-07478)

Will the men in this research go back to their previous lives as 'kuluna'? They are known by everyone in their neighbourhood as musicians who have stopped being members of violent gangs, and they are proud of this. As the possible causes for youth to start to be involved in gang activities - poverty, lack of psychologically and socially rewarding activities... - have not disappeared, it can be expected though that in the nearby future new groups of youngsters be formed who will act as the 'kuluna' did.

"By reducing and only looking at this one activity of the 'kuluna' - their extortion of goods from the population -, you are also reducing your management of the 'kuluna' phenomena by arresting them, sending them far away to awful prisons, possibly even killing them. But by doing so, you are not solving anything, because the reality which is at the basis of the phenomenon has not been changed. This form of management did not help. Most of them just came back and started the same activities. Some stopped, but a lot have not." (mirror interview with scholar Baudouin Bungu, 11.07.14, ref-03476)

It will be necessary to find interesting ways to occupy young men. They have not at all or hardly have been to school, and therefore do not have a level of education which allows them to apply for the reduced jobs available in Kinshasa. The phenomenon of young men being attracted to gang-life has existed for generations (Gondola 2013). Many young people in Kinshasa continue to have nothing much to do, no occupation, no training, and no money for survival. During the day they are in their houses, waiting for the evening to do acts of banditry.

Scholar Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi made an interesting link between the possibility of experiencing the 'flow' and the presence of juvenile delinquency:

Much of what we label juvenile delinquency - car theft, vandalism, rowdy behaviour in general - is motivated by the same need to have flow experiences not available in ordinary life. As long as a significant segment of society has few opportunities to encounter meaningful challenges, and few chances to develop the skills necessary to benefit from them, we must expect that violence and crime will attract those who cannot find their way to more complex autotelic experiences. (Csikszentmihalyi 1992-2002:69-70)

How they quit their life as 'kuluna'?

What also came out of the interviews besides all the findings related to the research question and hypotheses of this research with the former members of gangs, is that music is surely not the only way that stopped them from participating in gang-activities.

Some gave up simply by following the example of friends who had decided to stop operating as members of gangs. The gangs are closely knit groups of young men, so when certain respected members of the group decide to stop, this can be an important reason for others to do the same.

Another reason for following others who stopped can be that those others were arrested and badly treated in prisons, or - worse - killed. This has been for many a reason to seriously consider stopping this activity.

One of the interviews I could take in the streets of Kinshasa was with Yannick, alias 'General Tango Fort' (called after a famous - or should one say 'infamous' - general from the Congolese army) of the gang called 'Armée Rouge' of the neighbourhood Barumbu. He decided to stop his 'career' as gangster, after having been arrested and imprisoned during more than 4 years (from 2009 until 2013) in harsh conditions in a prison far away from Kinshasa in the Oriental Province of DRC. He was arrested during the operation 'tolérance zero' in June 2009. Before this 'opération', gang-members were often quickly released after their arrests, because their families would pay ransoms to get them free. In 2009 the then Minister of Justice decided to take the 'kuluna' far away from Kinshasa (in prisons as far as Buluwo, Katanga, and Angenga, Equateur). When Yannick came out of prison, he told members of his gang about the awful and painful experiences he had in prison, and many then decided to follow his example and quit as well.

"What helped me to stop my life of gangster was my experience in the prison in the Province Oriental, because I really thought I would die there. I could not imagine then that I could be today with you for this interview. I was very fat and still now have health problems from the time I spent in prison. I could not go to the bathroom anymore. There are those who are still over there, and who are dying in prison. I succeeded to flee and could get back over here. I crossed the river Congo in a pirogue up to Kisangani, and then from Kisangani up to Kinshasa. This experience made me want to stop being a 'kuluna'. Now we are not together anymore, as we all do different activities. Some do music, others football, others other things. For example, the group you just met in the street, they are also ex-

'kuluna' and they are now 'chargeurs de taxis' (young people shouting the direction of the taxis and taxi-busses that pass by and get some money for this from the drivers)." (from mirror interview with 'General Tango', 11.04.14, ref-01828)

"Hearing about what happened to me in prison had a big impact on my friends. And now most of us have other activities, and we have no time anymore for criminal activities, even though we are still in need of money and other things for our survival. But we do not want to get back to that life. With the 200 Francs that we get each time by helping to get clients for those taxis and taxi-busses, we succeed to get by." (from mirror interview with 'General Tango', 11.04.14, ref-01853)

The 'Général Tango Fort' was the pivot for one of the 'kuluna' gangs in Barumbu. By capturing the 'Général', the police succeeded in destabilising his gang. Also, before being transferred to the prison in Kisangani, Yannick was lead in front of a court sitting, which was made public. All this helped young men to come to their decision to quit the gangs.

The 'Opération Likofi' surely also helped some to stay out of gang-life, as they received following that operation a lot of encouragement from friends and family members to continue their new occupation in music and not think about getting back into crime. Some of their former friends in crime also decided to try to join them in the music ensemble, because their new identity of musicians had spared from being arrested or killed in this major police-operation (end of 2013 and beginning of 2014).

Others followed the example of friends to stop as 'kuluna' because they learnt and developed - as the members of the music ensemble Beta Mbonda did - an interesting profession or rewarding activity.

4.4.3. Youth and family background

The family is shaken by a deep crisis, with unemployment and parental deprivation leading to the erosion of parental authority and the widening gap between parents and children. Poor housing conditions, as well as the lack of family support, push young people out of the home and expose them to all kinds of scourges. The proliferation of single-parent families due to divorce and/or abandonment of the roof by the father, the multiplication of births outside marriage, combined with the increase in parental deaths due to AIDS, put many young people in a hopeless situation. (Mukendi 2009:204)

Pour être bien portant, l'enfant doit être bien porté. (Mukendi 2009:219)

It has been important for us to understand the family background situation and living conditions of the youth and young adults participating in this research.

At the time of this research, DR Congo counts 48% young people, Belgium only 17%. I have been confronted with the fact that the living conditions of youth in Kinshasa are also very different in comparison with adolescents, youth and young

adults in Europe. I was often inclined to make such comparisons, as my own children were about as old as most participants in my research.

In the following text I am shortly commenting on the family background of the young musicians in this research, in particular concerning their relationships with father, mother, step-mother and step-father, possible 'guides', and the impact it has of themselves becoming a parent, develop a relationship and get children.

As will become clearer further down this dissertation, the musicians of the brass band of Espace Masolo and the musicians of the percussion band Beta Mbonda have **different family backgrounds**.

The musicians of Espace Masolo, of which most of them were accused of witchcraft (16 out of 22), lived some time in the streets of Kinshasa. They came from families that were for different reasons dysfunctional. Their life stories were horrible in respect of how their families came to treat them. Almost all of them were continuously refused by different members of their family, and then needed to go from one home to another, ended up living some time in the streets, and then finally were welcomed in shelters for children in street situations, who sent them to the community arts centre Espace Masolo.

The musicians from Beta Mbonda did not have to flee their families, although their gang activities also made them choose to stay outside of their families during certain periods.

Many **parents** were **absent** during the growing up of their youth. About 1/3 of the parents were separated by choice of one or both of the parents, but many other parents were absent because of death, health issues, poverty or drugs and alcohol.

The relationship with the **father** was often discussed as being problematic, especially because he was in many cases **absent**. The absence of the father was also observed as an important element in the extensive research Baudouin Bungu did for the University of Kinshasa on 'kuluna' (gangs in Kinshasa).

A constant in most stories of many of the youth in this research is that many fathers were absent. The fathers were dead or were absent for other reasons. Such children are then often made to participate in taking up responsibilities in terms of taking care of their families. This was often contrary to what they told us though, saying: "We have convinced our family - even though they do not like it - that we cannot take care of them, because we are investing in

music." This has been hard for us to believe though, because which family can accept that its grown-up child of between 20 up to 40 years does not bring any revenue to the family during all the years s/he is spending time in learning and making music, while having to be in such a continuous mode of survival?

In the absence of the father, it is the **mother** who tries to make ends meet for the family. In a certain way, the children - especially the first-born sons - then get the position of the father and are expected to help out their mother financially. Mothers clearly experience heavy burdens in this society, where men often do not take their responsibilities towards their families, leave their wives and start other relationships and families, often one after the other. Mothers are often left behind with their children, and if they cannot count on family, they have serious difficulties to survive with their children.

When parents separate and create new families in this poor surroundings, children can become a serious burden, as too many children need to be fed. **Step-mothers and step-fathers** are said to have tried to get rid of the children of previous marriages, by accusing them of witchcraft. But contrary to what I was communicated in advance of the research, such conflictual relationships with stepmothers and -fathers - even though they existed - were not frequent in our case-studies (only a total of 6 out of 31).

The fact of **becoming** oneself **parent**, or of wanting to have children, has motivated up to almost half of the musicians of both ensembles to sort things out in their lives: They then want to be capable of taking care of their couple and children or future family, and decide to stop with gang activities or street life.

In the absence of parents, certain youngsters looked for others who could play the role of '**model**' or '**guide**', and several participants discussed the impact certain persons had on important turning points and decisions they have taken in their lives¹²⁹. The absence of models is an important element in understanding the pathways some of these young people took to make sense out of their lives. The absence of a parental model, especially the absence of the father, was also in this research a common reality for many of the youngsters interviewed:

¹²⁹ *Crucial turning points in the lives of certain participants in this research were triggered by people remembered as 'guides' (see such an example in the report of BM-IB, ref-07464 in selection of quotes in 17.3).*

"When I was with Mr Michel I was far away from any form of violence. I then started to go to church almost every day. I prayed a lot. I was always next to him. He also trusted me with money and asked me to buy things with money he gave me." (ref-06673) "Sometimes my father came to see my mother. But as I was very unhappy about their separation, I preferred to stay with mr Michel, who took me into his house as if I were his own son, together with his own children. I slept there. He did so much for me. In that period almost everything of my life was in relation with Mr Michel." (from life story interview with BM-GI, 08.12.14, ref-06675)

For the 'kuluna', their 'General' was their model. I was impressed by the former 'General' of the local 'kuluna'-gang I interviewed in Barumbu: an intelligent young man, with fine manners, good-looking and charming, with a nice 'discours' on leaving the life of 'kuluna' and taking up a more constructive position in the community. I could very well imagine him as a model for the young men of the neighbourhood, now and before.

4.4.4. The importance of music in Kinshasa

If there is one area where we excel, it is undoubtedly music and dance and our achievements in this field are recognized around the world. (Mukendi 2009:114)

The information I share here about the state of music-making in Kinshasa does only partly come from the data collected during my fieldwork for this PhD-research (field observations, interviews). It also originates from a wider understanding of the context gained outside the research from my own professional immersion in this country since 2007, as well as from reading other writing:

Especially the works by Gary Stewart (Stewart 2000), Bob W. White 2007, 2008) and lately also by Joe Trapido (Trapido 2016) have been informative on the important place music has in Kinshasa.

It was also interesting to understand that the phenomenon I studied had precedents in the recent history of the city. Congolese historian Didier Gondola wrote about some of the precedents in Kinshasa, such as Père Buffalo's project in the 1960s and 1970s in music and theatre to redeem the young 'Bills'. My interest in this study lies beyond the reality of Kinshasa though, and that is why I informed myself well but am not writing in this manuscript at length on details of the history of youth violence nor the roles of music in Kinshasa.

Kinshasa was not simply filled with music; it seemed held together by music (White, 2008).

As Bob White described so well, of all the places I have been travelling to with the music ensemble Ictus and with Music Fund, Kinshasa stuck out as the music capital 'par excellence'. Nowhere have I felt the importance of music on everyday life as much as in Kinshasa. Music is allover.

Everyone seems to listen to music and has opiated positions about the bands performing it. The music one hears most is popular music, which at the moment of this research was especially ndombolo dance music. But one could also hear traditional Congolese percussion music, other forms of popular music (rock, reggae and rumba), choral music and also a bit of classical western music. Kinshasa is considered the most important birthplace of rumba music. Music has played an important part in the lives of the 'Kinois', at many different levels of their society and in different stages of its national history. Musicians have been respected and listened to by the population, and instrumentalised by politicians. Music not only played a constructive role in society. It has also been the source of violence, as it was instrumentalised by certain gangs or certain political parties to incite violence towards those opposing them. Musicians in those cases have sometimes become similar to those who employed them, the gangsters and certain untrustworthy politicians. Certain musicians have excelled - and still do - in lifestyles in which money, sex, power and drugs are prioritised (Tsambu 2004).

As a result of this bad reputation of 'voyous' (bad boys, thugs), musicians are not always respected by the better off, middle class or 'educated' citizens of Kinshasa, and not all parents are therefore happy to hear that their offspring wishes to become musician.

Still, to many 'Kinois', becoming a musician represents an upward move in society, because of the potential gains in material wealth as well as identity through concerts and the media. To many people in the poverty-stricken city of Kinshasa, becoming a musician represents popular success, success with the girls, driving a big car, being important, going to Europe, buying expensive clothes of well-known brands with which to show off..

And, even though they have their own personal and different reasons for making the choice to become musicians, what people surrounding the participants of this research think also has an influence on how they think of themselves in their new identity of musician.

Congolese television stations give a lot of space and time to music, and many products are sold with the help of famous popular musicians. This puts them continuously in the focus of public interest and explains why so many admire them, look up to them and want to become like them, hoping that through the musical activity they will be able to climb the social and economic ladder, to make a living and to be respected and

liked. Music can as such seem to offer an ideal and rapid way towards upward social mobility (Tsambu 2009).

The phenomenon of poor children from Kinshasa society becoming musicians and going from being considered outcasts to idols, has a long history already. The career of a musician is nowadays also in Kinshasa often perceived as cathartic, therapeutic, redemptive, restorative, etc. But for a long time musicians were associated with 'delinquents' and indeed many of them came from the ranks of gangs.

What seems to be much missing in Kinshasa though are people with the talent and training to organise and manage musical projects. This is in sharp contrast with the importance music plays in the Congolese society. Music management professionals are missing who can accompany musicians and their projects and ensembles. Help is also needed to organise talent detection, and afterwards coach young talents. Young talented people now tend to be unsupervised. When they happen to be successful, success brings in money. But as initially they do not have financial, managerial nor productional supervision, things can then often go wrong. Professional recording studios and music managers are said to be missing in the country¹³⁰. Worse than that, in contrast with the immense importance of musical talent which is present on the market, there are hardly any professional theatres or concert halls which can welcome music projects in Kinshasa or elsewhere in the DRC. This is paradoxical. Congo is an important musical power, but in its capital - as everywhere else in the country - there is hardly a theatre worth the musical passion of the Congolese youth. Music projects and musicians therefore evolve in a very disorganised way. Young people, who generally do not have any professional training in this field and have no notions of how to manage musical ensembles or projects, become heads of successful projects, and tend to underestimate the importance of the coalition of talents needed to continue a musical ensemble or project. They then often think that the success is due to their personal talent and efforts alone, and they tend to act in an omnipotent and omniscient way¹³¹, imagining they do not need anybody around them and that the money of the group belongs to them. As that person imagines that it is through him alone that the group exists, he must have the beautiful house and the car which he has to be able to renew every 6 months and so on... The other members of the ensemble or the project then generally get nothing much. It is an old and well-known phenomenon in the Congolese music world.

¹³⁰ Didier Mumengi was over the years of my presence in Kinshasa not the only informant informing me about this deficiency.

¹³¹ Joe Trapido describes in detail how the orchestra 'presidents' position themselves as such 'gatekeepers' (Trapido 2016:106).

The government could play a role in this, but - even though the world-famous rumba was created here - it does not consider music as a job-creating sector. The government has not appropriated music as a special Congolese cultural capital which can allow the development of a music economy. Many Congolese musicians therefore have the reflex to leave the country and go abroad, and the country is thereby losing an important asset of its cultural capital and economic and job creation opportunities linked to this.

Traditional Congolese music and Congolese brass band music

The social music projects studied here are focussing on Congolese brass band music¹³² and traditional Congolese percussion music¹³³. It is good to know the specific role these two forms of music play in different places in the society of Kinshasa. Both are closely related to the local musical appetites and preferences, although brass band music is these days for sure much more popular than traditional percussion music.

The traditional music of Congo and its instruments are somewhat less appreciated these days. Three main causes for this were reported by informants during this research: (1) Certain Pentecostal churches ('églises de réveil') have decided that traditional music is satanic and therefore to be avoided (or worse, to be stopped). (2) Many 'educated' middle class 'Kinois' look down on this music which they consider as being retarded, coming from a less developed past or from 'provincial' backward areas of the country. And (3) another reason why traditional music seems to be in decline is that traditional music - like our classical music from Europe - is difficult to fully understand. It presupposes inside information. When one is knowledgeable about the performing tradition of this music (how instruments are being played, and how certain compositions and songs are being played), one has facilities to appreciate the specific performance as well as the talent the performers have (or lack) to improvise. Also, when one understands what the music is about, which stories it tells, and where these stories come from, then one can better savour the music and the musicians performing it.

Even though the decline of traditional music within modern 'Kinois' everyday life is something real, this decline should nevertheless not be exaggerated. Traditional Congolese music has not disappeared. At important social or cultural events, such as weddings, funerals, or celebrations related to tribal

¹³² played by the musicians of Espace Masolo, one of the 2 social music projects studied here (find an introduction to this project under 8.3.2.1).

¹³³ played by the musicians of Beta Mbonda, one of the 2 social music projects studied here (find an introduction to this project under 8.3.2.2).

membership, traditional musicians from the region of origin are being requested to perform. For example, on many 'marriage coutumier' (the rite of marriage bridewealth) traditional music is still performed.

Brass band music however has a much brighter position in the 'Kinois' society. The 'Kinois' love brass bands. There are many brass bands all over the city. They perform a lot and at all kinds of celebrations. Although recorded and electric music is causing some decline in the careers of brass bands, many funerals are still accompanied by live brass music, lasting for many hours between sunset and sunrise.

The different state of affairs of these two forms of music traditions explains the different economical positions musicians can take within the social music projects I studied, based on either one of these musical traditions: The young musicians who learned to perform in the brass band of Espace Masolo have more facilities to make money than have the percussionists of the traditional Congolese band of Beta Mbonda, who have not that many concerts at all, even though they may be considered as better musicians. But I will describe in this thesis that financial gains are not the only motivation for these young people to want to become musicians.

4.5. Preliminary considerations to this research

As in most research, I also considered a series of preliminary questions as well as assumptions, of which some of the most important ones are summed up here:

1. I have from the beginning of this research considered as a serious hypothesis that music on its own would not be the cause of major changes in the lives of the young people I was studying. Becoming a musician may in the case of members of gangs have been helpful in combination with other factors that changed in the lives of these youngsters and young adults, such as the ones just mentioned above. Music-making may also have played an indirect contribution in encouraging the young people in this study to take control of other aspects of their development, such as the formation of a family, enrolling in basic literacy education or vocational skills training.. This point finds a close echo in Eric Clarke's ecological perspective (Clarke & De Nora 2015) about the 'affordances of music':

What are the social action(s) that music affords in relation to participants' capacities and circumstances (biological, cognitive, social...), and how might we account for those affordances? (...) We hope to demonstrate that a socially informed

ecological theory is a powerful way to analyse, understand and interrogate music's sociabilities. (Clarke 2018)

2. Furthermore, public performances - in concerts or on television - have a positive effect on how the young musicians - formerly seen as 'gangsters' or 'witch'-children - are perceived by their families and their community. It reassures them that their youngsters (offspring, friends or neighbours) are effectively undergoing a behavioural change. The way the youngsters and young adults are perceived by their surroundings, and - at least as important - the way they perceive themselves, is crucial to the chances they will have to develop new life-styles.

3. Repression through operations of massive arrests and imprisonment ('Opération Tolérance Zero', 2009) and violent operations such as the killing of 'kuluna' by police in 2013-2014 ('Opération Likofi') also had its impact on the resolve of certain youth to stop with their gang-activities.

4. Strict classification of categories such as 'victims' and 'perpetrators' is inadequate, because in reality the youth I have been working with in this research take in a variety of in-between positions. Such classification can nevertheless be used as guidelines in order to make the distinction between those who especially undergo violence and those who commit acts of violence, even though the separation is not always clearcut. Victims might be at times perpetrators, and perpetrators can be seen as victims themselves.

Considering these observations, I can see the children in street situations (in Kinshasa often called 'chegués') in this research as especially belonging to the first group, while the second group would include the former members of gangs. Former 'kuluna' should not only be seen as 'actors' of violence though, but also as 'victims' of what society is not offering them (De Boeck 2005) as opportunities such as school education and work, or as victims because of the bad things that happened to them, such as the death of parents and the surviving mode they are living in. Also, the fact that they were always in danger of being a victim themselves, because of possible attacks from other gangs or arrests or violent interventions by the police, is given as an important reason for them wanting to stop their 'kuluna' life and activity.

5. Kinshasa's children in street situations who suffer constant violence sooner or later possibly resort to violence themselves, for example, to defend themselves, or to win business. Nevertheless, one should not overdo the violence perpetrated by such children in street situations. Such children and youth are especially victims of violence: A child suspected of being bewitched, is brought by the family to a

pastor who then confirms the suspicion. The confession is often extracted from the child by force. Once landed on the street, however, the violence is decreasing, although they may be subjected to some ugly forms of harassment. These children mostly do not commit acts of violence towards strangers. They can fight though among equals.

"I was really good in selling things in the streets, but older children came and extorted the money I earned. I was selling products I bought from others, so when the money I made was extorted from me, I had nothing left to hand over to the lot owners. When I refused to be extorted, the elders started to search me and attacked me when they found me. They hurt me badly here (shows a scar) with a Gillette blade." (from life style interview with EM2-ME, 22.07.15, ref-16275)

"Our work here in the shelter, as well as in the streets, is a job where you always have to separate fights. The world of the street is another world, with easy stakes and easy fighting. So as educators you have to be always on the lookout. You have to be alert all the time." (from mirror interview with educator Apisson of shelter Pekabo, 27.07.15, ref-16874)

6. The situation of the former members of 'kuluna' gangs is different. They had a home with their family but chose to rob people violently for the material gains they could get out of this.

"My dark memories come from the time of my 'kuluna' activity. But one particularly awful experience was the day I was badly injured in my face (shows a big scar on his forehead). I was always the one who did such things to others, I did not expect someone could do this to me. It happened in 2011. It happened around the train rail in Barumbu. I felt the hit of the stone. Then the blood coming down my head. People cried out seeing me. The injury was really bad and deep. I was taken to hospital. I did such things to others (repeats)." (from Life Story Interview with BM-GI, 08.12.14, ref-06695)

The former members of 'kuluna'-gangs did not only make victims, but they could also be victims themselves in the gang wars. There were a lot of risks involved in being 'kuluna'. They were themselves victims of youth violence from gangs coming from other neighbourhoods, to the point that they took the initiative to avenge themselves, in certain cases encouraged by their parents and the elders of their neighborhood.

7. The previous paragraphs have illustrated how my research can be contextualised within the existing literature related to this field of research. I now want to also make clear to what extent this work has wanted to add new data and perspectives, as well as challenge and maybe even change the existing knowledge and understanding of the phenomena studied in the field of SIMM-research (Lund 2014).

In confrontation with the data shared by the young musicians participating, the intrinsic benefits of practicing music have over time become an important focus of this research¹³⁶.

¹³⁶ see chapters 9.2 and 13

These intrinsic benefits are nevertheless what McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras & Brooks in their 'Gifts of the Muse. Reframing the Debate About the Benefits of the Arts' call 'the missing element' which is in need of being studied. Future research should according to them not continue to limit itself only to the instrumental benefits of practicing the arts, because:

People are drawn to the arts not for their instrumental effects, but because the arts can provide them with meaning and with a distinctive type of pleasure and emotional stimulation. We contend not only that these intrinsic effects are satisfying in themselves, but that many of them can lead to the development of individual capacities and community cohesiveness that are of benefit to the public sphere. (...) We challenge the widely held view that intrinsic benefits are purely of value to the individual, however. We contend that some intrinsic benefits are largely of private value, others are of value to the individual and have valuable public spillover effects, and still others are largely of value to society as a whole. (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras & Brooks 2004:xv-xvi)

The main reason why the contribution of my research can be of interest, is because studying this aspect further has appeared to be a priority.

Although their book is not about the impact of making art, but about the impact of 'consuming' art, Eleonora Belfiore and Oliver Bennett also come to a similar conclusion in their overview of the intellectual history of claims made over time concerning the value, function and impact of the arts in Western societies (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008:176-190).

As it is with play in general, also in this research the musicians' primary motivation for making music appeared to be the experience of intense immersion which it uniquely offers: When we are in this purely playful mindset, the experience of playing itself is its own justification, and no means for the next end. "Play thus resists any form of narrowly instrumental analysis" (Rodriguez 2006). Not only musicians, but 'players' in general "are typically motivated by the quality of experience that playing affords, not by the expectation of some future utility" (Rodriguez 2006).

5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

5.0. Main research question

What can the role be of music-making proposed as part of social-artistic programmes to young people in the poverty-stricken and often violent surroundings of Kinshasa?

I have limited my research question to the specific role music-making - according to the participants - is and can be playing in the cases studied in Kinshasa, with the aim to come to a better understanding of these programmes, as well as to a critical evaluation and the formulation of recommendations.

This research was a narrative research, based on a selection of 32 participants from 2 social music projects who were followed longitudinally over a period of 3 to 4 years (from August 2012 to January 2016).

The first two hypotheses were formulated before starting the fieldwork, while the two other hypotheses were resulting from interactions with the participants during the first year of the fieldwork.

Following you will find for your information at the beginning of this thesis only a short listing of the 4 main hypotheses, but in chapter 7 a detailed explanation is given of how the different hypotheses of this research came about in advance and in the course of the fieldwork in Kinshasa.

5.1. Hypothesis 1: Artistic and social accompaniment

(teaming up of musicians / teachers / mentors / educators)

The role of the mentorship framework provided by the music trainers and educators surrounding the young musicians is of utmost importance. A **double accompaniment is needed** by (1) talented artistic and musical trainers, and (2) strong social and community workers who can propose a closely followed social and psychological accompaniment. This can then allow the youth to stay within the music training process and not give up, because such trainings are demanding a lot of

discipline, effort, concentration, as well as a degree of constraint and confinement.

When music is used as an instrument in social work, it is instrumentalised. Depending on the project's ambitions, the social will be prioritized over the musical and artistic, or the other way around (the musical over the social), or else in some form of balance. This research makes clear that finding such a balance is clearly a main concern in succeeding the coming together and succeeding of both ambitions. One of the cases studied here was found to be closer to prioritizing the social, while the other is giving stronger priority to artistic and aesthetic quality. This has resulted in different outcomes and is closely related to different forms of mentoring.

5.2. Hypothesis 2: At the wheel (the role of competence and mastering)

Another central element which interests this research is the notion of 'competence' and 'mastery'.

Not all musical activity is similarly useful to make youth develop different positions in society. Learning the trumpet in a brass band is demanding and takes a lot of time and hard work. Also learning the multiple repertoire of Congolese traditional music takes a lot of time and work. It can take years.

The types of activities at the centre of this research are about 'mastering' knowledge and know-how of complex musical practice and repertoire.

The hypothesis proposed here is that the psychological and physical enjoyment¹³⁷/enrichment and the social pride of 'mastering' a musical instrument and repertoire is not only an important reason for these youth to be motivated to become musicians, but that this experience may also have social spillover effects, as it will encourage them to be also 'at the wheel' in other domains of their lives.

Types of music which do not require complex mastering and long periods of study, such as certain popular urban forms of music have not been chosen as part of this research.

¹³⁷ The concept of 'enjoyment' is used a lot in this thesis. It is used as it has been and still is being studied by Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (Haworth 2016, Csikszentmihalyi 2002). See also for more details about his work in chapter 12.6 in this thesis.

5.3. Hypothesis 3: Shared ownership

(the potential of empowerment through participation in internal organisation and governance related to music-making)

The question of how to organise participation inside the groups is an important element which comes back a lot as a concern of the young musicians in this research and became therefore an important line of inquiry. I became interested in this because the participants in our research had strong ideas and many questions concerning the internal organisation and democracy of the social music programmes, and the music ensembles which resulted from these programmes.

The organisational format in most Congolese music (and many other musical surroundings outside Congo) is often extremely hierarchical around a head of the ensemble who takes all the decisions and most of the money (White 2008) and who positions himself as solely in charge of allowing (or not) the musicians access to the social reproduction they aspire to (Trapido 2016:114).

As this research is about how music is thought to play a role in allowing young people to improve their lives, the research was interested to know in which position they were when starting to become musicians and in which position they could or would want be when they would develop a career as musicians.

This theme has become a central question of a series of focus group discussions as well as individual interviews throughout 2015, the last year of the fieldwork in Kinshasa.

In this part of the research I have also attempted to compare the organisation which they were used to in their previous lives in gangs or in the streets, the organisation of music-making itself, and the organisation or music ensembles they wished to be part of in the future. Their lives as members of gangs or children in the streets of Kinshasa were hierarchically organised, with a 'general' at the top, with clear rules of engagement and of what one could and could not do. In music-making the organisation can interestingly enough be both hierarchical as well as 'heterarchical', and this is explained in more detail in this thesis when presenting the findings of the research¹³⁸.

¹³⁸ See chapter 8.3.1.1

Personal empowerment and agency depend on the possibility of control and **shared ownership** through participation in the act itself of music-making, but also in the organisation of the music project. If this is missing or limited, it can limit the development and transformative processes of youth participating in such programmes, and therefore also seriously limit the role music-making can play in such processes.

5.4. Hypothesis 4: Beyond survival (the role of enjoyment / play / flow)

"Even though we are indeed very attached to our musical activity, we regularly feel lost and think of getting involved in other business. In comparison with certain friends who make money with their activities, I am in a music ensemble and do not make much money. It can make you doubt about continuing or giving up, or it can also seriously spoil your temper. The problem is that we love it so much. For me my music is my life. I love music beyond any consideration about my position in society." (from interview about music-making with BM-MW, 30.04.15, ref-09667)

I noticed that there is an element to look at beyond all the advantages which becoming a musician upholds in terms of symbolic and social capital (and for some also some financial profit), one which is intrinsic within the activity itself of making music:

The young musicians in this research are not only interested in what music brings them as extrinsic gains, but they are also - and very much so - interested in the very act itself of learning and performing music.

This seems to be an important element in keeping them into the act of learning and practicing music as an important part of their daily lives. It seems to help them to construct new habits, away from some of the violence of the streets of Kinshasa, which they experienced as perpetrators and/or victims.

This specific interest is intimately related to the enjoyment of mastery, but it is embracing other elements as well, such as the enjoyment coming out of 'flow' experiences¹³⁹ when playing music.

Especially in the case of the former gang-members, the question coming up was why they were spending so much time in

¹³⁹ The 'flow' is a phenomenon which Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and his international teams of scholars have studied at length. It is described as a state in which people are so involved in an activity, that nothing else seems to matter anymore. The experience itself is so enjoyable, that people will do it, even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it (Csikszentmihalyi 1992/2002).

music, time which they could spend on making money to make a living. Why were they 'wasting' their time making music, instead of setting up commercial activities with which they could make some money? They would then be much better off in their family's day-to-day survival struggle. They responded to this that they saw their musical activity as an investment towards a future in which they could be able to make a living with music. Their dream was not that unrealistic, because they surely have a great potential as musicians. Also, being a musician is now also constituting their new identity, something which they are not easily ready to abandon. But all this still does not explain why they were rehearsing 4 or 5 days per week or more, for more than 8 years now, and accepted to only have a few concerts per year. They worked almost every day, and had not much time for anything else.

The mothers we spoke with told us they were happy their sons were not in gangs anymore, but not happy that their sons are not bringing in money into the family. Still, they nonetheless continued to mainly occupy themselves with studying and rehearsing their music. This intrinsic value of the activity itself of rehearsing and performing music has therefore during this research become an intriguing question to look at¹⁴⁰.

To find in Kinshasa - where life is in many ways so difficult, in comparison and in contrast with most other places I personally know - young musicians who get captured ('in the flow') by the activity of making music for its own sake, is something which I have wanted to understand, as I think it will bring us closer to an understanding of the specific place music-making can have in social-artistic work.

¹⁴⁰ *Some arts advocates and researchers have expressed skepticism about the validity of arguments for the arts' instrumental benefits, and there is a general awareness that these arguments ignore the intrinsic benefits the arts provide to individuals and the public. (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras & Brooks 2004:xi) - Huizinga's general view that the integrity of play is perverted whenever it is made to serve social functions. (Rodriguez 2006) - Eleonora Belfiore and Oliver Bennett give an interesting overview of the discussions between those in favour of 'art for art sake' (intrinsic value of arts) and those favouring the instrumental value of the arts (Belfiore & Bennett 2008:7)*

6. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF METHODOLOGY

Before starting my fieldwork in Kinshasa, I studied different research methodologies in order to choose one which would best fit the research I was planning to set up.

How the methodology was developed is explained in detail and step by step in the following chapters 6 and 7, as well which works helped me choose the methodological framework of the research (Bryant & Charmaz 2013; Bryman 2004; Devereux 1967. DeWalt & DeWalt 2002; Drake & Heath 2011; Emerson & Fretz & Shaw 1995; Groundwater-Smith & Mitchell & Mocker & Rönnerman 2013; Latour 1987; LeCompte & Goetz 1982; McAdams 2012; Robson 2002; Van Campenhoudt 2001 and Van Campenhoudt 2011).

In order to be able to include and understand the characteristics of the specific situation of the study in Kinshasa as accurately as possible, from the start of this research the technique of **qualitative descriptive research**¹⁴¹ was chosen (Elbogen 2002, Nassaji 2015, Sandelowski 2000), within the more general context of qualitative research using a micro-sociological approach with overtones of ethnographical, inter-subjective and hermeunitical interpretative methodologies, and explained more in detail in the following chapter.

The reason why I have wanted to adopt this approach is very much related to my position as practitioner-researcher (see also chapter 3), wanting to be able to profit from - as well as critically question - my preliminary knowledge and understanding of the settings and questions of this research in this specific environment in Kinshasa, DR Congo.

Choosing to develop my PhD-research within the Department of Conflict and Development Studies **- at the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences of the University of Ghent - was for this reason the**

¹⁴¹ see also 6.5

right choice, because this department is favoring qualitative research methodology as well as extensive fieldwork in the projects its researchers are involved in.

6.1. Qualitative research

As I could not - apart from Geoffrey Baker's research - trace much literature on long-term research on young people who have been studying music within social programmes over a certain length of time (and have become musicians as a result), I decided already in the early stages of the research - and with strong encouragements of my supervisor - to adopt a qualitative methodology and strategy.

As hardly any research has been done in the past in this field on this specific topic, a more exploratory approach was needed, something for which qualitative research is the better choice (Bryman 2004).

The path I followed is one which permits the researcher to not limit him/herself too much in advance in terms of the lines and topics of enquiry, and to develop first fairly general and then (in confrontation with the data in the field) to come to more and more specific research questions (Bryman 2004)¹⁴³.

6.2. Micro-sociological approach

The focus of this research has been sociological, because it has in priority been concerned with the interrelations and interactions between the young musicians participating in the research and the society they live in. It is a research which

¹⁴³ *The development of the methodology as well as the changing focusses are being presented in detail in chapter 8, as it occurred through the years of this research.*

is mainly interested in questions concerning their position in their society, and the identities they adopt or receive, such as former 'kuluna' and 'witch'-children redefining themselves as musicians.

It has nevertheless throughout the research been necessary to not only look at the sociological reality of the young musicians being studied. Although different aspects have been looked at and different approaches to the situation have also been at times adopted (pedagogical, psychological, anthropological, musicological, political...), the main focus of this research is micro-sociological (about the youth in their interaction with the societies they live in).

6.3. Ethnographic approach

Although this research has ethnographic 'overtones', it is not fully ethnographic in comparison with anthropological research, because the time spent with the participants in the research is still limited (7 months spread over 3 ½ years). It nevertheless surely adopts the ethnographic approach. A lot of time was spent with the young musicians in this research, in focus groups, individual interviews and during many observations of rehearsals, concerts and some other daily life activities.

The research is allowing as well as specifically focusing on the subjective experiences and related narratives of the participants¹⁴⁴ - as well as of the researcher - and is as such a typical example of ethnographical research¹⁴⁵ from a phenomenological perspective. The phenomenologist looks at human behaviour as a result of how people interpret reality, and s/he is therefore careful to see things from the person's perspective in order to then be able to interpret and understand his world (Bryman 2004).

I spent a lot of time with the young musicians in my research, listening to them, in order to understand their motivation, their modus operandi.

Of course, stories can and should be questioned, and I did. I have been careful not to take everything for granted the participants told me about their lives and their dreams. I have encountered many fine intentions and words, which later on appeared not to correspond entirely - or sometimes not at all - with how they acted accordingly. But whatever the realities behind the stories, the stories people tell about themselves do define who they are. Even when some of their stories were only partially true, they inspired and made the narrator adopt the identity s/he had or with which s/he identified with (having an identity and identifying with an identity are two separate things).

Tia DeNora's *Music in Everyday Life* (2000) is entirely based on the interview of 52 women, and everything she writes or concludes is based on these interviews. Her letting "the interviewees' voices be heard" was the method I applied as well: I accumulated a lot of ethnographic material, and over time saw what emerged from there, without imposing my own conclusions in advance. In other words, I used Tia DeNora's

¹⁴⁴ *The far stronger voice comes from the beneficiaries [of such programmes], not the providers. (Sloboda 2015)*

¹⁴⁵ *By admitting into the research frame the subjective experiences of both participants and investigator, ethnography may provide a depth of understanding lacking in other approaches to investigation. (LeCompte & Goetz 1982:101)*

Music in Everyday Life as one of the models to inspire my methodology.

Geoffrey Baker also cherishes ethnography as "a particularly suitable tool. Its slow, indirect techniques allow the researcher to probe strong, deeply internalised official discourses and unearth internal conflicts and divergent opinions that may be obscured in surveys and official interviews. (...) Ethnographic studies are concerned less with counting or proving than with analysing perceptions, meanings, and the construction of social worlds. (...) Quantitative analysis of the impact of music learning on individual achievement or the national economy will have to be left to others. Both kinds of research are necessary, because they cover different ground." (Baker 2014, p.10)

6.4. Inter-subjective and hermeneutical interpretative approach

An inter-subjective approach has been taken, allowing a lot of discussion on the information collected¹⁴⁹. This was in particular possible because I involved **a team of Congolese social scientists who were collaborating as assistants to the research**¹⁵⁰. The team was composed with local researchers from the Kinshasa and with very different academic backgrounds and experience¹⁵¹, and therefore also representing different approaches, paradigms and basic patterns of thought to understand the realities studied. This context has been a strong element in this research, allowing for many enriching discussions amongst the team.

In qualitative descriptive studies, language is a vehicle of communication, not itself an interpretive structure that must be read. Yet such surface readings should not be considered superficial, or trivial and worthless. I intend the word surface here to convey the depth of penetration into, or the degree of interpretive activity around, reported or observed events. There is nothing trivial or easy about getting the facts, and the meanings participants give to those facts, right and then conveying them in a coherent and useful manner.
(Sandelowski 2000, p.336)

Not only can the qualitative description methods (as mentioned in the above citation by Margarete Sandelowski) profit researchers to come to a better understanding and interpretation of the language used by participants in research, to report experiences, opinions and expectations,

¹⁴⁹ The team-discussions have been recorded and most of them can be found as part of the transcriptions added to this thesis.

¹⁵⁰ They were not co-researchers but assistants, who also played an important role as informants, because they were themselves inhabitants of the same city and in certain cases experiencing similar conditions as the ones experienced by the participants of the research.

¹⁵¹ See workshop '(Silent) Voices' by the Governance in Conflict Network (GICn) of the University of Ghent on developing research by scholars from the Global South and North: www.gicnetwork.be/silent-voices-workshop.

but also the interaction of the inter-subjective perspectives of a pluri-disciplinary composed research team as ours.

A hermeneutical interpretative approach was taken: The reason for this is that from the beginning of this research I was not focussing on proving specific hypotheses, but instead on describing certain phenomena with the use of hypotheses as operational tools, and informed speculations that have arisen in the course of my fieldwork (Bryman 2004, 33). Descriptive research methods were therefore at the core of this research:

6.5. Qualitative descriptive research

The general view of descriptive research as a lower level form of inquiry has influenced some researchers conducting qualitative research to claim methods they are really not using and not to claim the method they are using: namely, qualitative description. Qualitative descriptive studies have as their goal a comprehensive summary of events in the everyday terms of those events. Researchers conducting qualitative descriptive studies stay close to their data and to the surface of words and events. (Sandelowski 2000, p.334)

My interest in descriptive research methods arose for an important part from the realization that in this study I wanted to deal with complex realities which could not easily be looked at or summarized in an unambiguous and simple way. In order to view, investigate and understand the complexity of these realities, I did not only want to see how music-making takes place in social work in general. Instead, I also above all wanted to arrive at an in-depth examination and nuanced understanding of what the individual participants in the research had to report in terms of their experiences in the process of learning and becoming musicians thanks to participating in the social music programmes. Qualitative descriptive research was very suitable for this sort of research where the setting up of tight control and experimental research situations is barely possible, and the generalization of findings to other environments not obvious (Nassaji 2015).

I have throughout this research been looking for correlation rather than causation: Instead of trying to prove a direct relationship between certain musical practices and shifts in social positioning, I have wanted to study the meaning and experience that the youngsters and their surroundings undergo in relation to them becoming musicians, and thereby making a shift away from their former identities and lives in street delinquency and/or victimhood. Many studies of music education programmes show correlation rather than causation (Baker 2014, McCarthy 2004). From the starting point of this research, I

did not count on being able to *proof*¹⁵³ 'impacts' of music-making on social becoming (Winner & Cooper 2000).

6.6. Transcription of interviews

The transcription work has been enormous (1 hour of recording corresponds to at least 5 hours of transcription work). I was first helped a bit in this by my assistants in Kinshasa, but then took over a lot of the transcription work myself. I ended up transcribing half of this work myself (about 80 hours of recordings), and then considered abandoning the project of having all interviews transcribed. But fortunately I still found extra budget which allowed me to have most interviews transcribed anyway. **A total of 161 hours of interviews have been transcribed.** This allowed me to go through almost all of the transcribed interviews and code them manually. Doing a lot of the transcription work myself, and then reading through the transcriptions made by others - in part while listening to the recordings - made me discover many details I did not see or hear or understand, although the interviews were taken by myself and in my presence. It helped me a lot in understanding some of the processes I was studying. God is in the details (and so is the devil, I know!). One of the reasons I wanted all the interviews transcribed, was not only to be myself facilitated in the analysis of my data, but also to allow my fieldwork to be accessible and possibly have it revisited by others afterwards¹⁵⁴.

6.7. Field notes

Besides books, studies and articles, I have also nourished my project using a large diary of field notes of meetings and correspondence with resource persons, as well as with the members of the accompanying and steering committees of this PhD-study. I spoke and corresponded with many experts in the different fields involved in this research, and received a lot of interesting reactions in return. Comparing their notes and advise has been not only stimulating and encouraging, but especially valuable when developing my research question and methodology in the exploratory phase and first months of my fieldwork in Kinshasa in 2012-2013. Later on, I have preferred

¹⁵³ Gregory Bateson: "Science probes; it does not prove" (Bateson 1980:32).

¹⁵⁴ Reliability refers to the extent to which studies can be replicated. (...) Establishing the reliability of ethnographic design is complicated by the nature of the data and the research process (...). Because unique situations cannot be reconstructed precisely, even the most exact replication of research methods may fail to produce identical results. (LeCompte & Goetz 1982:104) Even though establishing the reliability of our research is complicated, **open access is an important element of this project**, and therefore all data are made available publicly on DANS (Data Archiving and Networked Services; <https://dans.knaw.nl/en>).

to limit such contacts and focus myself on the data I collected in the field.

Besides this, a personal research diary, which includes ethnographic observations of my life in Kinshasa, also helped me stay in touch with my personal feelings, reflections and doubts concerning my research project, the contrast between the affluence in Europe and the misery in Kinshasa... and I have been able to also include this information as an integral part of my research work as well as in this PhD thesis.

The fieldwork notes include comments on interviews taken, while the transcripts of the interviews are a separate type of document.

Writing and then reading and later on re-reading the notes was helpful in constructing my thoughts and in guiding my perception of the realities encountered in the field.

My field-notes - a file of several hundreds of pages - also allowed me to understand and follow how I developed my research methodology, and to track the different decisions taken chronologically.

7. PRACTITIONER-RESEARCHER

We have often had an odd gap in our field of social change between practitioners and theoreticians. On the one hand we have theoreticians who, from a variety of disciplines, have provided major frameworks for our consideration. They often seek empirical evidence by watching what others do, but they rarely enter the swirling river of social change itself, particularly in settings of protracted conflict or deep violence. On the other hand, we have practitioners who live in that river, but only on rare occasions venture out to a place of reflection that translates their experience into proposed theory. We have few who do both. I come more from the practitioner-who-occasionally-reflects school. (Lederach 2005, p.123)

7.0. Introduction

It is important that the reader of this dissertation is informed about my specific position as an informed and involved researcher in Kinshasa, and I therefore wish to make some explicit comments about this, before developing the thesis further. I am conscious of the importance and the need for a researcher to be able to take as much as possible distance from one's own experience and one's own categories of pre-conceived thoughts towards the subject of his study. I have throughout the 4 years of my study done this tightrope balancing between involvement and distance.

I hope that reading the following chapter will make it clear that I have wanted to be particularly sensitive to the ways I was as an 'engaged outsider' influencing the results of my research, because of the role I was playing as facilitator of the music projects this youth were involved in, being founder of Music Fund, the organisation giving support to the projects in which these youngsters are becoming musicians.

My personal research route is clearly one which has been steered by an ambition to be in close connection with the practice of music-making in social projects. My 30-ish years of experience within the world of music (Ictus, Walpurgis, Flanders Festival) and my experience with Music Fund in accompanying music schools and other types of music training schemes in developing countries (DR Congo, Mozambique, Haiti, Morocco) and in conflict regions (Gaza, West Bank, Israel), were at the basis of this academic research project.

I have explained in the introduction to this thesis that I came to the decision to undertake my PhD-research in Kinshasa, because I had been regularly coming to Kinshasa since 2007 as the founder of the humanitarian organisation Music Fund (www.musicfund.eu). In this position I had been working with the music school of Kinshasa (INA, Institut National des Arts) for already 6 years before starting my case study research. I am known in Kinshasa for this. So it is surely true that my position would naturally induce certain expectations from the

projects which I would be doing my research upon. To make things worse, both Espace Masolo and Beta Mbonda¹⁵⁵ started a partnership with Music Fund in about the same time as I started my PhD-research. I have during my field work in Kinshasa stopped playing an active role as part of the team of Music Fund, but continued for sure to be identified as the founder of this organisation, and as such as someone who might have a certain leverage on making things happen for these musical projects. Telling them that my position as a researcher and my previous position running Music Fund were to be seen separately from each other, did not necessarily convince the musicians participating in my research. So one could say that I was in somewhat of an awkward starting position as a researcher who ideally needs to be able to make observations which are as objective as possible, without intervening too much in the reality of the subjects/participants of his research.

This being said, there is also much to be said in defense of this position. But before going into this, I would like to first make my case even worse, by admitting that when I started this research I could not possibly claim to be an academic worth this name. My previous diploma (master in politics of education, Université de Paris VIII) was more than 30 years old, and I did not learn much about how to set up a PhD-research back then. So, I had to go back studying many things in a short time. Should you see me then as a sort of imposter, because not an academic at all, because one does not become one in such a short time? The answer is negative. Even though by writing this I have wanted to make my professional and academic background before the start of my PhD-research explicit, my ambition is nevertheless to convince through this dissertation that my data collection, analyses, findings and conclusions are sound and well constructed.

To my defense, I have the following arguments:

7.1. Networking

Thanks to the 6 years of regular visits (at least once per year during one or two weeks) to Kinshasa, I had already developed quite a network of people in different fields¹⁵⁶ before starting my fieldwork there.

When I started the research I did not know that much about the social-artistic projects in Kinshasa, and I would in fact soon be confronted with unexpected surprises. By developing my

¹⁵⁵ find an introduction to both projects under 8.3.2

¹⁵⁶ not only people active within the musical sector, but also some working in the social, economical and political fields

network of contacts towards different milieus, this allowed me to quickly find out how certain things worked.

I think that reading this dissertation will make clear how much I have as 'practitioner-researcher'¹⁵⁷ (Robson 2002, Drake & Heath 2011, Groundwater-Smith a.o. 2013) been able to profit from this networking capacity, allowing me to be in touch with university professors, politicians, police officers, social and community workers, famous local musicians, bankers, industrial entrepreneurs, diplomats, etc... in Kinshasa and elsewhere. My position as someone with connections and with some previous understanding of the life in Kinshasa gave me advantages which an outside researcher coming into a new environment for the first time would not have had.

7.2. Walk the walk

Besides this type of local and international networking, I also from the very start of the research decided to 'walk the walk' by going to live with Congolese friends in the 'cité' of Kinshasa¹⁵⁸.

I moved around the city on foot, taking transportation together with the inhabitants of Kinshasa (taxis, taxi-busses, busses, or on the back of a motorbike). I wanted to get out in the streets and spent my time as much as possible close to the life the participants in my research were living, 'hanging out' while consciously observing and taking many notes.

I wanted to approach the young musicians in my research, listen to them in order to understand their motivations, their modus operandi, to be able to write about how they became musicians, and in order to allow us to have a better idea of what the phenomenon really is about.

I know of course that it was possible to get only partially 'close', but it was good to make the effort. It brought me every day again in contact with many people in the streets of Kinshasa. Often people would start talking to me, as they were not used to seeing a white man in the streets of the 'cité', the popular part of the city of Kinshasa. It made them curious

¹⁵⁷ Colin Robson gives in his 'Real World Research' a clear and detailed description of the 'practitioner-researcher' (Robson 2002:534-536), which very much corresponds to the type of position I have myself been in as researcher in this research-project.

¹⁵⁸ I stayed with friends in Kitambo, a poor and popular area of the city, away from Gombe, where foreigners, rich Congolese and whites are living and working. Kinshasa is an enormous city-province divided into four districts, further divided into 24 municipalities. The commune of Kinshasa gave its name to the whole city, but the commune of Gombe is the city's administrative centre.

about who I was and what I was doing there. Some called me a 'mundele madesu'¹⁵⁹:

Field note 05.04.14 - the 'mundele' is the talk of the 'taxi-bus'
In one of the 'taxi-busses' I am now taking to get around town, men sitting next to me congratulated me for being Congolese amongst the Congolese, saying that when white people ('mundele' in Lingala) come to Congo they mostly take life the easy way, and do not bother to go through the same unpleasant experience as most Congolese people of being packed as sardines in little dangerously driving vans and private cars. One told me I was ready to take on the Congolese nationality, something which made everyone laugh. I am glad that I am pleasing Congolese people just by joining them in their 'taxi-busses'!

This going out and 'getting close' (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw 1995) helped me much more than all the fancy networking: Just being there, in the streets of Kinshasa, with the people of Kinshasa, where they lived, worked, survived, helped me feel together with them, physically close, although mentally in many ways worlds apart.

I have during my stay in Kinshasa throughout the whole fieldwork-period been confronted with two different but not necessarily opposing experiences in relation to my relationship with this 'other' world, both continually present: (1) There was the experience of being close and one with the people of Kinshasa and their concerns, and (2) the experience of coming out of a different world and being condemned to stay separated from theirs. The contrast between my life in the rich world I grew up in and live in, and the misery of life in Kinshasa for sure often made me feel uncomfortable. Even though I did my best to participate as much as possible in the lives of the people I was doing my research with and on, I could never put myself entirely into their perspective, because my natural milieu is so different from theirs. Also, I would be leaving Kinshasa again to go back to my world after my all together brief stay of only up to 7 months in 3-4 years of my life. I acknowledge this as an element determining the limits of my research perspectives.

I arrive at the airport of Kinshasa to spend 10 days in the city to work on preparing my PhD-research. The question which haunts me is what I am doing here, why did I chose to come to this place to do this research, and why do this research at all. Questions, doubts.
The long waiting for my luggage at the airport, taking a 'bain de foule' (public bath) in the mass of people, all having to go through the same experience as I do, quickly made my feeling disappear of being strange to the place I arrive to. The length of this passage into the country (the waiting for one's luggage can seem endless) creates like a sluice, a special ceremony of entrance. Stuck as one is in this situation, collectively packed into the small area of the luggage belt, it helps one to arrive in the Congo one knows, as I could remember having gone through similar experiences so many times before since 2007. Being physically in this 'bain de foule', gave me the beginning of a feeling of being like the others there, and that I could find a place for myself in this world, really 'arrive' there and be part of the life of people there. If not, there would be no sense at all to do my research project in Kinshasa.
Arriving later that evening at the family's house of my Congolese friends, the feeling of belonging a little bit to this world is strenghtened. I will be able to live at their house for the whole period of my research in 2014 and 2015, and this

¹⁵⁹ 'mundele madesu' means "a white man who eats beans like we poor Congolese do"

will make a big difference. I have a 'home' in Kinshasa. (field note 07.09.13 - arrival in Kinshasa)

Each time I need time to arrive in Kinshasa. I cannot say I like to go to Kinshasa, no. But after 2 days (sometimes quicker), I feel quite well again. The Kinshasa where I hang out is so intense, so ugly, a garbage dump where only rats thrive, poor, life is so hard. But there is also the other side. When I start to work with the participants in my research, I get to see another part of the inside of life in this city: incredible courage, vitality, wisdom, generosity, forgiveness, humor and solidarity. That side gives meaning to even wanting to stay longer again. I planned during this last fieldwork-session to stay a lot inside the home of my hosts and to start writing on my thesis, but have decided not to do that, and instead spend as much time as possible outside in the city. (field note 22.12.15 - arrival for last fieldwork-session in Kinshasa)

7.3. The impact of the research itself on the lives of the participants

Because of my position (white, to a certain extend influential in the music field...) I have for sure been exercising - whether I wanted this or not - a certain influence on the lives of the young musicians I was interviewing. But early in the research I discovered something which has been so much more influential though: The fact that I was inviting them to participate in this research, and the fact that we developed this research together in such an intensive way for several years, was the most thorough way of intervening in their lives. Inherently in the act of doing the research, I have been encouraging them in their resolve to be and become musicians. This can be seen as a downside towards the research results, as I surely influenced their future resolve in that sense. Nevertheless, I have also invited them to reflect on themselves, in so many ways.

People want to tell their life story, as if they hope to regain control over the reality that has been so thoroughly disrupted. (Lieve Joris, "Dans van de luipaard", p.34)

Soon after I began the research, they themselves started to communicate to me about how much they appreciated the fact that our research sessions helped them to come to an understanding - and sometimes also to terms - with certain aspects of their past, present and even future lives. This dynamic has for most of them built up strongly throughout the research period, to the extend even that parting was difficult for many of them. Those who had this difficulty, told me that they experienced the end of the research as the end of an important period of self-reflexion, which had helped them to be resolved about certain things they wanted to make happen in their lives, as musicians, fathers, sons, daughters, future mothers, citizens...

I can claim with certainty that the biggest influence I have had on the participants of this research is not really because of my being white (=rich), because of my connection to Music Fund or to my network of 'important' people (politicians,

diplomats, famous musicians...), but most of all because of the simple fact that we did this research together over this length of time, giving them the possibility to seriously reflect and to discuss their situation with me, amongst each other and with themselves as well.

The musicians made it clear to us that the fact that they were being invited as participants to this research was reinforcing their identity as musicians. So, the very fact of me interviewing these young musicians, is reinforcing their resolve to develop their skills, and I am therefore influencing the outcome of what I am researching. The interviewed are being changed by the interviews, something which is well-known phenomenon in research in general¹⁶⁰.

7.4. Proposing special encounters and events

I have early in my fieldwork decided that I should see my position as an advantage. I have - with restraint - used my network and have been intervening in the reality of the young participants in my research, by creating special encounters and events, which allowed me to discover a lot of new information about them. I realise that this was a delicate matter, and that I would risk to be criticized for this later on at the defense of my thesis. It has nevertheless been a clear and conscious choice I made and for which I am ready to accept the consequences. The interventions I did have profited my research because they have allowed me to understand a series of dynamics involved. Besides that, the young musicians also profited from them, as it strengthened their resolve to continue to work on their music-making.

These are 3 examples of such interventions:

Example 1: 'Opération Likofi' and the general of police (Beta Mbonda): see description in chapter 4.2.1

Example 2: Manuaku Waku and Hono Kapanga (Espace Masolo): see description in chapter 8.3.8

Example 3: Commissioned concert Beta Mbonda in Barumbu: In April 2014 and again in July 2015 I commissioned the musicians of Beta Mbonda to give a concert out in the street in the neighbourhood where they live, in the city of Barumbu (Kinshasa).

I got lost in Barumbu, on my way on foot to the shelter for street-children Pekabo, but fortunately I came across BM-GI and BM-CL, 2 musicians from Beta Mbonda. We walked a long time before we finally found the shelter for street children, where BM-SA and BM-IS are staying, and before them EMI-RL, EMI-JO and EMI-MA from Espace Masolo as well. Walking through the streets of Barumbu, especially BM-GI was often recognised and addressed as 'Beta Mbonda' or 'artist'. We spoke about the nearby future of Beta Mbonda: about the space they will need to find for themselves, how the budget will need to be spent, and so on. BM-GI told me how much they appreciated that I had spent an evening and stayed overnight one

¹⁶⁰ Simply by studying a group, culture, or setting, the investigator affects it in some ways. (LeCompte & Goetz 1982:123)

night in April. He told me I should do this again, and in fact I promised I would. An idea: I could ask them to perform in the street before the house of Alhim, so that I can interview all the people coming to the concert, but also invite some people I know myself. I think I should pay them for this, and think of a sum of 100 usd (10 usd per musician). (field note, Kinshasa, 15.07.14)

The above extract of my field notes indicates in which atmosphere such ideas came about. These concerts in their neighbourhood were something they had wanted to do since a long time, but did not dare to do because of all the red tape with the local bureaucracy and police, and other strings attached to organising such an event. I helped them with this, as I had by then been able to meet a few local politicians who helped us get the necessary paperwork. The impact for them was enormous towards their own community. Many neighbours had already seen Beta Mbonda perform on television, but never in a live concert. During the research these concerts gave way to many subjects to be discussed (questions of identity, recognition, future ambitions...), at our or at their request.

Although I did not want this to become a major instrument of the research, I have allowed myself to be cooperative with the youngsters and their trainers, an approach which has sometimes closely resembled participative action research methodology. This does not mean at all that my research should be considered and labelled as 'action research', which it is not.

Instead of seeing these interventions as 'contaminating' the research, I understood that their "effects might provide the very source of [...] learning and observation" (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw 1995). Action research is not limited to single short-term interventions, but involves a joint initiative defining a problem and then a lengthy process of action and reflection from which processes are set up, which was never the case in this research project. In my research, there is a cooperative component (with young people and trainers) with a clear connection to the field (towards the practice, and possibly even towards policy), but it is not action research.

7.5. Build-up of trust relationship with participants and its relation to discretion

During the very last focus group session with the musicians of Beta Mbonda they started quarrelling amongst each other about a disagreement they were having (transcriptions ref-19065 to ref-19193). I have seen this quarrelling in my presence as a sign of their trust in me as an independent researcher: They allow themselves to also show lesser fancy sides of their characters and internal communication, knowing that they could trust me for not judging them accordingly.

In the beginning of my research I wondered how I would deal with the participants of my research trying to tell me what they thought I would want to hear, or what they thought would sound good to my ears. But - because of our longterm involvement in the research of three long years - soon after I had started working with them, different layers of understanding and of meaning came to the surface, interview after interview¹⁶¹.

What would in the beginning of the research period be given as the right words, the right answers, to serve and please the investigator/researcher in what he was hoping to find, would bit by bit be unmasked or explained differently in its complexity.

Very quickly, from the first month of the intensive fieldwork-period on, I started building up something with the young musicians. They quickly enjoyed and cared for being able to participate in the research because of the reflection moments which this allowed for them. They were also - and maybe most of all - happy with the confirmation this gave them of the interest in them and in their achievements. Somebody was coming all the way from Europe and during more than 3 years time and time again, only to talk with them about how they succeeded to build up their new identities, possibly with the help of their musical activities.

The degree to which trust and cooperation (rapport) are established, influences to a large extent the degree to which information gathered in participant observation is accurate and dependable. (DeWalt & DeWalt 2011:48)

Already in April 2014 I noted in my field notes about how both the musicians of Beta Mbonda and of Espace Masolo started to develop a relationship of trust with me. They started to speak out and express themselves more and more confidently, also about things criticising their mentors. Even though they knew I was also in good contact with their mentors, they believed me when I promised them not to communicate what they told me to their mentors.

Another important element was (1) the fact that I had been spending time with them outside of the interview sessions, and (2) that I had been coming to see them since 2012. It played an important role in building up their trust in me, because for them it was new to have a foreigner come see them more than just once or twice.

¹⁶¹ *On the credibility of informant reports in interviewing: informants may lie, omit relevant data, or misrepresent their claims. (...) sufficient residence in the field to reduce artificial reponses (...) are techniques used by ethnographers to control for such distortions in the data. (LeCompte & Goetz 1982:117)*

Spending so much time together over a period of several years, has been a major element in gaining trust from the participants in my research. I needed this trust in order to dig deeper and deeper with them into the questions of the research. Kathleen and Billie DeWalt even claim that "participant observation may, in some cases, be the only viable approach to research. [...] Long-term participation in the setting [...] the only possible way to gain enough of the trust of participants to carry out research. [...] the use of more formal methods might have 'put off' informants." (DeWalt & DeWalt 2011).

Trust is intimately related to discretion. The participants in the research needed to be able to count on the discretion of the research team in general, and in particular towards the mentors of the programmes, so that they could be free to criticise the weaknesses and failings of the project¹⁶². This is something which I repeated over and over again when starting interviews and focus group sessions on delicate subjects. I always promised to be discrete, not only towards their mentors, but also their family or towards society at large, including police, social and community workers... They told us they were pleased to be part of a research which had the explicit ambition to come out with propositions for practitioners wanting to instrumentalise music in social work, and that they would be proud to be mentioned by name as collaborators to the research. In order to follow the rules of discretion which we imposed on ourselves throughout the research, I have decided instead in this thesis not to use their names, except by listing them as part of the acknowledgments in the very beginning.

During an observation I did of an afternoon of rehearsals with Beta Mbonda, they ask me whether I could intervene with the direction of the project and ask whether they could rehearse less than the 4 days a week they were at that point obliged to guarantee, so that they would be able to develop other activities which could bring in some money for their families. I refused to do this, telling him I did not want to be an intermediate between them and their mentors, and inviting them to negotiate this themselves. Later that day, they also ask me whether I could help them to get more concerts for the month of December. I told them I had no ambition to become their manager. (field note 03.12.14)

The musicians themselves often tried how far they could stretch my position of non-intermittance between them and their mentors: They needed to trust my discretion, but at certain times would invite me to anyway play the role of the intermediate between them and their mentors, or to even become their agent and get them concerts. I refused this stubbornly, although I did intervene discretely on certain matters, when I could be of help. I could not limit myself to being only in

¹⁶² In particular, when investigating children in street situations, conventional survey-based quantitative approaches do not seem suitable because they are unable to create a trust relationship between the interviewer and child. (Conticini 2007:206)

the role of the observer, as if I were in some laboratory carrying out my observations. I am the 'mundele' (the white person, 'le blanc') from whom these boys and girls and their surrounding expect things. And yes, I have to admit that I had serious difficulties to avoid thinking of ways I could help them further in their search to get things better for themselves. I restrained myself as much as possible in order to protect my status of researcher, doing my best to stay an 'engaged/involved outsider'.

7.6. Reciprocity - what is in it for you?

Following the above reflexions concerning the importance of the trust relationship between the participants and the research team, something closely related to this is the question of reciprocity. The participants of the research were told from the beginning of the research - and during the research again and again¹⁶³ - what the general aim of the research was, namely to come to an understanding of how the experience of structured musical practice and education could have an influence on the lives of young people in the difficult living conditions of Kinshasa. This was in the beginning communicated without giving away too much of the hypotheses. But along the way, with time passing by, without sharing specific hypotheses, I kept the participants informed about the supplementary questions that came up in the research and asked their help to find possible answers.

Another range of reciprocity was reflected in the question which came up several times during the research, when certain participants would ask me the question "What's in this for you?". They wanted to know what I could gain from doing all this work, come from Belgium to meet them, spending all this money and time to come and listen to them... for what? The answer they received from me was that I am a social science scholar, and that it is my ambition to write a book in which I will propose advice to social and community workers wanting to instrumentalise music as part of their work. I told them that that book would only be possible to be written thanks to the hard work of reflecting they were doing together with me.

7.7. Social development study at crossroads of different disciplines

The optimum guard against threats to internal reliability in ethnographic studies may be the presence of multiple researchers. In some cases, investigations take place within a team whose members discuss the meaning of what has been observed until agreement is achieved. (LeCompte & Goetz 1982:111)

¹⁶³ see transcriptions in 17.3

This research is an example of a social development study¹⁶⁴ which is at the crossroads of different disciplines. One researcher can of course not be a specialist in all the different domains of interest in a social development study such as the one I embarked upon. But being acquainted through my past studies (philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, political science, music...) and my professional experience (in the field of music, education and social work), gave me the possibility to look at the realities studied here from different theoretical as well as practical perspectives. I am not a trained or experienced academic in the field of psychology, ethnomusicology, sociology, political science or educational science. This did nevertheless not only represent a handicap, but also an advantage, because I have not been looking at the realities studied in Kinshasa from one particular academic perspective only. On top of that, my research team was multi-disciplinary (1 sociologist, 1 political scientist, 1 social worker) and they could see and understand parts of the reality I was studying better than I could on my own. The advantage of my own position and my working with my multidisciplinary team has been that I could look at and - at least to a certain point - come to an understanding of these realities from different perspectives.

Besides our academic backgrounds, it was not evident for my sociologist assistants to **also understand** what the **artistic processes and experiences** of learning, rehearsing and performing music really represented and meant for the persons in our study. My personal background of having run musical projects and a music ensemble for about 30 years, and myself being taught as a classical singer and now studying the clarinet, helped me understand that important part of the research well.

The concept of 'perspective' is also for other reasons crucial in this type of research. As explained earlier on, the study is especially looking at the perspective(s) of the informants, the young musicians participating in this research. The information data collected is therefore limited to the perspective of the participants in the research, somewhat put into context and enlarged by the researcher (me), but still limited within the perspective of the research participants. I discovered this when discussing with colleagues researchers who were or had also been doing research in Kinshasa on street children and/or gangs. I found out that they would correct me

¹⁶⁴ And it is as such part of Development Studies which is by the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI) defined as: *a multi- and inter-disciplinary field of study (i.e. not a discipline) that seeks to understand social, economic, political, technological and cultural aspects of societal change, particularly in developing countries.* (EADI 2005)

on certain events or understandings, because their informants had given them different information concerning these realities. This shows how much reality can be looked at from different perspectives and therefore seen and understood differently, depending on through which glasses one looks at it. It also depends on the 'paradigms' (Kuhn 1962) which are the points of departure. My informants as well as myself are confined to the perspective we have from reality, and so have others. I therefore found instructive to discuss and cross-examine my findings throughout the research process with other researchers in the field (Congolese and from other nationalities), and I actively developed this part of my activities through meetings and correspondence.

Objectivity is not a concept that has to do with the discovery of truth. Rather, it represents a continuum of closeness to an accurate description and understanding of observable phenomena. [...] However, the understanding that any researcher (using any method) develops is partial. [...] All observation includes an observer. Every observer observes from where s/he stands. (DeWalt & DeWalt 2011:111-112)

7.8. Researcher - clarinet student

To enrich my capacity to understand what it meant to master a musical instrument and a repertoire, I decided in 2013 to myself learn to play an instrument. I have a basical music theory training (4 years of music academy) and a long training as a classical singer (20 years). That was long ago, and I was longing to be able to again enjoy making music myself. I chose to learn the clarinet, because I love the sound of the instrument, it immediately made 'some' sound when I tried it, and it was really handy to travel with (because small). I started on my own one year, then got stuck. Then I had a neighbouring jazz clarinetist give me monthly lessons, but got stuck again at the end of the second year. Finally, I decided to go back to music school in order to get a methodological step-by-step teaching, and I am now seriously studying the instrument. Going through this myself has proven to be an efficient way for me to come to a more concrete and practical understanding of an important aspect of my research which is also interesting itself in the artistic processes, as discussed especially in the chapter 'At the Wheel' on 'mastering' an instrument and repertoire¹⁶⁵. Some things you can not learn out of books. Certain things one has to experience for oneself in order to be able to have an empathic and physical connection with them. And for certain things one also needs pedagogues to learn from. Myself playing and mastering a music instrument and repertoire surely belongs to this category.

¹⁶⁵ see chapter 10

7.9. Participatory observation

The process of participant observation is, in part, a process of enculturation (...). The researcher gradually absorbs the big picture and some of the details that lead to an understanding of people's daily lives, structure of events, social structure and expectations and values. (DeWalt & DeWalt 2011:80)

The more I advanced in my research, the more questions I was confronted with, not answers. In the beginning of July 2014 I was already struggling to develop a new plan for my meetings for the month ahead. I had finished a first stage of manual coding all the focus group meetings and individual meetings until then, and had my lines of research in mind for the upcoming weeks. The focus group session of mid July 2014 would be dealing with questions inviting them to tell us about how they imagined their work as trainers of newcomers, also in the hope to be able to find out more about the role their own mentors had played in their own training.

But I felt a bit stuck. When I at that point in my research read and coded my notes and interviews and focus groups, I had the impression that a lot had been said already, and wondered how I would be able to delve deeper into the reality of these young musicians. Maybe simply by staying on, observing them at work and then hopefully seeing things I had not seen or understood before? Maybe the reality was not more complicated than what I had seen and what had been said about it until then? I felt that I needed to change my tactics and that I needed to spend more time just observing, not only doing semi-structured interviews with the young musicians, hoping that such observations would give more and new insights, which it did.

From July 2014 I added more and more time just being there, at rehearsals, at concerts, walking around their neighbourhood, sometimes going to have a drink and eat together with them, visiting places together, sometimes staying overnight at their houses in the neighbourhood in which they live¹⁶⁶, going to their churches, markets, and living as much as possible the daily life simple Congolese people live in Kinshasa, being hosted as I was at the house of Congolese friends..

In 2013 already I had decided to not use a driver during my fieldwork for this research. For my previous yearly visits since 2007, I could always count on getting around Kinshasa with a driver, provided by the Compagnie Sucrière de Kwilu Ngongo, the local sponsor of Music Fund. Instead I took the crowded taxis and taxi-buses, public transportation (busses of

¹⁶⁶ see for this experience in 17.1 the field note of 11.04.14 on a night spent at the house of one of the young musicians of Beta Mbonda in Barumbu, Kinshasa

Transco and Esprit de Vie), and I walked a lot on foot as well (called 'ligne 11' in Kinois language)...

By doing all this, I was allowing myself to be in and out of focus in relation to my research topics and subjects (Kratz 2008). Staying in Kinshasa for periods of at least one month allowed me to be 'in', and not staying there all the time by leaving for several months in between fieldwork-sessions allowed me to be 'out'. Such periodic temporary withdrawals from the field in order to "defamiliarize (oneself) with the social scene, to reconfirm (one's) primary status as dispassionate researcher, and to provide a respite for participants", is also advocated by researchers such as Margaret LeCompte and Judith Preissle Goetz (LeCompte & Goetz 1982:117).

7.10. Conclusion

During this research I have been living amongst the millions of poor people in Kinshasa, staying with Congolese friends in the popular 'cité' of the city. This gave me a strong sense of responsibility towards the people in my research. Still, I hope that this dissertation will make clear that my personal investment in the processes I am studying did not prevent me from keeping the critical attitude needed to come to meaningful research. I believe I have been able to be attentive to the pitfalls my personal commitment could bring with it in terms of the scientific qualities of my research. I am well aware of the impact of my own implication in the musical projects studied and take it fully on board as part of the reality of my research¹⁶⁷.

In this context the work of Georges Devereux (Devereux 1967) has been for me the most important source of inspiration. It has stimulated me to seriously and continuously look at my own position within the research process. Here are some of his thoughts (translated by me from French):

p.18: The researcher has to stop to exclusively focus on the manipulation on the subject, and he should at the same time - and sometimes most of all - try to understand himself in his position of the observer.

p.18-19: The data from the behavioural sciences are of 3 kinds: (1) the behaviour of the subject, (2) the 'disturbances' caused by the existence of the observer and his activities under observation, and (3) the behavior of the observer: his anxieties, his defense maneuvers, his 'research strategies', his 'decisions' (= the assignment of meaning to his observations).

p.30: The analyst of behaviour must learn to admit that he never observes the behaviour which "would have taken place in his absence" and that he does not hear the same story that the same narrator would have given to someone else. Fortunately, the so-called "disturbances" due to the existence and the observer's activities, when properly used, are the cornerstones of a science of behaviour

¹⁶⁷ Probably inspired by Socrates, Belgian sociologist Luc Van Campenhoudt writes about this: "To know is first of all to know oneself" (Van Campenhoudt 2001).

*truly scientific and not - as is commonly believed - an unfortunate setback for which the best way to get rid of is by removing it skilfully.
(Devereux 1967)*

In quantum physics, the idea has been accepted that the actual experiment, observation or measurement of something, affects that what one is trying to examine. There is always an interference of the measuring itself. And yes, a researcher in social sciences also always somehow affects, changes and influences what he or she is studying by his or her presence on the setting (LeCompte & Goetz 1982). But by being continuously conscious and attentive to this element of involvement¹⁶⁸, and by trying to take some form of distance over and over again, the practitioner-researcher I am can make claims concerning the quality of his findings. I could for sure not be an unperturbed researcher in the midst of the misery and difficulties I was confronted with during my fieldwork, but still I did my utmost best to stay calm, because that was necessary to not get carried away.

¹⁶⁸ *Ethnographers can study themselves within the setting and their influence on it, as well as the setting itself. (LeCompte & Goetz 1982:112)*

8. DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Our science has always desired to monitor, measure, abstract, and castrate meaning, forgetting that life is full of noise and that death alone is silent: work noise, noise of man, and noise of beast. Noise bought, sold, or prohibited. Nothing essential happens in the absence of noise. (Jacques Attali 1985:3)

8.1. Introduction

Following the previous chapter which proposes the overall methodological context and choices of this research, I am in the following chapter giving a much more detailed presentation of how the methodology of this research was developed over time.

As explained in the previous chapter, the qualitative approach was taken in this research, around several case studies in Kinshasa (DR Congo) of youngsters and young adults (between 16 to 41 years old) who reported that important social changes happened in their lives thanks to their study and practice of music.

The main research tools of this PhD were semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups, as well as participative observation.

The fieldwork was spread over a period of four years, with preliminary interviews in 2012 and 2013, and then six times one month of fieldwork in 2014 and in 2015, adding up to a total of 7 months of presence in Kinshasa.

Besides many focus groups sessions (28) and individual interviews (100) with the young musicians participating in this research, also so-called 'mirror' interviews (74) were conducted with family, neighbours, politicians, policemen, researchers (from within the DRC and from outside), Congolese professional musicians (some of them well-known), drop-outs from the programmes being studied or from similar programmes, as well as interviews with youth involved in other activities, such as Capoeira.

The focus group sessions and individual interviews with the young musicians were all organised taking a semi-structured interviewing approach.

Thanks to the assistance of two fine young Congolese social researchers - Jeudi Bofala Mboyo (sociology) and Patrice Mukulu (political science), both assistants at the Université de Kinshasa - all focus group sessions and many of the other interviews (where needed) were taken in Lingala¹⁸¹ - the Congolese language mostly spoken in Kinshasa - and simultaneously translated into French.

The French translations were recorded and 161 hours of them have been transcribed (in French or translated in English). These recordings and transcriptions served as data for this research, ensuring this research's transferability. It will also allow myself to have the data available for possible follow-up of this research in the future.

The 'beneficiaries' of the social music projects, the young musicians, were the main focus and interest of this research. I focussed on their narratives. They were the participants of the research. The research was developed with them and thanks to them.

The leaders/coordinators/mentors of the social-artistic programmes were also interviewed many times, but they were never present during the interviews with the participants, so that the young musicians could speak freely.

8.2. 2012-2013: Exploratory phase of the research and positioning in relation to theoretical and empericial background

8.2.0. First surprise: only two social musical projects in Kinshasa.

Since 2007 I had been visiting Kinshasa at least once a year for the projects of Music Fund, and that is how I came in contact with the social music projects Espace Masolo and Beta Mbonda. I imagined that I would in a place such as Kinshasa quickly find at least 10 or more similar social music projects though. But, even though I could count on a wide network of contacts, particularly through associations working with street children, to my great surprise I quickly came to the understanding that I did not find other projects comparable to

¹⁸¹ In Kinshasa the language most spoken these days is Lingala (while the administrative and mainly written language is French).

Espace Masolo or Beta Mbonda, except for a series of projects in which music is introduced in a time-limited way (one-off workshops or music productions) and also projects which started with similar ambitions as Espace Masolo or Beta Mbonda, but did not succeed in their objectives. An important actor in the field, the organisation ORPER, proposed music projects in the context of its programme, but apart from regular time-limited and fine music projects, they did not have long-term music training as one of the activities they propose to street children in their centers.

REEJER (a large network of more than 160 associations which work with children and youth in street situations in Kinshasa) informed me that Espace Masolo and Beta Mbonda were - at least for now - indeed unique in what they propose.¹⁸²

I then also quickly understood during this research that the fact that in a place like Kinshasa - with its rich musical life and its enormous social problems - only 2 social music projects have succeeded to develop themselves over a certain length of time (Beta Mbonda since 2009 and Espace Masolo since 2003), we may suspect it difficult to instrumentalise music as a tool for social becoming.

The reasons why this may be so, are multiple, and have become - at least in part - clear in the course of the research. It has for sure been one of the most unexpected findings of this research. The example of what happened to Manuaku Waku's initiative is interesting in the context of this part of the research¹⁸³. I have wanted to come to an understanding of the characteristics of the accompaniment that have allowed the projects studied here to survive and develop, when so many similar projects in this city die quickly.

8.2.1. Exploratory individual and (focus) group interviews

Choice for a qualitative approach

Wanting to base my research on case studies, the qualitative methods such as participant observation and semi-structured individual and focus group interviews were best suited. The qualitative methods used in this research also allowed me to work for a longer period of time (3 ½ years) in the social setting studied here, so that I could observe and understand how the complex realities of the young musicians were

¹⁸² Besides the short-term social music projects of ORPER and the experience of Manuaku Waku, no other such initiatives were reviewed and rejected, as not meeting the entry criteria for the research (long-term musical training aiming to help obtain mastering of a musical instrument and repertoire). I could count on REEJER's knowledge of the field in this respect.

¹⁸³ See also chapter 9.6.4 under 'drop-outs from Espace Masolo'.

composed, came into existence, but also how they were developing¹⁸⁴.

Critical case studies in Kinshasa

I have at an early stage in my research decided to focus on only a few single cases and to develop a detailed and intensive understanding of them.

To choose is to lose. This choice clearly has advantages and disadvantages.

The cases studied in Kinshasa have an interest in themselves and I give an in-depth description, analysis and understanding of them in this PhD-thesis.

Single case studies do not allow us to make generalisations about similar cases, and I also did not have this aim. The cases studied in Kinshasa were case specific and cannot be considered as samples.

Nevertheless, the ambition of this study has been that the cases studied in Kinshasa could help us come to a better understanding of the circumstances in which music can play a role in social work.

The reasoning behind this ambition comes from the fact that the social music projects being studied here are situated in extreme and unusually difficult circumstances, with the poverty and the violence of life in Kinshasa as a backdrop.

They can therefore be considered as highly critical cases and may allow us to come to a better understanding of the circumstances in which our hypotheses will and will not hold (Bryman 2004:51).

The first interviews in 2012 and 2013

Several exploratory individual and (focus) group interviews were conducted in August 2012 and in September 2013. The youth and young adults who would later be the participants of the research, were in this way from the very beginning of the study themselves valuable sources of information in preparation of the research project.

¹⁸⁴ *Qualitative research tends to view social life in terms of processes. (...) Ethnographers (...) are able to observe (...) in which the different elements of a social system (values, beliefs, behaviour, and so on) interconnect. Such findings can inject a sense of process by seeing social life in terms of streams of interdependent events and elements. (Bryman 2004, p.281)*

In August 2012 four (4) individual youths have been interviewed (2 from the percussion group Beta Mbonda, and 2 from the brass band of Espace Masolo), each twice (one interview of about 45' + one shorter interview a few days later of about 15').

In September 2013 a first (focus) group interview was taken of 8 members of Beta Mbonda. I undertook these first interviews in September 2013 with the assistance of my team of two Congolese researchers, the sociologists Dr Leon Tsambu and Mrs Jeudi Bofala. These first interviews each lasted for about 1 hour.

Semi-structured and non-directive interviews

These first interviews in 2012 and 2013 were held in a semi-structured and non-directive way, allowing the interviewed as much space and time to talk about what they wanted to share concerning the topics of the research. In conceiving and conducting the interviews, I was inspired by the non-directive and person-centred methodology of Carl Rogers (Rogers 1973; Van Campenhout & Quivy 2011). As such, I have wanted as an interviewer to take up the role of facilitator for ideas, thoughts, understanding, analysis as well as allow for discourse to pop up freely from the interviewed during their testimonies, in individual as well as in group interviews.

Although I prepared questions in advance, and discussed them with my research team in advance of the interviews, I tried to ask as little questions as possible during the interviews. I started each interview with a short introduction of myself and of my research project and invited the interviewed to help me understand certain aspects of the perceived phenomenon (by them) of music having an impact on their lives.

Language of the interviews.

From the beginning on, all interviews with the young musicians were held in the local language (Lingala), so that the interviewed could feel at ease thanks to the fact that they could express themselves in their own language. To allow this, and to allow me to follow what was being said during the interviews, I hired the help of Congolese assistants who simultaneously translated for me from French into Lingala and from Lingala into French (I do not understand Lingala), and audio recordings were made of the French translations.

My presence somehow handicapped the free flow of speech, because of the simultaneous translation needed: In order to make sure that I was able to follow the conversation, everything needed to be translated simultaneously for me. And

I would then sometimes also intervene to slow down or limit certain participants speaking to fast or at the same time as others. It was good that I invited them to listen to each other, and that I cut some who had the tendency to take too much space and time. In this way, our sessions were throughout the 3 1/2 years of our research also a learning experience for everyone involved.

The point of departure of the research is the reality as narrated by the participant (the young musician), as they experience it, and as they conceive it, as being their reality. It is important for this research to seriously consider the perceptions, experiences and thoughts of the young people participating in these music programmes.

This set-up and strategy of running the interviews has been followed throughout the research, even though I have become more and more conscious of the workings and dynamics of this part of the research, and will explain this in further detail later on in this thesis.

The exploitation of the exploratory interviews from 2012 and 2013 was done in an open way, without the use of a precise and preliminary analytical framework¹⁸⁵:

field note 16.09.13 - first focus group meeting with 8 members of Beta Mbonda (transcriptions ref-00699 to ref-00757):
After having listened to about 30' of a musical presentation on tambours and on balaphons (Congolese marimbas), the first focus group meeting is organised with 8 members of Beta Mbonda. I have asked the leaders/coordinators of the band not to be present, so that the young participants to the research can speak freely. Everything is recorded. What surprises me first of all is that these young adult men are very keen on talking about all the things I ask them to talk about. The experience of doing this with Congolese sociologists Léon and Jeudi was also a very positive one. During the group interview, Jeudi immediately took the lead, and clearly made the young guys feel at ease. Everything in Lingala. I had difficulties following, but did not want to stop the dynamics of the conversation, counting on being able to get most of the details of what was being said later on from Léon and Jeudi. I was the one who formulated most of the questions though, which I had prepared in advance, and checked with my team (Léon and Jeudi). My preparations: an introduction (what the research is about; what I expect from them; regular conversations in group (twice per month when I will be coming to Kinshasa in 2014 and 2015); also individual conversations and observations), and then a number of questions which I prepared: (1) How did you start making music and how did you join Beta Mbonda? (2) Your 'activity' as 'kuluna' brought in much more money than the 'activity' of music. Why then choose and continue to choose for Beta Mbonda? (3) What are the reactions towards your new lives as musicians from those who kept on their 'activity' as kuluna? And how does your family react? (4) I see you are having a lot of joy when playing the music in the band. Can you try to describe what the music does to you? (5) Which type of music do you play exactly (from which regions in Congo)?
Remarks on how the meeting went: (1) I should have a translator doing simultaneous translation for me during the focus groups, which I could then also record, so that I immediately have a French translation of the conversation in Lingala. (2) They tell us they had no knowledge at all about music before joining Beta Mbonda (LP: this appears not to be true later on in the research: at least 3 of them had been playing music before joining the project). (3) They all come from the same neighbourhood as the leading musician of the project (Citas, in the municipality of Barumbu). (4) They stress the importance of the 'encadrement moral' (moral

¹⁸⁵ Similar prepared questions listed in field note 16.09.13 as asked of Beta Mbonda were also the ones which were asked of Espace Masola participants, apart from the questions related to their previous life as 'kuluna'.

coaching / guidance / mentoring / supervision) as offered by the musicians leading the project. (5) They seem to be a closely knit group of friends. They touch each other physically and show respect for each other during the conversation. One of the directors of the project agrees when I share this observation with him afterwards, and he even complains that they tend to cover each other when things go wrong (for example when one of them arrives late at a rehearsal). (6) BM-KU says little. He does not seem well. He seems much older than the others. Afterwards I hear that he has troubles with a sick child. (7) In comparison, it seems to me that the focus group methodology is much more important than the individual interviews, at least for now.

8.2.2. Starting points of the research

During the first two years of studying literature and doing preliminary exploratory interviews, I prepared the more intensive part of the research which brought me to Kinshasa on a regular basis and for longer periods by looking at a series of possible reasons/motives/influences that can make the young people in this study move away from their previous lives and adopt a new 'habitus'.

Operational lines after manual coding of preliminary interviews

The operational lines of inquiry were extracted from manual coding (see codebook 2012-2015 in attachment 17.5) the preliminary interviews and focus group session taken in Kinshasa in 2012 and 2013 and served as guidelines when preparing the focus group semi-structured sessions, as well as the individual interviews taken during the first month of fieldwork in Kinshasa in April 2014.

These lines of inquiry (or 'operational hypotheses' or 'topics') were not seen as mutually exclusive, but most likely as interacting. I am - as is often done in qualitative research - using hypotheses "as speculations that arise in the course of fieldwork" (Bryman 2004), not to test the possible relationship between variables.

This study has wanted to stay away from mono-causal explanations of any kind. One finds many such type of claims in the retorics on music and social becoming. Social and human realities are complex though, and they involve so many different phenomena.

This research has been studying the question whether making music and becoming a musician can be an element amongst others which can play a role in the development of a person's life, in combination with other things at play: Does music-making represent a relevant element for social change, within the limits of the study of these specific case studies in Kinshasa.

The ambition is nevertheless to be able to propose a framework which would allow the development of further research which could tackle the question of probability and/or causality. Although not necessarily impossible, this seems in my opinion to be a difficult challenge for future research.

The purpose of this research is to look at the role music can possibly be playing in the changing lives of youngsters and young adults in these case studies in Kinshasa, in combination with a series of other factors, which this research aims to identify, describe and understand.

"I think 'probability' is a way in which it might be possible both to by-pass the complexity of causality in social contexts such as yours in Congo, while establishing an evidential basis that funding agencies can understand. I also think it's important to accept that nothing about art and people's responses to it can be guaranteed at an individual level: probability might be a way to think about outcomes that avoids that trap. I appreciate that neither this nor causality is part of your present research (and I don't suggest that they should be) but probability may be a way of explaining why not addressing causality is okay."
(email from François Matarasso about 'probability', 19.11.14)

This research is trying to understand and describe reality as much as possible in its complexity¹⁸⁶. I have wanted to confront the realities I met in this research in their contradictions and to respect their nuances. The work of philosopher Hans Achterhuis has been most inspirational for this:

As post-modern people, we are all (...) confronted with multiplicity and diversity, and we must learn to live with this... Violence becomes meaningful in the multiplicity of perspectives in which it appears. (...) 'Weak and modest thinking' is an approach that does not shy away from taking in incompatible standpoints... and that is open to the incomprehensible and uncontrollable, the other and the secret.
(Achterhuis 2010:43-44)

Triangulation

Data have been collected by 'triangulation'¹⁸⁷: a combination of semi-structured - focus group and individual - interviews, and of participant observation. The different methods used to collect data, but also the fact that various sources have been consulted, all having their specific strengths as well as limitations, allowed me over time to cross validate and compare data, interpretations as well as conclusions.

¹⁸⁶ Research on resilience is also confronted with this reality: "The impossibility of observing resilience directly or of identifying precise causal relations and the complexity of identifying contributory effects of interacting and cumulative factors means that it makes most sense to speak in probabilities. Incertitude of causal relationships in human development and conduct remains, since the correlation between various inputs (for example, mother's education) and outputs (for instance, child's health or education attainment) are derived from large sets of socio-economic variables that cover many different parental and community characteristics (Yaqub 2001). Thus, direct pathways are not identifiable (nor assumed to exist) and understanding of how different inputs and conditions interact remains complicated. And herein lies one of the most profound problems for resilience research."
(Boyden & Cooper 2007:12)

¹⁸⁷ using more than one method and source

Explorative ideas and questions

Following the preliminary exploratory phase in 2012 and 2013, the intensive period of fieldwork for the research in 2014 and 2015 was started by looking at a series of possible reasons/motives/influences that could have made the youngsters and young adults in the social projects in Kinshasa move away from their previous lives and adopt a new 'habitus'. These were expected to be not mutually exclusive, but most likely interacting, such as:

Explorative questioning 1: Intrinsic influence of music

When asked what music 'means' to them intrinsically, the youth all became focused and eager to try to respond to the question. Their answers were describing music as a special place, a treasure, a different state of mind, transformative, empowering strong energy...:

- a. higher concentration
- b. enjoyment of discipline / hard work leading to results / gives regularity
- c. enjoyment of performing in group
- d. deep focus
- e. joy of playing music
- f. enjoyment of 'mastering' an instrument and certain compositions / pleasure of succeeding to get a certain level of virtuosity
- g. wish/enjoyment/pride to master & satisfaction of complex mastering music instrument and music (whether classical, traditional or popular)
- h. escape from a violent and ugly world: *"Music takes me somewhere else, to a precious place"*

An important question for the research would remain though to determine which from these elements was specifically related to the activity of being/becoming a musician, such as e.g.:

- i. relationship master-disciple
- j. belonging and being in contact with a long tradition
- k. symbolization and abstraction (principally about creating sound, not about conveying a message)
- l. the importance of negotiation (with the composition, the other musicians, the conductor, the difficulty and even virtuosity needed to master the instrument...)
- m. what is specific about the desire for music

Explorative questioning 2: Extrinsic values attributed to music

(and which are given as reasons and motivation for leaving the previous life):

- a. financial income: making money from performing
- b. finding work related to music (workshops for children,...)
- c. further (music) education opportunities
- d. positive reactions from surroundings: reputation and respect: not being seen anymore as 'witch' or as 'kuluna', but as a person making music
- e. negative reactions from surroundings (from former 'partners in crime')
- f. becoming a famous musician (hope for celebrity)
- g. becoming a music teacher (teach others, children,...)
- h. musician as a profession ('métier', skill)
- i. change of mentality/attitude towards moral values / seeing things differently
- j. finding stability in life: being able to take care of a family, children, have a house, income
- k. reclaiming / building up self-esteem

Explorative questioning 3: The role of the mentors

During the first exploratory interviews and focus group session it became clear that the young musicians themselves think the role of the mentors is of great importance in helping them to move away from their past lives and construct a new one. The musicians of Beta Mbonda talk about the important impact of what they call the 'moral guidance/framing' ('encadrement moral') by their mentors. They cannot see the impacts of their making music separate from this moral framing by their mentors.

Explorative questioning 4: From insecurity to quietude

A reason put forward by the former gang members (kuluna) to break with their previous lives of kuluna, is the insecurity of that life, and the quietude of the new life as musician, bringing (now or expected for the future) financial security and respect by society.

Explorative questioning 5: Learning a highly skilled and specialized profession

The enthusiasm of youngsters wanting to do big efforts to learn music - even if they have to do important sacrifices for this (financially and in learning effort) - could be understood by the fact that they not only obtain a new status in society, but also a highly skilled and specialised profession.

Explorative questioning 6: Youngsters become violent, like 'kuluna' do, because they have no other activities.

Music fills a void and a need for an activity that helps them to construct their lives. The time it takes them to make music, is time during which no other social activities can be

involved in. Other activities could fill this void as well (football...).

8.3. 2014-2016: The main fieldwork-period in Kinshasa

8.3.1. Original set-up

An important aspect of the research is its **medium-long-term** character. The interviews during the main fieldwork-period were organised from the beginning of 2014 until the end of 2015. I was present in Kinshasa for periods of each time 1 month (3 months in 2014 and 3 months in 2015, until the beginning of January 2016).

The original plan which was conceived after the literature study and exploratory interviews in 2012 and 2013 was to work during the main fieldwork-period in 2014-2015 with 2 to 4 groups of between 5 and 10 participants each, and propose 2 group meetings (focus group meetings) per group per month of about 1 to 1,5 hour each + staff-meetings following these interviews.

Individual interviews (II): The project was to also speak with most participants at least 2 times over the 4 years of the research (2012-2015).

Mirror interviews (MI): Part of the planned research set-up was also to interview people who would be of help to understand the context of the individual lives of the participants to this research, be it members of their family, friends, or other members of their community, but also resource persons who could give information about the reality the youngsters and young adults in this research live in.

The focus group sessions were all planned with the 2 assistants present, translating and leading. I myself would do most of the other interviews, accompanied by at least a translator, so that all sessions with interviewees having only limited knowledge of French could be held in Lingala.

As the further presentation of the research methodology will make clear, I ended up doing many more interviews than the amount which was originally planned:

Planned focus groups

So, before starting the main fieldwork-period, the plan was to start the following focus groups:

- (1) in Kinshasa, **Espace Masolo**
- (2) in Kinshasa, **Beta Mbonda**
- (3) in Kinshasa, a **mirror group** of about 10-20 musicians who are part of bands that use music to incite or enforce violence (individual interviews): I hoped to have a choice of other groups composed of musicians who had links to gang-life
- (4) outside of Kinshasa¹⁸⁸, **supplementary mirror interviews** of about 10-20 young musicians participating in music projects in Palestine (Gaza and West Bank) and in European cities: D.E.M.O.S in Paris, France (www.orchestredemos.fr) and Orchestra Geração in Lisbon, Portugal (www.orquestra.geracao.aml.pt)

Then, during the first 2 months of fieldwork, the reality in the field made me change my plans considerably.

The focus groups were never bigger than 10 participants and could not be. They all talked a lot, as there was clearly a big need to express themselves. When the focus groups would have been bigger, this would have handicapped the flow and focus of the conversation.

Cancelation of comparative interviews outside of Kinshasa

Before starting the main fieldwork-period in Kinshasa, I planned to take supplementary mirror interviews far away from Kinshasa, in projects I also knew (in Gaza, Lisbon, or Paris...), in order to allow myself to put into perspective and to get - so to speak - a 'bird's eye view' of the reality of the groups of youth and young adults studied in Kinshasa.

The interviews outside of Kinshasa were meant to function as 'contrastive', not as comparative. The aim of these peripheral interviews were not to compare situations, but to take a look at the research from outside in order to be able to look at the centre from a distance.

But when I started the case studies in Kinshasa, I quickly decided to abandon this plan, and stopped those interviews. I could not imagine being able to do this in a sufficiently thorough way, in combination with the work involved in doing the case studies in Kinshasa, within the time limits of the 7 months of fieldwork I could dispose of. I judged it better to

¹⁸⁸ When the case studies in Kinshasa were started, this plan was early on abandoned, and those interviews were stopped (see explanation next pages)

concentrate entirely on the case studies in Kinshasa and to not be distracted by other places and social and community music projects, which would better be studied separately by myself or by others later on.

Another reason which inspired this decision was the confrontation with the sheer complexity of comparative research, and even the probable impossibility of such approach at this time of my research.

Although I am referring in this thesis to a number of comparative contexts (other places, other activities...) there has been no real comparative work as part of this research. The reason for this is that I have focussed on doing a good job with my ethnographic case studies and this was difficult to combine with equally focussing on similar at depth fieldwork elsewhere. That is also why I imagined this work as 'contrastive', not as 'comparative'. It has for sure been enriching for my research with the young musicians in Kinshasa to also be in touch with similar social-artistic music projects in other countries, as well as with social projects using other activities such as Capoeira, as this extended my perspective and helped me avoid being too much absorbed by the unique situation of my case studies. But I needed to focus in order to come to a better understanding of the situations I was studying in Kinshasa.

8.3.2. More detailed information on the cases studied

8.3.2.1. Espace Masolo

Espace Masolo was during my research based as an art community centre for children in street situations in Masina, a popular neighbourhood of the popular 'cité' of Kinshasa.¹⁸⁹

The children were sent there by shelters for children in street situations (the centres Pekabo, Sainte Famille and Monseigneur Mujiro), who are important social partners of Espace Masolo. The educators from these shelters propose a series of possible training programmes to the children. If the children are not interested, they can return to the shelters and the educators will then decide on other possible training programmes.

What is being offered at Espace Masolo are activities and training in the field of the arts and creativity. They do not only propose music, but also other training programmes, such

¹⁸⁹ In 2017-2018 Espace Masolo moved from Masina to N'djili.

as theatre, puppet making and playing, sculpture, drawing, sewing and dressmaking, as well as reading and writing.



A lot of the children at Espace Masolo arrived there because their relationship with their families were broken, often because they were accused of being bewitched ('witch'-children). A lot of these children and youth have been able to go back to their families, thanks to the work of Espace Masolo, as it is one of the main ambitions of the centre to reunify them with their families.

The 3 co-founders of Espace Masolo are Malvine Velo (social and community worker, also working at library of INA, the music school of Kinshasa), and 2 theatre makers, Lambert Mousseka and Hubert Mahela. Lambert and Hubert now live in Europe (Germany and France), but come back regularly to Espace Masolo. They represent the 'diaspora' of Espace Masolo in Europe, assuring a strong backing from German and French donors in support of the development and sustainability of Espace Masolo.

Espace Masolo was founded in 2003 as a place where children living in the streets (called 'chegues' in Kinshasa) could come to during the day for creative and artistic activities. In the beginning, the main activity was theatre and puppet theatre (the professions of Lambert and Hubert). Then later on they received a few sewing machines and decided to also propose sewing and dress-making as an activity.

The Belgian composer and film-maker Thierry De Mey visited Espace Masolo in Kinshasa in February 2007. He was the first person who told me about Espace Masolo, and strongly advised Music Fund to consider a partnership with them, something we only started many years later (in 2015). In 2007 Thierry De Mey took a donation of 20 recorders (wooden flutes), a first modest donation from Music Fund to Espace Masolo. The musical

activity at Espace Masolo began with this gift of wooden flutes they received from Music Fund.

The project to one day start a brass band existed already, but they did not at that point in time have the instruments to start it. In 2008, a donation of brass instruments (trumpets, trombones, saxophones and percussion) coming in from France and Germany (not through Music Fund) allowed Espace Masolo to start the brass band.

The brass band was created on 16th April 2009 and quickly became a success. The children were eager to become musicians, and - although it is not easy to master the instruments and repertoire - most succeeded, after playing many years in this band. The brass band has between 20 and 25 musicians. The children are between 10 and 20 years old.

When Espace Masolo started, some of the children were former child soldiers. Now most children and youths are so-called 'witch'-children (see chapter 3.6).

Espace Masolo is a private initiative of Congolese people which has received on and off financial support from an association of Friends of Espace Masolo in Strasbourg (F), Emaus France, and from organisations and friends in Stuttgart and Wuppertal (D).

The children and adolescents work 1 to 3 days per week in the brass band, or more, when preparing concerts, they need to rehearse.

Some of the youth became musicians and wish to continue to study music.

Espace Masolo organised several tours with the children from Kinshasa to France and Germany, and German youth also once came to Kinshasa in the Summer of 2014. These opportunities were for sure also an important reason why the brass band has been so attractive.

Documentation:

Espace Masolo: www.facebook.com/espace.masolo

Les Jeunes Talents: www.facebook.com/jeunetalentskin

photos made by photographer Ann Grossi of Beta Mbonda:

www.anngrossi.be/Bienvenue/photo/Pages/Beta_-_Mbonda.html

'Bright Brass', a photo-reportage (9'26") on the brass band of Espace Masolo, made by Dutch photographer Rachel Corner and journalist Laurens Nijzink:

<http://vimeo.com/16083687>

'Espace Masolo, Graines d'artistes', a television documentary (15'05") by Chuck de Liederkerke, Angalio Productions, 2007:

<http://videos.dhnet.be/video/actu/espace-masolo-reinsertion-d-anciens-enfants-soldats-congo/?sig=iLyROoafJ5zt>

television documentary (2'29") on Music Fund with Beta Mbonda and Espace Masolo by Antenne A, Kinshasa, 2012: <http://vimeo.com/69230096>

short (9'35") video-report on Music Fund @ Espace Masolo, made in July 2016 by Quentin Noirfalisse: <https://vimeo.com/231373494>

8.3.2.2. Beta Mbonda

This percussion ensemble started its activities in 2009 and is performing traditional Congolese music. When I finished my fieldwork in Kinshasa (January 2016) the band was composed of 9 young men between 25 and 41 years old, who had been previously active as members of violent gangs (called 'kuluna') in Kinshasa.



'Beta' in Lingala comes from the English word 'to beat', and 'mbonda' is Lingala for drums. The ensemble presents itself as a social music project which helped young men who were involved in gang crime to change activity and identity, stop 'beating people' and start instead 'beating the drums'.

None of them have committed murders nor seriously injured (innocent) people during the time they were kuluna. They considered their time with the gangs as an 'activity'. They have little moral considerations about their previous ganglife, and therefore also hardly any remorse about it afterwards.

The co-founders of the percussion band Beta Mbonda, the Congolese percussionist Alhim Eyenga and flutist Maître Tshamala, are experts in traditional Congolese music. The band started simply as follows: Alhim was as always rehearsing at his home in Citas, a neighbourhood in the municipality of Barumbu (Kinshasa), and this attracted the youth from his neighbourhood. One day a group of 'kuluna' from his neighbourhood came to see him and asked him whether they could try playing the drums as well. Alhim liked the idea and started to show them. He later asked flute player Maître Tshamala to help him set up a social music project with these young men. Since 2009-2010 they started developing their project, an ensemble of (now) former members of violent gangs.

The project was from the beginning explicitly set up to offer these young men a way out of their former 'occupation' as violent gang members, hoping that by interesting them in making music and becoming musicians this would distract and even disinterest them from their gang activities.

The financing of the project has been and still is very precarious. The band rehearses on a parking lot of a supermarket and uses old containers in which to store their instruments and other stuff. In 2018 they lost this space to rehearse and were working outside behind their houses in Barumbu.

In their performances the ensemble BM plays the repertoire of different regions and provinces of the DR Congo, including Bas Congo, Bandundu, Katanga and Ecuador. They did not play the repertoire of all the tribes of the DRC during the shows I attended, but they are able to. They also play some of the repertoire of Rwanda.



They live from one concert to the next and from one donation to the next. And even though they had during the period of our research (2012-2016) only a concert once in a while (every few months), they rehearsed at least 4 or 5 days a week, sometimes more (when they prepare a concert). Certain months they had more concerts, but certain other months they had no concert at all.

Their new activity of becoming musicians represented a serious financial decline in comparison with these young adults' former lucrative activity of being member of the 'kuluna' gangs.



Documentation:

www.facebook.com/BETA-MBONDA-119867008102068/
 Plissart, Marie-Françoise: film 'Kinshasa Beta Mbonda', Alter Ego Films, release in 2019, teaser: <https://vimeo.com/316126704> [last accessed 02.05.19]
 Grossi, Ann: photos on Beta Mbonda: www.anngrossi.be/Bienvenue/photo/Pages/Beta_-_Mbonda.html [last accessed 04.03.18]
 Antenne A: television documentary (2'29") on Music Fund with Beta Mbonda and Espace Masolo, Kinshasa, 2012: <http://vimeo.com/69230096> [last accessed 05.04.18]

8.3.3. # Participants in research (2012-2015)

# per group:	10 Beta Mbonda 11 Espace Masolo 1 (more advanced musicians) 11 Espace Masolo 2 (beginners) total: 32
age in 2015:	Beta Mbonda: 24 - 26 - 2x 28 - 2x 29 - 3x 31 - 40 Espace Masolo 1: 18 - 2x 19 - 4x 20 - 2x 22 - 2x 23 Espace Masolo 2: 15 - 3x 16 - 5x 17 - 18 - 20

In the exploratory phase in 2012 only 4 young musicians were interviewed (2 out of each case study; each during 2 times 1 hour), and during the exploratory visit in 2013 only 1 focus group was organised (with 10 members of Beta Mbonda).

Then, during the intensive stage of fieldwork (2014-2015), the total number of young musicians participating grew up to 31.

In April 2014, 27 participated, divided into 3 groups: 2 of the groups studied in April 2014 were musicians: 10 musicians of Beta Mbonda and 11 more advanced musicians of Espace Masolo.

In July 2014, I decided to add another group to the research: 11 beginners of the brass band of Espace Masolo, and the total of youngsters in the research became 32. The group of

beginners allowed me to contrast the reality of beginners with more advanced musicians.

The number of young musicians studied was limited, but the time spent working with them was not.

Between December 2014 and December 2015, the total number of participants present in the focus groups was between 25 and 32, and individual interviews were started with all participants.

The **gender and ages** of the participants were as follows: Beta Mbonda (10 young adults; between 24 and 41 years old, most of them in their twenties), Espace Masolo more advanced group (2 young women and 10 young men; between 18 and 23 years old) and Espace Masolo beginners (3 young women and 8 young men; between 16 and 20 years old). The ages mentioned here are the ones at the end of the fieldwork period (January 2016).

More than the number they represent, I think - as does historian Elikia M-Bokolo - that these two social music projects and their musicians may represent possible nodal points in society:

"The trajectory of these people can count, and the effects it can produce on their surroundings. We looked for ways to work with children and kulunas, all kinds of things - repression, religion... - but it did not work much. So, it is good to see where they are, how they are being supervised, and how their acquisition of mastering of music works, all things which can obviously be important, for themselves but also for others. (meeting with historian Elikia M'Bokolo, Kinshasa, 27.04.14, ref-03008)

8.3.4. Re-organisation from the original hypotheses into only 3 lines of inquiry

After the first full month of fieldwork in April 2014, the set-up was re-organised, taken into account some of the new findings I just presented. I also decided to limit the study during the following 1 month-session in July 2014 to the following 3 lines of inquiry which at that stage of the research stuck out as needing further in-depth study:

The framework ('mentorship') provided by the trainers and educators surrounding the musicians was seen by the participants to be of great importance. The framework concerns both the discipline and the moral accompaniment needed to allow these young people to stay within the musical training process and not give up on something which was asking a lot of effort and concentration.

It is indeed difficult to imagine how these former gangsters ('kuluna') or these former children in street situations ('witch'-children) could have become musicians at all, without the accompaniment and continuous follow-up and encouragement of their trainers and educators.

The mentors succeeded to keep them into the training project. Of course, in the beginning the youth did not attend all of the rehearsals, so the educators had to call them or go get them, discipline them, talk with them, moralize, convince and educate them, until they started to adopt the framework and attitudes needed to be in a position to learn and exercise (inculturation).

Members of gangs and children in street situations are not at all used to function within such a restricted disciplined and structured environment. They are for sure used to discipline in the streets of Kinshasa, imposed upon them by the life of the group or gang with which they dwell (Geenen 2009). Life in street gangs is all but undisciplined. It has its own structures and laws, with considerably more punishment for those who transgress the unwritten rules.

Street youths usually live by a surprisingly tight schedule anyhow, with a marked distinction between work and leisure, and sometimes even the classic Sunday visits to relatives. As one leader (Kanyinda, 25 April 2005) put it: 'Dimanche: repos!' ('Sunday: day off!'). As a consequence, bashenge never just hang around, they hang around in a structured way. (Geenen 2009:362)

But these young persons are not used to the specific type of discipline which the mastering of a musical instrument and repertoire is demanding. Convincing them to adapt to all the new rules and discipline needed to succeed their musical training, is not an easy task at all, not for the youngsters and young adults themselves, and not for those who accompany them.

The element of 'mastery'

A second line of inquiry which this study wanted to come to a closer understanding of, is the element of 'mastery'. My personal experience (learning to master classical singing, and more recently the clarinet) and my experience of up to 30 years within the music sector as producer and manager of musicians, taught me that especially those musical activities which allow for a form of mastering could be in a strong position to help young people construct new positions in their society.

I wanted to study this aspect of the learning process together with the young participants in this research. Learning the trumpet in a brass band takes a lot of hard work. Learning the

vast repertoire of Congolese traditional percussion music is equally demanding. Such learning processes take a lot of time, not just weeks or months, but years.

So, the activities being studied in this research are about 'mastering' knowledge and know-how of complex musical practice and repertoire. The hypothesis is that this mastering later on may result in a sense of control, agency and proudness, something which might spill over to other realities in these young people's lives.

These were at that stage of the research questions and hypotheses, not conclusions. I decided to study music which is leading to a form of mastering, in contrast to types of music-making which do not require much mastering or long periods of study. For this reason, I excluded from the research certain popular urban forms of music for which one needs little investment in studies before reaching first results.

Interest in the very act itself of learning and performing music

The third element seems much more complex to grasp, to approach, to describe and to understand: I noticed that there is an element to look at beyond all the advantages which becoming a musician upholds in terms of symbolic and social capital, and also beyond the small financial profits some of these young musicians make with music-making¹⁹¹.

The element being scrutinized here is intrinsic within the activity itself of making music. I discovered that the young musicians in our study are not only interested in what music brings them as extrinsic gains (the symbolic, social or financial capital), but that they are also very much interested in the very act itself of learning and performing music.

The case of the former gang-members (the former 'kuluna') was particularly surprising in this respect: They have been during the whole period of the research complaining about their awful financial situation, the poverty in which they were living, and that their music-making was not bringing them the income they needed to survive.

I told them time and time again that I could not understand why they would then keep on spending so much time in this activity, rehearsing and playing music, when at the end of the

¹⁹¹ ... the financial profits made by those who became musicians performing brass instruments, not so much by those performing traditional Congolese music, as they do not have many concerts.

day it did only bring them down financially. I asked them why they were spending so much time in music, time which they could spend on making some money to make a living for themselves and their families. Why were they 'loosing' their time making music, instead of setting up some commercial activities with which they could make some money? Wouldn't they be better off then in their daily life, I asked them.

They answered me that they saw their musical activity as an investment in a future in which they would be able to make a living with music. Although I considered it a surprising thought within the extremely difficult context of surviving poverty in Kinshasa, their dream was surely not that unrealistic at all. They have a great potential as musicians. They are becoming better musicians every month, thanks to their impressive investment in time and hard work.

But I was not satisfied with the reasons given by them. I thought the reasons given could for sure explain why they were rehearsing 4 or 5 days a week (in 2015, already since more than 5 years), while only having a few concerts per year!

They worked almost every day on their music and they had not much time left for anything else. Their mothers told me they were at first happy when their sons decided to quit the gang-life and became musicians, but that several years down the road they were not so happy anymore, because their sons were not bringing in money to support the family.

The intrinsic value given by the young musicians to the activity of rehearsing and performing music has imposed itself in this research as an element to look at more closely, as it appeared to be an important driving force for them within these social projects.

8.3.5. Planning and design of the focus groups

Most importance has in this research been given to working with group interviews (focus groups), because the group dynamics are an important object of the research, and also because they gave access to different types of information: Individual interviews with participants and mirror interviews with people out surrounding the participants helped understand individual lives, everyday practice, social networks, institutional constraints, etc., while focus groups helped understand language, social interaction and social imaginaries.

The focus group interviews were held about twice a month (x 6 months of the research in Kinshasa). A total of about 24 focus group sessions were planned, but I ended up having a total of 29 focus group sessions and 103 individual interviews with young musicians:

		2012	2013	2014	2014	2014	2015	2015	2015-2016	2017	total
		Aug	Sep	Apr	Jul	Dec	Apr	Jul	Dec-Jan	May-June	# sessions
focus groups	Beta Mbonda		1	2	2	1	2	1	2		11
(about 2h per session)	Espace Masolo 1 (advanced)			3	1	1	1	1	2	1	10
	Espace Masolo 1 (beginners)				2	1	1	1	1		6
	Capoeira Congo			2							2
											total # focus group sessions: 29
individual interviews	musicians Beta Mbonda	5		1	1	15	14	9			45
(about 1h per session)	musicians Espace Masolo 1	4			2	12	12	13		3	46
	musicians Espace Masolo 2						6	6			12
											total # individual interviews with musicians: 103
	mirror interviews (family, informants, mentors...)	2	5	26	17	3	8	10	4	4	79
											0
participatory observations	with Beta Mbonda	1	1	1	3	4	4	4	4		22
	with Espace Masolo	1	1	1	1	3	4	4	2		17
	other			2	2	2	2	2	2		12

As this table shows, the fieldwork involved an important amount of interviews (in group and individual).

Each focus group was prepared around specific subjects (governance, their experience in teaching beginners, their own needs for further training...) or themes or recent event (police operation Opération Likofi, death of a member of the group, recent or upcoming concerts...). We started each beginning of the month with time taken during the focus group to discuss the period of several months in between two research periods.



April 2014: Three focus groups were chosen. They represent a diverse group of young musicians: (1) one composed of street youth (most of them have the 'witch'-child background), and (2) another one composed of young former gangsters (Beta Mbonda).

July 2014: I included as the 3rd focus group a group of beginners from the Espace Masolo brass band.

In December 2014, April 2015, July 2015 and December 2015 the 3 focus groups had at least one session each month. And one additional focus group and several individual interviews took place with the more advanced musicians of Espace Masolo (the ensemble Jeunes Talents) in May and June 2017 in Germany and Belgium, during their tour in Germany.

The focus group format was particularly appreciated by the participants in this research.

During certain focus group sessions with the youth who have been accused of witchcraft when they were children, I dared to speak with them in group about their past experiences related to the rupture with their families. I wondered whether they would be ready to speak about such traumatic experiences within the group. But to my surprise, there was no break and no limit to their flow of stories. I even had to ask them to summarise and reduce their accounts, so that I could go on to talk about other things or let others talk. Some of them really told difficult and painful stories.

Different participants reacted differently within the focus groups and individual interviews: Some were a bit shy during their individual interviews while outspoken during focus group sessions, and others the other way around. So it was good I could meet these youngsters in different settings. I could understand that in the individual interviews some could be intimidated to be in front of 3 adult researchers. Others clearly felt much better in expressing themselves in individual talks instead of in group sessions. And what one shared in one of the two formats could be different information.

8.3.6. Individual interviews with participants

From December 2014 on **each participant** from Espace Masolo and Beta Mbonda were **interviewed individually** as well, at least twice during the period of the study (2014-2015). These individual interviews represented a new and important stage in the research.

I felt that trust had sufficiently built up between the participants of the research and myself as the investigator, so that I could start to also work on a one to one basis in individual meetings (always with at least one of the research assistants also present so that conversations could take place in Lingala). I felt the need to start this series, because

what participants told during an interview could be different "according to who else is present" (LeCompte & Goetz 1982:108).

Up to 10 individuals were individually interviewed per focus group. So, a total of up to 30 individual participants have been interviewed several times, over a period of 2 years, and this mounted up to a total of 103 individual sessions. The individual interviews with the young musicians were also semi-structured and each time dealt with a specific series of questions.

Three different such **interviews** were prepared: (1) a life story interview, (2) an interview on the practice of learning of making music, and (3) an interview focusing on questions concerning governance.

The individual interviews allowed me to make individual portraits with private story related information, although the focus also there was on the societal components of their narrative and how they related to the context of music-making in their lives.

8.3.6.1. Life story interview (LSI)

Narrative research has been receiving increasing attention as a way of developing a holistic understanding of how experiences are given meaning in the context of people's lives and also how these link to the broader social environment that they inhabit (Bruner, 1990). A narrative approach sees people as storytelling creatures who draw from social and cultural resources to structure their lives into meaningful accounts that help to make sense of important experiences (Squire, 2008). Telling narratives is also a major way that individuals make sense of disruptive events in their lives. (Berckmans, 2015, p.4)

This semi-structured individual interview was taken from almost all participants (all musicians of Beta Mbonda and all more advanced musicians of the brass band Espace Masolo, not all beginners of Espace Masolo) between December 2014 and January 2016, and most of the time 2 sessions of 1 hour were needed to go through all of the questions.

Currently one of the more dominant narrative approaches in the field of personality psychology is developed by Dan P. McAdams from Northwestern University (Evanston, USA). McAdams asks his subjects to describe their life as a story, separated by chapters and to describe specific events. He then asks them about an underlying theme that permeates their life story. Even though I did not use any of his quantitative measures to supplement the interviews, I have used the Life Story Interview questionnaire he developed (McAdams 2012), adapted it to the particular context and questions of my research. Using this interview scheme has helped me a lot in order to come to a better understanding of each young participant's

previous life experiences, plans and expectancies towards their futures, as well as coming closer to his or her main personality traits.

Individual fact sheets were then made on each participant of this research for later analysis.

During these interviews the interviewees were encouraged to associate freely. Although I tried to get through all of the questions, I avoided stopping them in their momentum to speak about what they wanted to speak about.

The questions of the interview are covering a wide range of subjects: early memories, dreams, hopes, fears, sufferings, education, professional training, family, friends, sex life, their ideas about religion, politics, responsibility towards society...

The aim with these interviews was to get a broad picture of the person in front of us, so that I would later on come to a better understanding of this person's positioning in relation to his/her past life in violent gangs or surviving as children in street situations and their relationship with music-making.

The participants often told me how much they appreciated the opportunity this interview gave them to be able to express themselves on subjects they might otherwise not even thought of discussing, with me or with anyone else.

This is how the LSI interviews were built up, the structure of the interview always following this order:

Introduction:

-I told the participant about our discretion towards everyone inside and outside of the research, including the mentors of the music programmes, friends, family, police, etc. (this was a message I repeated as well many times in other interviews and focus groups).

-I explained that it would most probably be an interview in 2 parts of each 1 hour, covering past, present and future of the person.

A. Chapters/episodes in past life:

Imagine your life as if it were a book or a tv-series and tell it as short as possible and indicate the most important chapters/episodes in it. Do this if possible in about 15'.

(Comment: Rare were those who could tell their past lives in such a way. Most of them presented it as one long flow and also needed much more than just 15' for this.)

B. Most important sequences in your past life:

1. Give an example of a most positive highlight from your past life
2. Tell about your most negative experience until now
3. Tell about an important turning point in your life
4. A very positive child memory
5. A very negative child memory
6. A moment of wisdom
7. A religious, spiritual or mystical experience

C. Future scenarios:

1. What do you expect to happen in nearby future (between now and the end of 2015)?
2. What are your hopes, dreams and plans for the future years to come?

3. What would you call your project in life?

D. Questions related to personal ideology:

1. What are the qualities that make someone a 'good' person?
2. What would you want to change in society and in politics?
3. What do you consider as a singular most important value?
4. What would you need to improve of yourself in terms of all qualities you value in life?

E. What do you consider as the main path in your life? Do you have the feeling you are following a path of your own? Are certain things that happened to you until now not part of this 'path'?

8.3.6.2. Interview on music-making (IIMM)

This semi-structured individual interview was taken from almost all participants (all musicians of Beta Mbonda and all more advanced musicians of the brass band Espace Masolo, not all beginners of Espace Masolo) between April and December 2015.

These interviews were organised to help us understand certain specific conditions and characteristics of music-making. I have not only taken this semi-structured interview from the young participants in the cases studies, but also from some professional musicians in Kinshasa, in order to find correlations between the perspectives of beginners and professional musicians.

Part of these questions were also treated during focus group sessions, so I have responses on these topics out of group sessions as well as from individual sessions.

Not all questions were asked. The list of questions was used as a reservoir out of which I could delve to encourage the individual interviewees or the focus groups to talk and describe as much as possible detailed experiences, feelings and thoughts concerning these questions.

This interview served me especially to bring more detailed data and a better understanding concerning the dynamics of mastering music (**hypothesis n° 2**) and concerning the role of sheer enjoyment in the act of playing music itself (**hypothesis n° 3**).

This is how this interview around questions concerning music-making was built up:

Warm-up questions:

1. Tell us about the other music styles which you perform or would like to perform besides the music you are already playing within your ensemble.
2. Are musicians less aggressive/violent than non-musicians?

A. About mastering:

1. Introduction: You and other participants told us music is difficult, because it needs mastery, and therefore a lot of learning time, discipline and determination is needed. We want to try to understand this better together with you.

2. Tell us about the physical and technical difficulties you experienced (dexterity, finesse, virtuosity, positioning fingers and body, physical pains, respiration) when learning to master an instrument and its repertoire.
3. Why do you need regularity in the work? What happens exactly at the level of your mastering the instrument and the repertoire, when you skip rehearsals for a certain while (one week, one month, or more)?
4. How do you rehearse (in group, alone, before a concert...)?
5. How do you memorise/remember? By repeating a lot, through counting, thanks to scores, cues given (by whom?), direction...?

B. Music for the sake of itself, for the enjoyment of it:

1. You and other participants explained that music is seen as a tool for your personal flourishing, development and education, but also simply for the enjoyment it gives you. We want to understand what makes music so enjoyable for you.
2. Explain what makes playing music enjoyable.
3. Explain what makes playing music a mentally as well as physically intense activity.
4. Describe your physical contact with the instrument.
5. Some say that playing music is addictive (like drugs can be), or at least 'capturing'. Do you recognise this? Explain please.
6. Describe the effects playing music have on you (before starting to play, while playing, after playing, during rehearsals, during concerts...).
7. Do you experience special effects of your mastering the instruments and repertoire on the enjoyment you experience?
8. What is the effect of making music when you are having troubles (money problems, conflicts at home...)?

C. What is a 'good' musician?

To help them, I proposed them to imagine the following setting: Five musicians are all playing the same instrument, and they all perform perfectly well on the technical level (in tune, the right notes, correct rhythm and tempi...). But one of these five musicians sticks out as a very fine musician. What would most likely be the reason for this musician to be considered as very 'good' by yourself or by others?

(This question is asked in order to find out how these young musicians understand the difference between technicality and artistry.)

8.3.6.3. Interview on governance, organisation, participation and shared ownership

This third semi-structured individual interview was taken towards the end of the fieldwork-period, during the sessions in July-August and December 2015. Most advanced musicians of the brass band of Espace Masolo - who during the research period in Kinshasa had formed their own ensemble: Jeunes Talents d'Espace Masolo (Jeunes Talents, for short¹⁹²) - and all members of the ensemble Beta Mbonda, were proposed this interview, and several focus groups were also organised around these questions.

This interview was of course organised in order to help me study the questions related to my **hypothesis n° 4** concerning the potential of empowerment of internal organisation and governance related to music-making.

Questions asked in this interview were:

- Many music groups and projects fall apart when success comes, and money with it. How do you think you will be able to avoid this within your ensemble?
- What is according to you a good organisation of a group and organisation?

¹⁹² in 2018 they changed their name into 'Kidikako', which means something like 'if you give, we take, and we give as well'

- Describe your organisation as it is now and try to define each person's position and responsibility.
- Explain how the programming is done of the concerts. Who is in charge of this? Do you as performers have a say as well? How does it work?
- How are musicians selected for concerts? Who decides, and based on which criteria?
- Budget decisions: how are musicians paid and who decides on how the money is spent?
- Promotion and sales: how are things organised, who decides on what to present where?
- How do you imagine the organisation of the acceptance of new members in the future?
- I explain the difference between hierarchical and heterarchical types of organisation + ask them for examples of heterarchical organisation types within their functioning.
- When do you need a chief?
- What would you miss when you would take away one of the chiefs, one of the musicians...?
- What is missing in your organisation as it is now?
- Tell us about how you were organised in your previous activities (in gangs, in the streets...), and how does this compare with the way you are organised now within your music ensemble.
- How would you describe your participation in the organisation?

Also here, the questions were not all asked. They only served to help and encourage the participants to share their feelings and thoughts concerning these research questions around governance, organisation, participation and shared ownership.

8.3.7. Mirror interviews

An important part of the research was also to interview people who could help me understand the context of the individual lives of the young musicians participating in the research, be it those accompanying them in their musical practice (artistic mentors, educators, social and community workers), members of their family, friends, or those living with them in their neighbourhood (former 'partners in crime', neighbours, police-officers, politicians, family and friends), but also resource persons who did not know the young musicians personally, but could inform us about the reality they live in. As this aspect of the research was considered important, a total of 79 such interviews were taken between 2012 and 2017.

I met with young guys in the streets of Barumbu, who are presented to us as friends of the musicians of Beta Mbonda. They also make music. They call it 'musique décalée'. They react very differently from 'our' musicians. Very chaotic. All speaking at the same time. Undisciplined and unpleasant towards each other. Several times almost fighting to be able to talk. Patrice, Jeudi and I were all impressed by the contrast between their attitude and the calm attitude of the musicians of Beta Mbonda. I did not see this aspect of Beta Mbonda so clearly before the street encounter with this group. The 'musique décalée' is a form of rap. DJ Abdoul is an example of this music. Professor Léon Tsambu calls this music 'pomba'-music and sees it as related to violence and sex. (field note on mirror interviews with former 'kuluna' in the streets of Barumbu, 21.04.14, ref-02153 to ref-02167)

8.3.8. Invitation of professional musicians to focus group sessions

Throughout the fieldwork-period I invited professional musicians from Kinshasa to meet with the young musicians in my study. These confrontations-meetings were much appreciated by the young musicians, and these sessions helped us - the young musicians and the research team - to come to a better understanding of some of the questions in this study.

The first such encounter was organised in April 2014, when I invited two well-known Congolese musicians - Manuaku Waku (Pepe Felly)¹⁹³ and Hono Kapanga¹⁹⁴ - to join a focus group session with the so-called 'witch'-children who became musicians in the brass band of Espace Masolo in Masina. During this meeting Manuaku Waku and Hono Kapanga first heard the young musicians play, and afterwards had a long talk with them about their dreams and about the reality of being a serious professional musician (transcriptions ref-02494 to ref-02537). Manuaku also came back to Espace Masolo to give a music lesson and discuss more at length with the young musicians about musical techniques and content.

In 2015, more such encounters were organised with the young musicians in the research, involving professional musicians from Kinshasa: pop musician Felix Wazekwa¹⁹⁵ with Beta Mbonda (transcriptions ref-13401 to ref-13429), singer-songwriter Djonimbo Bilansa with Espace Masolo (transcriptions ref-17280 to ref-17402), and jazz musicians Gabriel Wadigesila and Sidi Kiala with Beta Mbonda (transcriptions ref-13225 to ref-13398).

Organising these meetings which brought professional musicians together with beginning musicians, helped us question and confront the young ones with a series of thoughts the beginning musicians had about their future profession. It also helped them realise - and come to terms with - the difficulties all musicians - also those who ended up succeeding to make a successful career - had to go through and still went through in order to keep going as musicians.

8.3.9. Financial agreement with participants

In the tacit - but always again reminded - agreement I made with the participants to this research, the young musicians were invited to share - as openly as they themselves wished -

¹⁹³ Manuaku Waku (Pepe Felly) was co-founder of the famous Congolese band *Zaiko Langa Langa*

¹⁹⁴ Hono Kapanga performed with and composed for famous Congolese musicians Felix Wazekwa and Kofi

¹⁹⁵ Felix Wazekwa is one of the most popular musicians and band in DR Congo

information about their personal lives and history in relation to the research questions of this PhD.

To cover their expenses, a sum of 3000FC (about 3€) was paid cash to them at the end of each individual interview and focus group to which they participated.

The first group sessions were paid 40 usd for each focus group session, of which half was given directly to the participants (2000FC per person) and 20 usd was for the general budget of the project. But I quickly changed this and started to pay each participant directly. I did not want the direction of the projects to have to be in between this, as it was about covering expenses related to a work relationship I had with the participants of my research.

I came to the understanding that opinions amongst scholars can be contradictory to paying participants. Some do not see a problem, others are against.

I am sure the young musicians did not participate in the research for the money they received, even though this surely also helped their motivation to attend all sessions, because they needed the money so much in their day-to-day struggle to survive.

In December 2014 I had a discussion with the members of Beta Mbonda about the possibility to be able to interview more informants in Barumbu (victims of 'kuluna' interventions, family, friends, former colleagues in crime...). They told me that I would also need to be able to pay them at least something to drink. I decided not to do this, and to reserve the payment of expenses to the participants of the research only, in order to make clear that I wanted to make a clear distinction between those actively collaborating within the research, and those whom I considered as outsiders to the research. If not I was expecting to find many 'victimes' who for a 1000FC or a drink would be happy to be interviewed by us.

8.4. Ethical considerations

8.4.1. Access and consent participants

At the beginning of the first meeting with participants I explained to them what the project of this research was about and what I expected from a collaboration with them.

This was repeated regularly, as I thought I could expect them to forget when I had not worked with them after a period of several months.

I each time told them how I would respect their confidentiality towards their tutors and the outside world as well.

I each time asked them their consent and told them that they could at any point withdraw as participants from the research.

This message was repeated many times, at the beginning of almost each interview, and can be traced in the transcriptions. I wanted to make sure that everyone would clearly understand and consent in a fully informed way to the set-up and strategy of the research project, and understand that they were free to stay or to leave the research process. This was all done by word of mouth. The participants were not asked to sign a declaration of consent.

8.4.2. Confidentiality

Even though the participants to the research did not ask for this - and sometimes even expressed the contrary (hoping to be recognisable when the research results come out in the future) - I have nevertheless chosen for strict confidentiality as an important element of my methodology¹⁹⁶.

All names of participants in my research have been changed in the thesis.

But to make sure the young musicians get credit for their participation in this research, something they ask for, the publication of a book will make sure that there is something out there which they will themselves be able to consult and share with others¹⁹⁷.

The confidentiality question was especially important in terms of the relationship of the young musicians with their mentors, the initiators directing the social music projects in which they were participating. As I were also in contact with them, I was very careful in not passing on information from one group of interviewees (the musicians participating in the

¹⁹⁶ *The protection of confidentiality always comes before any other consideration in fieldwork. (DeWalt & DeWalt 2011, p.49)*

¹⁹⁷ *With this in mind, the book which is planned to be published in 2019 about what we can learn from the social music projects in Kinshasa, as studied in this PhD-research, will also be made available for free online in French (see info under 15.3).*

music projects) to another (those training or directing the projects).

The young musicians would sometimes ask us to be their intermediates in order to pass on their worries or complaints to the direction of the project, but this was something I systematically refused to take on board, as it would damage the trust I had built up with both groups.

8.4.3. Reciprocity of the research for the participants

We want the defense of your doctoral dissertation to go really well, because the narrative of your thesis is our narrative as well. (BM-MW during focus group with Beta Mbonda, 02.01.16, ref. 19165)

The research itself has had an impact on the lives of the participants in this research, for different reasons¹⁹⁸.

I have seen the musicians participating in this research so many times, I spent so many hours together, watched them during their concerts, and again and again came back to see them over a period of 3 ½ years. There was maybe in the beginning a problem of trust between us, but this disappeared quickly.

*The fact that we had visited our own culture and families, **but had returned to renew our stay** (...) demonstrated our commitment... (...) The experience of improved acceptance after returning from a trip away from the research setting is so common in the literature that we have come to think of it as one of the most important ways to enhance acceptance. (DeWalt & DeWalt 2011, p.56)*

I talked with them in group sessions, and I spoke to them individually. Did it change them? Did it make them think of aspects of their lives they did not think of before, or not in the same way? What was in other words the possible reciprocity of the research for them?

For some it was the first time they met someone who asked them about their past and present life, and about their plans for their future. My long presence with them in Kinshasa had - so they reported - also encouraged them not to abandon their plans to try to improve their conditions.

And the fact they were part of this research on the impact of music-making, in itself had an impact on their determination to continue to work on their music. My interest in this part of their life encouraged them to reflect on themselves and also to keep on investing in music-making. So one may conclude that, also here, the research itself impacted on the reality studied, as research does so often.

¹⁹⁸ see also 3.3

Delving into the process of learning and making music also helped them to better understand their own practice of music-making, and this was also appreciated:

BM-MW: "I am very happy with this research, and with the long time we worked together. It really took a lot of time, and it taught us a lot about things we did not know. (...) We understood that music is not only about playing. There are other things that matter in music-making, and it is from this research that we have understood other facets of music." (from focus group with Beta Mbonda, 02.01.16, ref. 19165)

Thanks to the interviews, they sometimes noticed some surprising things about themselves in regard to certain aspects of their life and of their practice of making music.

The observation that there was not only the research team who came to see and question them, but also a series of other people who came after or during our passages, to follow them and who came to listen or talk to them, enhanced their self-esteem, and their resolve towards self-enhancement.

Even though I was very careful about not behaving in a 'moralising' way towards them, the fact that I took so much time to discuss their lives, made them reflect and sometimes come to new understandings as well as convictions concerning the paths they wanted to take in their lives:

EM2-AR: "This research helped me a lot. The day we started, when you asked me the question: "How did you flee your family home and then were living in the streets?" It made me think about this. The way you asked your questions, I sat down, I thought. I thought it was such a difficult life for me. I thought it was important to be able to take another way of life, like that of practicing music. The life in the street was the life of delinquency. Thinking about this did me good. It was the first time I had been asked such questions about my past life. I then thought that life on the street was not a good life, and that it is important for me to stay calm and to organize my own life so that tomorrow or after tomorrow I will be a respectable person." (from focus group with beginners of Espace Masolo, 23.12.15, ref-18200)

What I heard the former 'witch'-children in this research tell about their past life, was often terrible, awful even. And it was amazing they could at all talk about it. It was good they could talk about it, even though I have been really careful in not insisting at all when some did not feel like sharing certain things with us. I knew that we could be taking mental health risks in relation to the traumas they experienced (De Haene & Grietens & Verschueren 2010)¹⁹⁹. Our research had for some a therapeutic side to it. Some even had difficulties to stop sharing and talking about their traumatic experiences, in

¹⁹⁹ Lucia De Haene, Hans Grietens and Karine Verschueren describe some pitfalls we may as researchers be confronted with when interviewing people who went through traumatic experiences, and they also suggest a series of strategies to avoid damaging participants of such research: They describe some of the *risk issues of reactivating distress, misrepresentation, therapeutic misconception, or intensifying stigma in working with vulnerable respondent groups (...)* In contrast to the benefit ethics discourse, the argument addresses the need to recognize and contextualize the fluid possibilities of both harm and benefit that develop within each specific research relationship (De Haene, Grietens & Verschueren 2010:664-665)

individual but also in group sessions. Some of what we heard was nevertheless very painful indeed. Most Life Story Interviews²⁰⁰ lasted for several hours, because the interviewees enjoyed answering our questions and did so in detail.

"It's true that there is a lot to say about my life, and I'm happy to talk about it, but, I'll make an effort to summarize. I am very happy to tell my life." (from life story interview with EM-MA, 18.12.14, ref-06837)

For most of the youngsters of EM it was important to have the opportunity of the regular visits of us researchers, to reflect together with us on their situation. They have been living difficult times in the streets before, during which they were not respected. Now they were, and they enjoyed the interest people like us had in them. They also needed to express themselves in order to help them find a place for their traumatic experiences. The fact that people like ourselves were carefully listening to what they had to say, could - maybe - help them to heal.

EM2-AM: "The time you take to work with us is because you want to know about the life we lived and live now. Besides that, it's such a good thing you take your time, because your questions really help us transform our lives, instead of only going back to our past lives. So the concern for us is to become men of value. That's what I understood from this research." (from focus group with beginners Espace Masolo, 23.12.15, ref-18199)

The **possible social benefits of the research itself** has also been my concern. I have in this been influenced by Georges Devereux and Bruno Latour's work²⁰¹, because many of my reflections considering this question are also major concerns of these authors.

Reading John Sloboda's worries concerning what happens in and with our world, and to which extent this could or should interfere with our work as researchers²⁰², also corresponds to my position and motivation to be involved in socially relevant research activities, even though this obliges us to tightrope walking an attractive but fragile combination of closeness and detachment.

Researchers can represent an interesting '**third party**' or 'from the outside' vision and input towards and for practitioners of social music projects. Inviting researchers into social music practice can be a dreamt of opportunity for initiators, trainers as well as for participants to reflect critically on their

²⁰⁰ find more information on this semi-structured interview under 7.3.6.1

²⁰¹ especially Georges Devereux's 'From anxiety to method in the behavioral sciences' and Bruno Latour's 'Science in Action'

²⁰² chapter 23 in John Sloboda's book "Exploring the Musical Mind" on 'Assessing music psychology research: values, priorities, and outcomes'

practice. Researchers will have their own research agenda, which is not necessarily the same as the agenda and concerns of practitioners. Researchers will question and comment on the practice and can therefore help practitioners to develop their work in directions which they might not have considered without the help of such 'third parties'.

The participants in this research in Kinshasa also expressed several elements which are important in terms of the **potential social benefits of this type of research:**

(1) Especially if the research is - as it was in this case - involving a long-term connection between the researcher and the participants of his/her research, then the immediate benefit of the research is that it allows the participants to reflect on their practice and on aspects of their lives closely or not so closely related to their practice of music-making. This opportunity to regularly connect with a researcher to reflect is by many participants experienced as beneficiary on itself.

(2) Doing research with disadvantaged creates expectations of possible - present as well as future - support beyond the research activity. This can be seen as problematic - but also as interesting - opportunities for the researcher, to be involved in meaningful positions towards people who are in need.

(3) Such expectations from participants in research can confront researchers with the responsibility of making the findings of the research available, not only within the academic community and world, but also very much to those who themselves participated in the research. And besides making findings available, researchers can in certain contexts also play a role in advising how the results of the research can inform and inspire developments and improvements of the realities of former participants to the research and their peers²⁰³.

8.5. Analysis of data

The ethnographical approach²⁰⁴ has allowed myself to come as close as I could to the social reality I wanted to study, starting from general research questions without too many preconceived ideas or hypotheses when arriving on the research stage in Kinshasa.

²⁰³ See also Tia DeNora's ethnographic method of letting the interviewees' voices be heard (DeNora 2000).

²⁰⁴ which is also sometimes called the 'fieldwork method' (DeWalt & DeWalt 2011)

Bit by bit, as time went by, my observations and the data collected from the interviews then led me into directions of research and questioning I could not have imagined before embarking on this study (Bryman 2004).

Even though grounded theory is the approach which for sure inspired the methodology for this research (as described recently by Bryant & Charmaz, 2013), I did not go all the way in stringently coding and analysing all my data from a to z, from day one to the last day of the fieldwork, following the grounded theory techniques. I nevertheless did adopt part of its strategy of collecting and developing research questions, topics and finally hypotheses. Alan Bryman sees this method of "oscillation between testing emerging theories and collecting data [as] a particularly prominent feature of grounded theory" (Bryman 2004, 271).

Instead, this research should be situated in the realm of qualitative descriptive studies²⁰⁶, which Margarete Sandelowski has described as follows:

Qualitative descriptive studies are arguably the least 'theoretical' of the spectrum of qualitative approaches, in that researchers conducting such studies are the least encumbered by pre-existing theoretical and philosophical commitments. In contrast to phenomenological, grounded theory, ethnographic, or narrative studies, which are based on specific methodological frameworks emerging from distinctive disciplinary traditions (e.g., Lowenberg, 1993), qualitative descriptive studies tend to draw from the general tenets of naturalistic inquiry. (Sandelowski 2000, p.337)

The treatment of the large quantity of data which came out of the many interviews and focus groups taken over the 3 1/2 years of intensive fieldwork, was based on qualitative content analysis:

Qualitative content analysis is the analysis strategy of choice in qualitative descriptive studies. Qualitative content analysis is a dynamic form of analysis of verbal and visual data that is oriented toward summarizing the informational contents of that data (Altheide, 1987; Morgan, 1993). In contrast to quantitative content analysis, in which the researcher systematically applies a pre-existing set of codes to the data, qualitative content analysis is data-derived: that is, codes also are systematically applied, but they are generated from the data themselves in the course of the study. (Sandelowski 2000, p.338)

An important reason why this methodology was chosen, was because in the interviews with the young musicians the focus has especially been to find information in their narrative on what they want (their motivation) and who they are and want to be (identity).

Although I started the qualitative content analysis from the very beginning of the fieldwork, I continuously modified my coding lists and groups of lists throughout the 3 ½ years of

²⁰⁶ see also chapter 6.5 in this thesis on the qualitative description research methods at the core of this research

fieldwork and the successive period of processing the data, sometimes discarding entire coding lists in favor of new ones, in order to get ever closer to the questions being studied. This process was not annotated, but the liquidity of it will become clear when you look at the successive coding lists from 2012 to 2017, attached to this thesis. I flexibly changed things over time as new material came. It is completely normal in coding and categorising in qualitative research, because: when one gets more familiar with the material one sees what belongs where and which codes need to be reorganised.

Most individual interviews and focus group sessions were recorded (a total of about 175 hours of recordings), of which the biggest part (161 hours) have been transcribed.

Fortunately, I started early on in my research to index and encode a big part of this material, and then treated it with the help of Word and Excel, building up successive codebooks which were developed and changed continuously throughout the research, with indexes becoming codes becoming concepts becoming categories becoming potential hypotheses leading to 'building blocks of theory' (Bryman 2004). Comparing the codebooks from 2012 up to 2017²⁰⁸, you will find how detailed they were, and how they changed over the years.

Manually coding and recoding the transcriptions of 161 hours of recordings obliged me to revisit the interviews several times (first transcribing half of them myself, then reading all the transcriptions, part of them several times). This was an immensely lengthy monks work, but it made me come to an ever-growing understanding of the realities studied.

²⁰⁸ see under 17.5 and 17.6

understood because of the length of time I spent with them, and this allowed for a certain degree of saturation to be reached. Thanks to the amount and extent of the interviews taken, and thanks to the length of the field work, information became *increasingly predictable, and surprises peter out. (...) Intense observation creates a gestalt of the whole, and a solution simply clicks into place* (Lund 2014).

The well-coded transcriptions also allowed me when writing this thesis to quickly find my way back towards interesting quotes out of the individual and focus interviews I took during my field work.

Even though I cannot indicate its exact quantity or percentage, there is for sure a portion of the data (individual interviews, focus groups, mirror interviews, field notes) which do not inform any of the chapters. Not all material encountered in the fieldwork has been of interest within this particular PhD-thesis, even though it could often be of potential interest to scholars developing research in related fields. Certain elements, items, questions and subfields of data have not in detail been analysed within this research, and therefore were not used in this thesis, even though very interesting information is available on them in the data of this research. My data could e.g. be revisited by scholars interested in witch-children. That is why all data of this research will be made available publicly on DANS (Data Archiving and Networked Services; <https://dans.knaw.nl/en>).

PART 2: FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

9. WHY MAKE MUSIC AT ALL?

"For me, music does so many things. (...) I love music so much. It gave me the intelligence to know and master an instrument, and even how to earn something in life. And then, it gave me the opportunity to meet certain people, whom I could only dream of meeting in my life. It also allowed me to play with certain other musicians. Despite the difficult times we are going through, and the conditions in which we have been learning, there is the love of music. That's what I think can help me move forward more and more in life. Playing music does not give me a lot of money, but it does give something valuable, because our musical activities are great activities that help us survive anyway. That is why I want to continue making music. But I do not want to be a musician who is only playing at funerals. I want to be able to play everywhere, in different municipalities, in other provinces, and why not in other countries as well, as we already do. Our level will have to be more sophisticated though. I want to be a great person and fine musician. I am already becoming one, because many people know me. And then also, through music, I forget my past life. It pushes me towards a more comfortable situation. So, it's the music that makes me who I am." (from life story interview with EMI-MA of Espace Masolo, Kinshasa, 18.12.14, ref-06931)

9.0. Introduction

1. Faced with the many obstacles young people in Kinshasa are confronted with in developing their activities as musicians, I have in fact more than anything else been wrestling with the question **why they would want to master making music at all.**

2. The following chapter is proposing a number of aspects encountered in connection with the question what made the participants in this research interest themselves in wanting to be involved in the activity of learning to become a musician.

3. Before presenting the four major hypotheses and related research questions in the following 4 chapters (chapters 9 to 12), I first propose in this chapter to look at a series of extrinsic as well as intrinsic outcomes which are reported to possibly result from the activity of music-making.

9.1. Extrinsic outcome from making music

I hereby take out four of the extrinsic outcomes which were reported by the participants as being the most important ones in relation to their activity of making music:

- (1) the possibilities and limits of financial income,
- (2) the attraction of further training,
- (3) the new identity and respect earned, and
- (4) the possibility of becoming music trainers themselves.

These are some of the motivations to make music, but they are external to the activity itself. That is why I bring them here together under 'extrinsic' outcomes.

9.1.1. Financial income

When one becomes a musician in Kinshasa, one only in a limited way solves one's problem of unemployment. The more advanced musicians of Espace Masolo (Les Jeunes Talents) were young people (between 19 to 23 years), some of which - especially the trumpet and trombone players - found small jobs, because there are many brass bands in Kinshasa looking for trained musicians.

The reality of the musicians of the percussion band Beta Mbonda is different though. Despite the fact that they work much more on music than the group of brass band musicians does, they have less opportunities to produce themselves in concerts and other performances. They tell us they are patiently investing in a future, which they hope will allow them to make a living with their art.

The musicians in the study showed evidence though of modest success in making a basic living. They were generally observed to be well-dressed, and in good physical shape, manifesting in this particular context the characteristics of relative rather than extreme poverty²¹³.

Most of the musicians of Beta Mbonda (BM) asserted that although they would very much want and need to make money with it, they absolutely do not develop their musical activity for the money only.

We decided to give up 'la débrouille' (little jobs here and there) when we started becoming musicians. After having several years invested in learning to master music-making, I can really not imagine giving up music for something else. I put so much of my time into learning music, and with the know-how gained, I can not give up music. Those who are in 'la coop' (who earn money circumstantially), they have not made much progress in their lives. We can see that. They continue to be stuck in a survival modus. (BM-CL during focus group #4 with Beta Mbonda, 14.07.14, ref-03630)

It is comparable to the feeling a parent can have towards his children. BM is our child. We were nowhere financially, but now we are respected as musicians through our work with BM. So we cannot imagine leave or neglect this group, because it allowed us to come into contact with worlds and persons which we could not meet before. We are also proud of this, because we also played our part in constructing BM to what it became now. And we are hopeful that this will give its fruits in the nearby future. We cannot leave our field when it is time to harvest what we sowed. There are many difficult moments and periods, but there are also moments of pleasure. (intervention by Beta Mbonda member BM-GI during focus group #7, 20.04.15, ref-11353)

²¹³ see more on 'poverty' under 4.2.4

They say that if they would do it for this reason, they would have quit this activity already a long time ago. But now that they have been investing so much and since so many years in becoming musicians, they do not think of giving up.

I will continue making music, but if I find another work, I will combine music and that job. I will try to find a job thanks to which I can make some money and then this will support my music-making. So, even if I find another job, I will always want to combine this with music-making. I will not give up music. (intervention by Espace Masolo beginner EM2-ME during focus group, 23.12.15, ref-18170)

Music is a good thing. I love music, depend on music, live music, even though it is not easy. Playing music, having a performance only once a week, you have something like 20 USD. Not easy to come by on here in Kinshasa. Especially since we are not really known, and we do not have a very high level. There are people who are far better than we are. If I want to continue music, I will need to rehearse frequently. There are days I work in my workshop (LP: wood sculpture) and that allows me to earn something. It allows me to survive, whether I have markets or not for music, I then earn at least something to allow me to pay for the transportation costs to come to the rehearsals and to meet my basic needs. But if I do not have the opportunity to earn a little money, it becomes complicated. I first have to find some money, and only then can I get into the music. If I continue making music, it will not only be just brass band music. I have to mix, diversify, not only brass band. It is hard to make money in music, but I can have other opportunities that give me some money and that allows me to propel myself into music. (EM1-CK speaks in the focus group with the advanced group of Espace Masolo, 20.07.15, ref-17314)

They report earning little with the concerts. Most musicians of the brass band of Espace Masolo (EM) and LJT (Les Jeunes Talents) report having maximum 2 performances per week from which they earn maximum 50 USD altogether per month.

By playing at funerals, I can take 5000 or 6000 francs per performance, sometimes up to 7000 francs (4500 Congolese francs in 2015 = 5 USD) allowing me to buy only a few things. (individual interview on 13.08 with Espace Masolo trumpeter EM1-NA, ref-00500)

It's hard to save (...) because when I play music, the money I earn can be - although not every time - something like 20 USD. But I live in a house where my dad is unemployed, he does not do anything. My mother, too, is doing her best to make ends meet, but often she needs my help. Even my little brothers and my sisters turn their eyes towards me. (laughs) You realize that you're a girl, that you can want to buy things for yourself... You have to meet your own needs as well. It's a difficult on the money side. Also, because this money, we win it just only during the weekends, on Friday Saturday Sunday. But the other days of the week, you and your family also have needs. Not easy at all. (individual interview on 14.07.15 with EM1-DO of Espace Masolo, ref-14774)

The musicians of BM reported that they earn similar amounts from their music-making, and that it would be impossible in Kinshasa to live from that.

They nevertheless have expressed the hope that one day they will make money with their music-making and make careers solely as musicians.

I dream of a career as a musician who can travel. I am absolutely good enough for this. And it will allow me to buy my own compound, so that I can start my own family. Also, I wish that my country will get to know me as someone who was a 'kuluna' in the past, but now became a good and respected musician. (individual interview on 11.11.14 with BM-VA of Beta Mbonda, ref-08047)

I also myself started to think seriously about my condition. I started to go to church and pray. It is in that period that BM-AL came up with his proposition to start Beta Mbonda with young people in violent activities. In my street a girl lives who also plays the tamtam and who succeeded to develop a nice career already

and has made concert tours to Europe. This example inspired me and helped me to decide to join BM-AL's project. After only a short time, we already had a concert at the Halle de la Gombe. We did not perform very long, because we simply did not know much to play. The audience asked us to play more, and then BM-TS has taken the floor to explain that we had just started learning to play and would soon be back with more. (individual interview on 15.12.14 with BM-CL of Beta Mbonda, ref-08141)

The extrinsic outcomes resulting from the activity of music-making have fortunately not only been financial. Besides financial capital other forms of immaterial capital have been benefits for the musicians in this research, such as social capital and symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1998).

9.1.1.1. More work in brass bands

Someone who has learned to play the saxophone e.g., is someone who in this city will be looked for and get a job in studios or in bands who need the sound of saxophone, in different styles of music such as jazz or religious music. The trumpet is maybe closer to our own pop culture, although also for this instrument more and more new opportunities start to exist. I agree that they should indeed be able to perform beyond the world of funerals and therefor be more valorized. I agree that that is the follow-up which needs to be assured after what has already been done for them. These young musicians need to be recognised for their creativity, and for their capacity to move people. (from mirror-interview with social and community worker Papi at shelter Saint-Famille, 25.04.15, ref-02893)

Some of the more advanced musicians of Espace Masolo already had up to 6 paid performances per month, which means they start to make some money thanks to music-making, allowing them to buy clothes and food, troubleshoot their family in case of financial difficulties, pay the rent for their house or studio... There are many brass bands in Kinshasa, so there is work to be found for them.

With the brassbands in which I play trumpet, I have several funerals per week to go perform at. About 2 per week. But it is hard for me to save money, because when I play music, I do not every time earn 20 dollars. I live in a house where my dad is unemployed. He does not do anything. My mother makes ends meet somehow, but often my little brothers and my sisters turn their eyes towards me and ask my support. (individual interview on 14.07.15 with Espace Masolo trumpettist EM1-DO, ref-14722)

9.1.1.2. Financial support from friends/family

For the percussionists of Beta Mbonda it is not so easy to make a living, as traditional percussion music is less asked for, and less well paid as well. As the musicians of BM do not earn much at all, but spend so much time in rehearsals, they have people around them who 'sponsor' them.

Someone insures their survival. In most cases their wives work and make sure they can make ends meet, or else their parents do. In the absence of the man, in this society it is often the women who try to make ends meet for the family.

Anyway, they must have some activity at the side, or else they must have persons in their surrounding taking care of the income to help these young men and their families survive. When they are really in trouble financially there are certain people in the neighborhood who help them out because of the fact that they are artists-musicians. These 'sponsors' ('matolo') of musicians may want to help them out if they play well the music of certain tribes and give them money for that.

Another way they encourage sponsors to give money is through 'libanga' (name dropping in songs)²¹⁵.

They count on their relationships, that is, people who know them and whom they can ask to give them money. They tell us it is the life of a musician to get support from outside. Many can sponsor through small amounts, such as only 1000 FC, or through drinks or food (rice, chicken...).

When we live in a dry season ('la secheresse', meaning that it is a period without much income), we will have friends outside of Beta Mbonda who make money here and there. And they will sometimes help us out. Sometimes they will offer us something to drink or even to eat. These friends want to encourage us in what we are doing, hoping that later on we might be able to help them out when we will earn money. (BM-CL speaks during focus group #9 with Beta Mbonda, 17.07.15, ref-13544)

Giving concerts in the streets in their own neighborhood of Barumbu is therefore for them an opportunity to find sponsors. Because most people never heard BM perform live, and only know them from television, they very much want to give concerts in their own neighbourhoods of the municipality of Barumbu, in order to be better known and accepted in this part of Kinshasa where almost all of them live.

9.1.1.3. Work/income from other activities

I would say it's not easy to come by financially... to find gigs at funerals is easy, because a lot of people are dying. But to play in concerts, in churches or elsewhere, that is really difficult. And if you do play in a church, this will give you for example 20 dollars. But if you have children and a wife, your children have to study. Will twenty dollars really meet the needs of feeding and dressing the family? Sometimes you have a series of concerts and play a whole month, but you can also have months where you do not have any concerts. You can be lucky or unlucky and end up with only 10,000 francs. If you have three children, it can not pay children's school fees. (EM2-CN during focus group with beginners of Espace Masolo, 03.08.15, ref-17672)

Apart from their musical activities, the musicians do small jobs in town to make some money. They tell us they want to find other work to help them make a living, but only if it allows them to keep on making music as well. So the other activities cannot take too much of their time. They do not want to give up music, and need time to continue to work on it in order to become better or to stay in good musical shape.

²¹⁵ see White 2007, White 2008 and Trapido 2016

It is obvious that [those doing little jobs in the streets of Kinshasa] earn more money [then we do], but you also have to see how they earn it: they carry packages, empty garbage cans..., all things they will not be able to do when they will be old. Whereas even old, I will be able to organize my work and to live well. (EM1-MA during focus group #3 with Espace Masolo advanced group, 16.07.14, ref-04050)

If I find another job apart from making music, I will really plan my schedule so that I can work, do something else, and also play music. Because, as I see it, I did a lot of things, but it was in music that I succeeded to really build up something and evolve as a person. I think there is really no way I can give up music-making. (EM1-RO during focus group with Espace Masolo beginners, 29.07.15, ref-17310)

The other job(s) will not only serve to make ends meet financially, but also need to allow them to continue their musical activities with which they do not earn much, at least not yet for now. When they want to continue to play music, they need to have some form of financial basis. A musician does not necessarily have to work long hours every day, but his music will make him think of it all the time in his mind. So even though s/he is not in rehearsals or concerts, in his/her mind s/he is often working on his music anyway.

My question is the following. You told us that musicians have to work 24h/24h in order to become experienced. But in relation to the circumstances in which we live, we may want to combine this with other activities which allow us to survive. So sometimes other such activities as well as other responsibilities as towards a wife and children can handicap/limit you in your capacity to engage in music-making. If you only give yourself to the musical rehearsals which do not pay you anything, how can one support one's family? Can you give me some advise about this? I really am very determined to work on developing my music-making activities, but I also have my responsibilities towards my wife and children, and it limits my engagement towards my music activities. (BM-GI, member of Beta Mbonda, asks this question to Felix Wazekwa, 04.05.15, ref-13416)

Activities these musicians may do to make a living besides their music-making are: selling products in the streets of Kinshasa (water, food, clothes...), unloading trucks and containers, dress-making, building and repairing music instruments, puppet making and playing, making sculptures, interior painting, training others in music-making, and building and repairing music instruments..

Besides their living costs, music-making itself also costs them money. It costs them to move around the city to go attend rehearsals or concerts. The tops of the drums are regularly replaced, and wind instruments also need regular repair and maintenance. And promotion also costs money. Television broadcasts need to be paid in Kinshasa.

9.1.2. Further education

Musicians never stop developing themselves. When a beginner tells you that s/he is a confirmed musician, then this is not the beginning, but more like the end of him/her being a musician, as the understanding of what one is not mastering and the need therefore for further training is ideally something which never ends throughout the life of a musician. I encountered such musicians who are too happy with their mastery in the brass bands, and I doubt whether they will still be musicians when I will be back in Kinshasa for my post-doc research in 2021.

At the music school of Kinshasa (Institut National des Arts, INAS), we have experienced an evolution but we were stuck with the lack of instrument at home. Also the rehearsal schedule at Beta Mbonda is complex and time-consuming. We also did not have enough money to meet our daily needs. So despite our serious desire to learn music, it was impossible for us to complete this training at the music school. We nevertheless still want to return to INAS to continue the training. (musician BM-GI during focus group # 3 with Beta Mbonda, 21.04.14, ref-02046)

Music lessons at the music school of Kinshasa (Institut National des Arts) were arranged for free for musicians of BM and of EM. The members of these two social music projects could follow music lessons at this school, and some did for a while, but most dropped out again.

In 2011 the musicians of BM first had a positive experience with the school, when 2 young musicians from Belgium (Hester Bolle and Joachim Thys) took the initiative of proposing and supervising a music project at the Institut National des Arts, bringing the musicians of BM in the school. During this project which went on for several weeks, they invited the students of the school to learn from BM, and the other way around. In traditional Congolese music, INA students missed - in comparison with the musicians of BM - practical know-how, while the musicians of BM missed theoretical training. So they could be complementary, and that is why it was such a positive experience.

But when the musicians of BM later went back to the school to start being trained there, they quickly felt they missed too much musical background in comparison with the other students of the music school, and they dropped out.

The music school would like them to come back, and it is something they were towards the end of our research period reconsidering, because they were attracted to the possibility of learning to read music well. Besides that, they were also attracted to the opportunity they would be able to meet and perform there with musicians from other musical styles (jazz, brass band, traditional music, pop music...).

But... after what the musicians of Beta Mbonda reported on their experiences of following lessons at this music school, I doubt whether this academic music training programme is well adapted to this population of musicians. The music theory lessons

which bass-player Gabriel Wadigesila gave in both projects (EM and EM) were so much more adapted to these beginning musicians, as they were given in Lingala and adapted to their level of understanding and playing music.

9.1.3. New identity and respect

In a call for projects by a Belgian Minister in charge of social affairs, I read this: "We are looking for projects which focus on positive identity development among young people, which can help these young people feel valued, be meaningful, be able to fight 'radically' in a positive way against injustice. (...) projects that strengthen the position of young people and young adults in society, who are committed to increasing their social involvement and civic education, projects that can turn feelings of exclusion or injustice into positive commitments, projects that make young people feel in a future, and so on." (July 2015)

The respect which the musicians of Beta Mbonda get in their community is important for them, because when they were in their 'kuluna' activity, they were considered bad boys, not respected, but feared. And now they are acclaimed and respected in their community. This is important for them. This can surely - at least in part - explain why they are so attached to their musical activity with Beta Mbonda. They now have a kind of notoriety, which represents a reputational capital. This capital is linked to the name of the ensemble Beta Mbonda, and to leave BM is therefore to risk losing this symbolic capital.

9.1.3.1. Police leaves them alone

Also in terms of their relationship to the police the musicians of BM are now more at ease in comparison with their previous life, when they always needed to hide as they risked to be arrested. Since they became known as musicians, they are not bothered anymore by the police, who believe that they have transformed into artists-musicians. Now they can go wherever they want without any problem. Everyone knows they are musicians now, as most people saw them on TV²¹⁶.

9.1.3.2. Recognition

Their ambition to become successful and well-known musicians is an essential motivation for them, because being recognized for having been seen on television, the buzz they get on internet, being recognized in the streets... are enormously satisfying for them. When attending their performances, it is also clear how much they enjoy being seen and loved in their position of persons creating beautiful and enjoyable moments

²¹⁶ Even I myself was often called 'mundele Beta Mbonda' ('white Beta Mbonda') in the streets when approaching their neighbourhood in Barumbu.

with their music. They want to be seen. The element of identity and respect is motivating for them to stay focused on their music. People look at them differently. This is true for all kinds of other professions too, but being a musician is an outspokenly public profession.

"When I was a kid I was begging for money in the streets and someone could slap me. Now, thanks to the music, people are interested in me, follow me, and even want to become friends with me." (from interview on music-making with EM1-CL at Espace Masolo, 23.04.15, ref-09770)

"What interests me in music, is that when someone follows us to attend our concerts, they find out that we were children who came from the street, and have now become musicians. That is something which surprises and challenges many people. It makes them realise that we should never neglect someone, because we do not know what this person will become in his future. So when I see people applauding us and following us, I think it is a lesson we give through what we do with music." (from focus group with young musician EM2-RU of Espace Masolo, 29.04.15, ref-10243)

The dimension of having a positive project is also seen as an important new element in the life of somebody who was a gangster or street child before: Being recognised for the know-how one has with which one can project oneself into a constructive future, gives in itself structure to a person's life.

9.1.3.3. It's the identity, stupid!

Their change of identity - from 'witch'-children and 'street children' and 'kuluna' to musician-artist - and the recognition by the outside world, is something the participants in this research - as well as some of the musicians and social and community workers - during the interviews continuously stressed as an important reason for wanting to continue to stay in music.

First of all, there is the fact that by coming to the centre (shelter), they broke with their live in the streets, a live which was free, chaotic and libertine. We then oriented them towards Espace Masolo, proposing them to interest themselves in the training programs which are being proposed there. When we started sending children to Espace Masolo, they did not yet have the brassband, only the other artistic activities. When music was proposed, we felt that they all were particularly attracted to it, in comparison with the other artistic activities proposed there. All three of them develop another professional artistic activity besides music (EM-GL: sculpture, acting, puppet theatre; EM-NA and EM-CA: dress making). These activities surely helped them to break away from the ordinary live of children in the street, persons not considered important by society, and change their skins entirely and become persons who are to be respected, persons who have special value in society. (from interview on 25.04.14 with social worker at shelter Sainte Famille, ref.02877)

Starting to make music played a role in helping them get out of violence and off the streets, and it gave them respect from their surroundings, thanks to broadcasts on television and concerts. They earned a new respectability.

They are proud to be seen as artists. They are proud to be on television. This symbolic capital is valuable for them. I

found that although they complained that their profession was hard, they considered it as important to be seen as members of a band which was known. I found that - even more important than money - they cared very much about this symbolic capital. And such symbolic capital could be transformed into social capital, and even result in financial capital (local sponsors).

When I play, I have joy because I realize that my identity is changing. Yesterday, I was in the street (...) but today, my identity changes. It makes me happy to see people coming to admire me. There are people I meet in the street who encourage me to continue with my music. What motivates me more is the admiration we are receiving for what we do. (musician EMI-MA of Espace Masolo, 08.07.15, ref-14057)

Before they were singled out as thieves or 'witch'-children, but today, thanks to music, people are amazed at the change in their lives. They mentioned this so much, that I can without any doubt state that the change of identity is absolutely one of the most important reasons why these young people stick to making-music, even though it makes them hardly less poor financially.

The members of BM tell me that when they have financial difficulties they are sometimes tempted by other 'kuluna' to return to their previous activity, but they do not fall back into gang activities because of the reputation and dignity they now have and want to preserve as artists-musicians.

Camille: These young people who make music are different from others because they try to distinguish themselves from their peers, stopping smoking hemp, etcetera. We have seen that many of them wanted to find their place in society by renting a place in which to live together with other kids. Also, on the relational level, there is a phenomenon of valorization and upgrading: These children were initially rejected, but now that they have learned a specialised profession, this makes their entourage to be once again interested in these children.

Lukas: Is this the case in general for youth learning any profession, or is it especially true for those who become musicians?

Camille: It is true in general, but especially so for musicians, because theirs is an occupation which is developed in public: When people see them in concert, they cannot believe these were children who were in the streets before. People are really positively amazed.

(from mirror-interview with Camille from shelter Pekabo in Barumbu, Kinshasa, 24.03.14, ref-02840-> 02842)

Much more than a change of so-called 'habitus', what matters here is the change of 'identity': Members of dangerous gangs become and remain musicians, even if they earn nothing or hardly anything with it. They 'are' musicians. It is their new identity. They do not want to know about dropping this new identity and exchanging it for something else.

9.1.3.4. Meeting 'important' people

The musicians of both projects are also proud to have been able thanks to their musical activities and new identity of musicians to meet with people they could never have imagined

speaking to before, such as: well-known personalities, local artists (Jean Goubald, Felix Wazekwa, Manuaku Waku, Papa Wemba, Werason...), ambassadors from different countries, politicians and business people from in and outside of the country, who come to greet them at performances.

The brass band musicians have thanks to the projects of EM also been able to travel several times to France and Germany, and could get the visit of European and Australian musicians and fans to see and work with them in Kinshasa.

The youth at EM, who were in their earlier lives accused of being 'witch'-children, also benefit enormously from their change of identity, and often succeed thanks to that to connect again with their families, who realise that their children are after all valuable personalities who succeeded to build up something meaningful and worthwhile.

9.1.3.5. Self-image, self-esteem and self-confidence

The self-esteem of the musicians in our study has grown a lot thanks to their change of identity. Their ability to master music also helped them to regain self-confidence and affected how they started to see themselves and consequently what stories they tell themselves and others about who they are. Having confidence in a skill is so much concreter than having confidence in oneself.

I met young guys in the streets of Barumbu, who were presented to us as friends of the musicians of Beta Mbonda. They also make music. They call it 'musique décalée'. They react very differently to 'our' musicians. Very chaotic. All speaking at the same time. Undisciplined and not pleasant towards each other. Several times almost fighting with each other to be able to talk. It was clearly for them also a matter of getting our attention in order to get some money out of us. Patrice, Jeudi and I were all impressed by the contrast between their attitude and the civilised and calm and respectful attitude of the musicians of Beta Mbonda. I did not see this aspect of Beta Mbonda so clearly before this street encounter with this group. (field note of meeting musicians 'décalés' in streets of Barumbu, Kinshasa, 21.04.14)

What is for sure not much helping young brass band musicians' self-esteem though is performing at funerals, which is reported by these young aspiring musicians as something humiliating. They make some money in such opportunities, but do not feel respected as artists, as musicians, because the musical level needed is very low. No or hardly any rehearsals are needed, because they always play the same tunes. Performing at funerals feels like getting back into street life, with consumption of drugs and alcohol. Such mourning sessions go on throughout the night and for several days.

The question of self-image has also been of interest to us, i.e. how assuming the discipline, role and identity of a

musician may affect how these young persons see themselves and consequently what stories they tell themselves and others. In other words, there is not only the outward change of identity which plays a role, but surely more impactful in terms of their transformative processes is also their identification with this newly acquired identity.

9.1.4. Teaching others

As Frank Heuser found in his interesting and critical study of the Isaiah House project of the North Park band in the US (Heuser 2011), wanting to teach others is something also in Kinshasa many of the musicians in our research dream of. Especially being able to propose training to children and youngsters with a similar background of life in the streets or in gangs interests them, as they know this life well themselves.

I had specific sessions with the more advanced musicians of EM and with the musicians of BM on how they imagined themselves in the position of trainer. In both case studies (EM and BM) the young musicians are asked to start training others, or get certain tasks to assist their trainers in coaching new trainees. The young musicians in our research were very interested in this and I was amazed how some of them were able to explain in detail how they would go about step by step teaching music to beginners. Some of them very much want to develop themselves as future trainers. And some also had concrete ideas on how training should be done, and could express themselves clearly on this. These sessions also helped us understand better how their own music training was set up and experienced, and which aspects were thought to be missing, according to the participants in our research.

Whether the ambition of BM to teach people all over the immense city of Kinshasa²¹⁷ will be possible remains to be seen, but there is according to them a big interest in many neighbourhoods to create similar social-artistic projects which propose music training and performances on traditional Congolese instruments. The musicians of BM are well-placed and well-trained to play a role in helping to develop such projects.

It is not because one knows the technique to play an instrument that one is capable to transmit this knowledge and know-how to others though. Some of the young musicians have according to their mentors some natural innate talent as pedagogues, but training to become a trainer is what most need

²¹⁷ (as was reported by the initiators of BM)

to get. So the musicians need the help of their trainers when starting to train others themselves. Peer-to-peer training is therefore not always working well, because some handle this well, while others not at all.

Some of the more advanced wind-players of Espace Masolo have started to help teach beginners within the community arts centre, and were able to tell us in detail how they developed this:

EMI-MA: "The courses we give here are very different from those given in classical schools. A pupil enrolled in such a school is aware of the fact that he will study there. Here, on the other hand, we offer training but the learners do not understand them all in the same way. There are some who have the spirit elsewhere during the training. But personally I know how to deal with this category of students since I was myself a difficult student at first. However, I agree that the student must be willing to learn. Regarding the approach to follow, I prefer to start with the description of the instrument, how to hold it, and how to position the lips. If they master this lesson, I then teach them some of the scales and let them repeat with the instrument and concomitantly I teach them the lesson on music theory. It's not easy to get them to master but we are slowly advancing." (from focus group at Espace Masolo (group 1) about teaching, ref-04018)

Payment for teaching is hard to get, but the musicians say they are willing to teach without being paid, as they themselves also received training for free. They tell us that teaching others is something very meaningful for them and that they do it out of pleasure, because, as they were helped themselves, they want to also be able to pass their know-how and knowledge on to others.

When being taught by musicians who come out of comparable social backgrounds as they do, it is much easier for the students to identify with their teachers, and follow their examples. Such teachers have a complicity with them. They can possibly get along well because they come out of a similar environment.

The musicians of BM say that many youngsters ask to get training. So many that each could have up to 10 students easily, if they would be able to propose private lessons. But this they cannot, because they do not possess instruments to work with outside of the ensemble.

Teaching others is also stimulating as it makes one understand even better how one masters oneself: To be able to share with others, one first has to be conscious oneself about how things work²¹⁸.

²¹⁸ The North Park students in Frank Heuser's study (describing a middle school band programme in which students teach instrument lessons to similarly aged children in a homeless shelter) also report that they are becoming better musicians through these experiences. They discover that teaching requires a deep understanding of the foundations of their instrument and the fundamentals of music as they go over the basics with each student. (Heuser 2011:300)

Additionally, teaching other musicians also helps one to come to a better understanding - and appreciation - of how one was taught oneself, as this is the example one will try to follow when teaching others.

When talking with the musicians about how they want to become teachers themselves, they give a much more positive and even admiring picture of their own trainers, calling them - despite their weaknesses - their spiritual fathers to whom they owe a lot.

9.1.4.1. Teaching others - introduction to instrument

The more advanced musicians in the brass band of EM do as their masters did with them: They first present the students the wind and percussion instruments that are available, and ask them to choose one. After the choice of the instrument, each student is shown how to apply his lips on the mouthpiece of the instrument. They then let the student some time try out the instrument by himself. If found the instrument is not appreciated or for some reason does not fit well, another instrument may be proposed (time needed for this: 3 days x 3 hours). Then the operation of the instrument is explained, showing the various elements which compose it and their names. After this the student is invited to blow the instrument for a while to allow his lips to adapt to the mouthpiece (time needed for this: 4 days x 3 hours).

In a classical music school one learns the theory first, but in Espace Masolo they welcome children who - most of them at least - can not read or write at all. So they start by first having them try out the instrument. After being introduced to the instrument, its different parts and their respective names, and its basic operation, beginners are then submitted to some simple practical exercises. Only much later will they learn bit by bit pieces of simple songs.

The more advanced musicians of EM are welcomed to assist the main trainer in all of this. They also assist him in teaching the beginners music pieces which they master well already. They do not yet have the capacity to transmit them a lot, but they can at least teach them the pieces of music they already master.

9.1.4.2. Teaching others - difficulties

Some seem to have more talent and clear ideas as trainers than others, and report that when in the position of teaching others, they do not follow the same approach as their own

teachers had. They do not feel obliged to proceed as their masters and proceed otherwise. With their specific background and experience they may have their personal ways to introduce youth to making music. Several more advanced musicians of EM even think they are in a better position than their trainers to introduce children from the street to music, because they can easily have empathy with them. They can for example be confronted with children who are talented for music-making, but who have difficulties concentrating themselves on the first steps of mastering it. Our participants in the research say that if they do, they would have more patience with such students though, because they understand them well. Often they are confronted with students who at first do not feel at all like wanting to master an instrument of the brass band. Because learning to master an instrument is difficult, this can give way to outburst of frustration and anger, something which musicians with a somehow similar past can deal with more easily.

Most musicians nevertheless imitate their master when they start to train others. Within EM, the main mentor asks some of the more advanced musicians to come assist him in training newcomers, but even though he lets them play the role of trainer, he is always looking on and can intervene and help out when things do not work.

9.1.4.3. Teaching others - attract not force

The young people who are coming to the music training of EM come by recommendation of their respective shelters for children in street situations. They are often attracted to join the brass band, after seeing others play, even though they may have been hesitant at first. The shelter directs young people according to the training wishes they express. When they arrive at EM, some end up joining the brass band, but not all. Several came for the training in dress-making at EM, and finally also became musicians.

It is considered important by both projects studied here (EM as well as BM) not to force anyone to make music, but to awaken their curiosity and then pleasure to want to learn to make the music. How do they then stimulate the interest in learning when being confronted with someone who is not interested? Children and youth who do not want to be there every day and refuse to go through the difficult process of learning music, the mentors do not want to try to convince them²¹⁹. One way the young musicians in our research reported

²¹⁹ *The trainers also reported they do not only not want to, but also consider themselves not able to convince those who do not show an interest in music-making.*

using to attract newcomers is by flattering them, 'moralizing' them and 'pampering' them.

9.1.4.4. Music as a new occupation

"There is indeed a big difference, because before they became a member of Beta Mbonda, they were not OK, because they did not have an occupation to which they could devote themselves to. Their leader Alhim succeeded to gather these youngsters in order to show them that music can make a difference in a person's life. He recruited youngsters whom he trained as musicians. Most of these youngsters I knew as 'kuluna'. And it is true that when these youngsters started to train with Alhim, they stopped their activities as gangsters. They started to get re-organized in their lives and succeeded to become useful and helpful members of society. All this happened thanks to their musical training and their new occupation as musicians." (from interview with Willy, head of police station of Barumbu, Kinshasa, 11.04.14, ref-01858)

"A few years ago already, we said that we had to find something to occupy these 'kulunas'. They are young people who have not been to school. They do not have a level of education that allows them to find work. We wondered what we could do for them, such as offering them work on public roads. The phenomenon has existed for generations. There are already several generations of 'kuluna', always people who have nothing to do, no occupation, no training. During the day they are in their houses to wait for the evening to do acts of banditry." (from interview with Apolinaire Ipayya, former mayor of Barumbu, Kinshasa, 25.04.14, ref-02937)

The phenomenon of street violence and of children fleeing their families after having been accused of being bewitched, makes that many children and youngsters are in need of being meaningfully occupied. The society must give them a rewarding occupation, out of a basic sense of social justice²²⁰, and also in order to give such young people a sense of belonging²²¹. This is necessary for the health of these youngsters and young adults, and at the end of the day also in favour of the health and development of the society which they are part of. If music can play a role as an instrument of reintegration, then it should also be proposed as a possible occupation.

Many people in Kinshasa agree that a lot of the transgressive and violent activities of gangs are related to the fact that these youngsters miss activities to do. A lack of occupation can make people want to find refuge in anger, aggression and violence. Violence is often found in neighborhoods where people do not have work. When you have work, you are busy and ready for it from early morning on. After eight hours of work and more in the workplace, one is tired and has no time nor energy to do anything else. Musicians also do not have much time for other things. They are very occupied, having to rehearse a lot. And when one becomes an artist-musician, things change a lot: For them days are not from 9 to 5. They have no time to think of violence, not only because they are so busy working on their music, but also because they are busy

²²⁰ What role can music play in human rights? Jane Sugarman argues, music by itself can change very little. (Dave 2014:9)

²²¹ Still, studies of youth who join gangs have shown they also do so because such membership brings with it a sense of belonging (Ungar 2007:18).

with it in their minds, so it is not only an occupation which keeps them busy and 'occupies' them.

Besides what I could observe myself, I also received testimonies of people surrounding the young musicians that they had - in comparison with before they embarked on their occupation of music-making - very much changed their attitude towards life, and this was i.a. to be seen in the way they spoke, the way they expressed themselves, the language they used, their appearance, how they behaved, how they dressed, and also how their conversation was going, allowing everyone to speak one after the other.

9.1.4.5. Stability and security

Learning music-making imposed regularity in their daily schedules, and started for the young adults in this research a process of reconstruction, resocialization and reintegration, and this was especially felt in its giving them more stability in their lives. They do not necessarily earn much money with music, but they enjoy to live more in peace.

Those who were in the gangs could back then make money easily by ripping of money and objects from civilians, but they lived in insecurity, as they were searched by the police and when arrested, they risked being imprisoned. And the money earned as 'kuluna' took them also into spending it all again quickly, so that soon they were back to zero, and ready to plunge back into 'kuluna' activities. The stability, security and tranquillity which they acquired by living in music was very much appreciated, even though they were making little money.

9.1.4.6. Possibility to travel outside DR Congo

The dream - and in certain cases (EM) the real prospect - of being able to travel outside DR Congo thanks to their music-making, has - especially for those attracted to the brass band of EM - surely also been a reason for some to want to become a musician. Young people know that when they follow the music training programme at Espace Masolo, they might have an opportunity to travel to Europe, even though they do not know for sure whether there will be future trips and whether they can then be part of it. And within BM the musicians have the example of their mentors who regularly travelled to Europe or to the US for concerts or to give training, and they also hope one day to be able to travel abroad, as their mentors do.

9.2. Intrinsic outcome from making music

The autotelic experience: The key element of an optimal experience is that it is an end in itself. Even if initially undertaken for other reasons, the activity that consumes us becomes intrinsically rewarding. (...) The term 'autotelic' derives from two Greek words, 'auto' meaning self, and 'telos' meaning goal. It refers to a self-contained activity, one that is done not with the expectation of some future benefit, but simply because the doing itself is the reward. (...) Most things we do are neither purely autotelic nor purely exotelic (...), but are a combination of the two. (Csikszentmihalyi 1992/2002:67)

In this research I focussed on trying to find out what the experience of making music brought to young people who became musicians thanks to the social music projects of Beta Mbonda and Espace Masolo, and I thereby wanted not only to find out what the external (extrinsic) advantages were - or were expected to be - but I also very much wanted to know what the activity of making music in itself brought them in return.

This direction was taken in the research, because, from hearing what the participants had to say about what motivated them, the intuition imposed itself that the sheer pleasure of the activity itself was an important motivation for them to be involved in it.

When seeing friends making money within other activities, while they themselves continued to live difficult lives in poverty, they did regularly feel lost and at times thought of getting involved in other 'business', as they hardly were making money with their music. Because of the survival mode they need in their day-to-day life to be in - and are expected to be in by their family -, their lack of income could make them seriously doubt about continuing their musical activity. That they could consider giving up, was something I would understand very well within their context. But they did not,

and said they did not, saying they loved making music too much, beyond any consideration about their position in society.

I have in this research wanted to understand the reasons why they could not or did not want to give up their music activity. **Why are they there and why do they stay?** This is a question I had especially in relation to the situation of Beta Mbonda, and also, but less, towards the musicians of Espace Masolo.

The musicians of a brassband such as Espace Masolo can quickly make some money out there. Not much, but some. So, in their case I could easily conclude that they were there in this activity because they made some money as a result of it. The musicians of Beta Mbonda hope and even expect that they will make money as well some day. Possibly they have a promising future ahead of them thanks to their activity as musicians. But in the meantime, after all the years in this activity (since 2009), nothing much came out of it in terms of concrete financial or material gains. Even though they had moments and periods of discouragement, most of the time they continued to be motivated and engaged in this activity.

The reason they give for this is that the act of studying and performing music gave pleasure in itself. So music-making can in itself represent a sufficient return from the activity, on top of the possible but limited financial returns and gains in symbolic capital (respect, hope for a career as a well-known artist, being already recognized on the streets after television broadcasting...).

They for example came back after a break of 2 months, not because their financial prospects with BM had changed, but because they missed the activity itself. Making music and being together is in itself of great interest to them. They are a closely knit group of young men. But it is especially playing the music itself which they love, and something which makes them come back to rehearse and work.

Music-making is an artistic activity which means more to the musicians than only what it can produce in terms of money or recognition. One has to be able to take ownership of the instrument. It is difficult to master an instrument. It is something which is demanding a lot of work and concentration. The process of mastering a musical instrument and repertoire supposes the incorporation, internalization and embodiment of a series of reflexes and automatisms. For these reasons, becoming musician represents a lengthy work. One cannot quickly learn how to learn how to play an instrument.

Beta Mbonda rehearses 5 days, sometimes more, per week. They continue to work seriously, since many years, even though they only have a small number of concerts. It was for them important to be involved in this activity because of the respected and the new identity they gained. People were not afraid of them anymore, but rather respect them in a positive way as artists. They hope and expect to one day make money with this activity.

But the contrast between the limited financial and symbolic gains they make right now, and the fact that since almost 6 years (in 2015), they worked on a day-to-day basis on their music, is really surprising. For anyone it would be astonishing to have to stay within such miserable conditions and still keep on developing the activity of music-making.

In my research I have been putting out a series of questions concerning the reasons they could have for their continual focus and commitment to making music, and mostly received the short answer that it was because they loved it. Together with them I worked on trying to come to a better understanding of where this pleasure then came from.

I have wanted to find out why such young adults, coming from such surroundings, could not - as they claimed - afford to give up their musical activity, even though the financial and symbolic returns after 5 or 6 years were meagre or hardly existing.

"The artist is already paid by the melody. The artist is already paid by what he makes. That is already his first salary. I had a friend who was Mutombo, who was at one time a member of the orchestra of Tabu Ley. He was before that together with Manuaku in the Great Zaiko. I saw him when he started with Rochereau (Tabu Ley). He then told me that he did not exactly know what he was doing in this orchestra, but that he was so happy to be doing what he loved and dreamed to do." (from meeting with musician Felix Wazekwa, Kinshasa, 04.05.15, ref-13410)

Below I am listing and shortly describing six of the intrinsic outcomes which were reported by the participants as being the most important ones in relation to making music:

- (1) the enjoyment of discipline,
- (2) the enjoyment of hard work leading to results,
- (3) the enjoyment coming from playing music itself,
- (4) the enjoyment to master music instruments and repertoire,
- (5) the enjoyment of being in another world, and
- (6) the enjoyment resulting from the master-disciple relationship.

These are some of the motivations to make music, which are internal to the activity itself. That is why I bring them here together under 'intrinsic' outcomes:

9.2.1. Enjoyment of discipline

The act of mastering music involves forms of restriction, effort, endeavor, struggle, straining, labor, and strictness, and so to succeed in making this all happen, some level of discipline is needed.

Before arriving in the settings in which music-making was introduced to them, they were for sure living lives in which they knew what discipline meant. To survive within gangs of children in street situations or of older 'kuluna', discipline was an essential element in the organisation of their day-to-day lives, but not in ways to be compared easily with their lives as becoming musicians. In comparison with the previous lives of most of these young musicians, they were then suddenly obliged to accept schedules of rehearsals which were uncomparably strict and they needed time to adjust to this new situation. Several musicians reported their pride related to succeeding to accommodate themselves with this over the years.

9.2.2. Hard work leading to results

As it takes a lot of work and a lot of effort, learning music is at first especially difficult. It is only after a while that it starts to become a pleasurable activity. But the hard work needed to arrive at results comes with an inner satisfaction of the individual vis-à-vis the result he/she has obtained in doing his work, which is sanctioned by the public, and motivates him/her to continue.

"When I say that I am the leader of my instrument, it is because it is something that belongs to me, on which I work every day. My work is what promotes me and makes things work for me. And when I'm working on my instrument, I am already in control of it. I have worked on it many times. It became almost like water for me. And so, when I am in front of the audience, I always have the pleasure of playing. The joy I have is to be able to share the results of my hard work with people who come to listen to me." (from interview on music-making with BM-GI, Beta Mbonda, Kinshasa, 04.05.15, ref-13439)

Even though they all started learning out of their own free choice, in the beginning they needed their trainers to impose them the discipline of a certain pace of work, because they knew nothing and had little or no pleasure then. Only after they started to experience the pleasure of mastering their instrument a little bit, this schedule would loosen up a bit.

Musicians need to continue to work on their art and craft all the time. In fact, they should be working 8 hours a day on their music, but this is something which is not possible because of the hot climate in DRC. When they rehearse less, they immediately feel a loss in capacity though. The more they rehearse, the better they can become.

9.2.3. Enjoyment of playing music itself

Musicians in our research could very well imagine playing music just for the pleasure of it, also without being paid for it.

"When I play music, even when I do not eat or drink, I will forget all of that. When I am in front of the instrument, everything else does not count anymore. Also money does not count. I can play for nothing at all, it does not matter. The only thing that matters then is the pleasure of performing music. If I would not have my musical activity, I might have abandoned my struggle in life a long time ago. I love music so much. So when I play music, even if I am in trouble and have no money, I dash into it, take a dip and experience as an immersion into the music, feeling one with it. (from life story interview with BM-CL, Beta Mbonda, 15.12.14, Kinshasa, ref-08213)

9.2.4. Enjoyment to master music instrument(s) and music repertoire

When the musicians succeed to attain a certain level of mastery of the instrument and of a musical repertoire, this in itself is experienced as a treasure, because that is where one starts to become a musician, with everything this can represent and mean. Mastering is something which is felt like a motor encouraging their further development as musicians. When a minimum of mastering is missing, this is experienced by the participants in this research as a problem, creating frustrations, and in certain cases making some of them stop making music.

It is not certain that it is the musical activity in itself which has helped these young musicians go through the personal psychological and social changes they have gone through, even though music-making clearly played a role in this. It were in particular certain characteristics of the activity which played an important role in this. The act of mastering was reported as an important one, because they felt they were becoming capable beings, valorized by it and felt it could have side-effects on other parts of their personality and social life which also needed mastering.

The importance of mastering also became clear when lack of mastering was discussed: When musicians are confronted with a lack of mastering they also lose a lot of the pleasure attached to playing music. This can happen because one is missing certain technical capabilities, or because one does not yet know certain works of the repertoire well enough... But, to be confronted with difficulty and missing mastery is at the same time also an important element which helps to keep on animating a sense of curiosity and wish to become better musicians.

During the musical activity they feel more in charge - 'at the wheel'. Thanks to a developed form of mastery, they are able to perform complex music. This experience is known and studied in psychology as a state of 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi 2002). It is a feeling of pleasure related to the ability to achieve something strong and complex. It is a phenomenon which is not unique to the activity of performing music, but it is a well-known experience among musicians. It is inspiring and motivating for these young people to be able to experience this, in contrast to the difficulties their life in Kinshasa imposes on them. Music-making represents because of this experience of mastering an oasis for them: They realise they are able to create something beautiful thanks to their capacity of mastering music instruments and repertoire. Even though it does not bring in much money, they come back to it again and again, day after day.

"Pleasure does not only come out of mastering something I had difficulties with. A great pleasure comes out of the feeling I have when everything I have learned comes to together in unisono. For example, I was asked to come to a studio recording with BM-DO. All the instruments had already been recorded. They only wanted to add madimba and asked us. It all had to be done quickly. We were asked last minute to take the madimba, take a motorbike and come to the studio. They let us listen to what they had recorded until then. I quickly thought about the different rhythms I could propose on the madimba and we played it for them. When we played, the studio people cried out loud that they loved it and wanted to keep it. The pleasure was immens. It took us not even 10 minutes. We were paid for it and enjoyed their enthusiasm. This was for me a moment of great pleasure because of the combined mastery, everything coming together, exactly when I needed it."
(from interview on music-making with BM-MW, Beta Mbonda, 30.04.15, ref-09672)

The importance of mastering was in this research taken as one of the four most crucial questions studied. Chapter 10 of this thesis is entirely devoted to the phenomenon.

9.2.5. Being in another world

*Hey Jude, don't make it bad
Take a sad song and make it better
Remember to let her into your heart
Then you can start to make it better
(Lennon-McCartney, 'Hey Jude', 1968)*

*I am sure that one of the reasons why music affects us deeply is its power to structure our auditory experience and thus to make sense out of it. Although I have been at pains to dispel the psychoanalytic view that music is an escape from reality or a regression to an infantile state, there is no doubt that music provides one path of temporary withdrawal from the hurly-burly of the external world. This is refreshing, because it permits the same kind of scanning, sorting, and rearrangement of mental contents which takes place in reverie or in sleep.
(Storr 1992:105)*

Playing music is by most participants in this research reported as allowing them to - at least during the activity of making music - forget ugly or difficult things of their past and present, psychological injuries and pains they may have from this, money problems, or problems with diseases they can

have themselves or members of their family may have... It makes one think of Huizinga's 'magic circle'²²².

The massive childhood traumas the former 'witch'-children have, can affect their health across their lifetime, and it would be uncritical - to say the least - to claim that music-making could easily heal them - or 'save' them, as they themselves say - from such past injuries.

Music is not having a big impact on problems one may have or may have had in the past, but nevertheless, when making music, one can create another alternative world of sounds and rhythms and beauty, to which one can go to, a refuge.

9.2.6. Relationship master-disciple

Another important aspect reported on the process of learning music was the special relationship which exists - or is expected to exist - between teacher and pupil. The relationship master-student is in both projects experienced as crucial to learning music. The master passes onto his students a tradition of knowledge and know-how. Music-making is a craftsmanship which needs hands-on learning, because it involves many things one can not learn on your own or from books or videos, but for which one needs a master-coach as go-between.

In their culture they have the habit of calling all younger ones 'kids' and the older ones 'father', or 'mother'. Respect for the elderly is experienced as something necessary and natural.

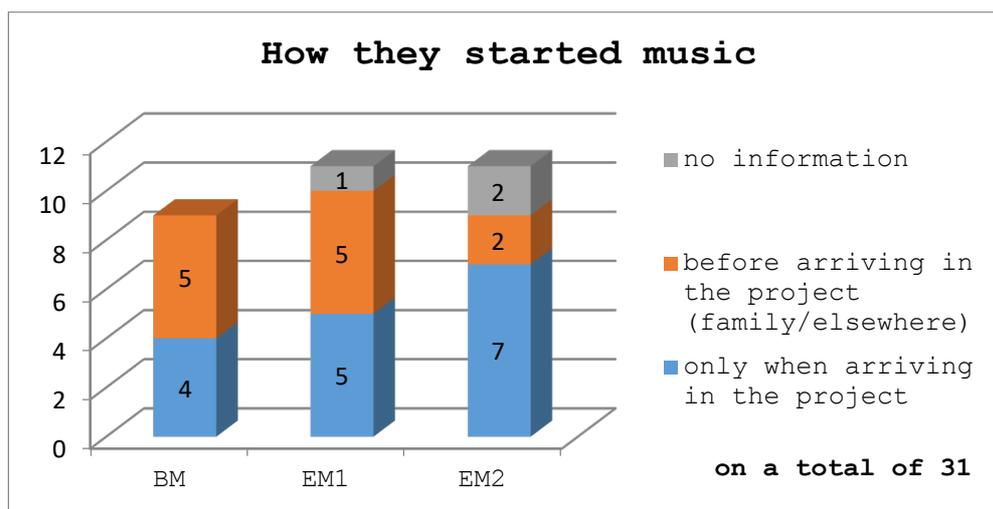
The mentors and trainers are also for the young musicians their examples, and models to be followed. The master masters and can help the student to discover and develop his own mastery.

Through their teachers they come into contact with a tradition of music-making, with those who have been making music before, and with the music repertoire and techniques of performing the instruments developed in the past.

²²² According to Johan Huizinga, the consciousness of play as a separate and self-contained sphere is often reinforced by the pervasive tendency to enclose the players within a spatiotemporal frame, the so-called "magic circle", which isolates their game from the more serious tasks of daily living. (...) The concept of the magic circle is perhaps Huizinga's most frequently discussed contribution to the field of ludology. (Rodriguez 2006)

9.3. How they began music-making

How they started music	BM	EM1	EM2	
only when arriving in the project	4	5	7	16
before arriving in the project (family/elsewhere)	5	5	2	12
no information		1	2	3
on total	9	11	11	31



When BM was started, 3 young men came to the first meeting, and later some more came and joined. But they did not all stay. Some left and did not come back, while others left but joined again later on. BM was started because the young men – then still members of the violent 'kuluna'-gangs – asked musician Alhim whether he was willing to become their master and teach them. Alhim had a project he wanted to start for children in street situations, not with former gangsters, but accepted. So the project really started because the young men asked for it themselves.

When I was small, we lived in a compound in which a group of musicians lived and rehearsed. When I came back from school at noon, they would be rehearsing there, and I could also try the tamtam. I was 14-15 years old then. It was the group in which also our mentor BM-AL played. When BM-AL came there he took me with him and invited me to try to play the tamtam and taught me things. In the beginning, mastering the tamtam was also not easy. It also took time. What surely helped me a lot was the fact that the tamtam was always there where I lived, so I had many opportunities to play and exercise on it. I would find it each time I would come home from school. I would go to sleep with it and wake up with it. Not only BM-AL came there. Also other masters in the art of playing the traditional percussion came there in our compound. And they also called upon me and taught me more and more. To be able to play the tamtam you need a good musical ear ('l'oreille musicale') and that is something you are or are not born with. Some people just never understand anything about rhythm, while others follow it easily. I have this facility to easily learn new rhythms. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-DO, 14.04.14, ref-09507)

Interesting to note is that half of the musicians in BM and in LJT already at least touched some music-making before getting involved in these projects. Whether this is due to the fact

that so many people in Kinshasa have some experience with making music, or whether this is due to other reasons, I do not know. Only 4 of them (out of 32) came out of families in which parents or other family members or neighbours were musicians, and they were thereby introduced to music early on. I only discovered this element after analysing all the interviews, so could not double-check the reasons or contexts of this with the participants in the research. But as up to half of the musicians reported having a preliminary interest in music, I can at least conclude that this was for the group being studied here an important element to guide their attraction, choice and maybe even sentiment of vocation for music-making.²²³

Music is all over town in Kinshasa, and children are said to be particularly attracted to it. They love to sing and dance to music they hear all over in the streets of the city. Music is also present in churches, and children are often invited to join orchestras there.

Watching others play, was for many the inspiration which made them want to try making music as well.

Most musicians (not all) are critically evaluating themselves and seem to be conscious about what they have and have not acquired and still need to perfect, willing and wanting to do the necessary efforts to make improvements. During the interviews I insisted on this point in order to find out what they would indicate as being the weak points on which they needed to work on to improve. The answers I got were diverse, concerning many different aspects of their music-making: their limits in certain technical craftsmanship on the instrument, limits of creating the right sound or rhythm, a lack of knowledge and know-how related to different styles and repertoire of music...

9.4. What makes someone a (good) musician?

Some musicians are more gifted than others. Some have more talent than others. But with only a little talent for music one can surely also become a musician. There are fortunately different levels of quality needed within the community of

²²³ Psychologist Ericsson's research teams already concluded that *unique environmental conditions and parental support, rather than talent, may be the important factors determining the initial onset of training and ultimate performance.* (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer 1993:365)

musicians. There are the exceptionally creative musicians, who then often become the soloists. And there are musicians who are technically good, who play their part perfectly well, and who are also needed in the orchestra.

Proposing music as an activity to help young people in difficult social conditions, surely does not work well with all youth. Not all youth are 'made' or 'meant' to become musicians. They can at a certain moment become OK or even good technicians though.

In this research I asked all participants what the difference is between a musician and a car mechanic. Certain young musicians immediately understood the difference between technique and art, but most of them did not. That was in part so because they were in a certain stage of their training and therefore also in a certain stage of their understanding of music-making. When one is debuting and only in the beginning of mastering the instrument, one then especially sees the technical side of the activity.

Another question I asked, is this: Imagine yourself hearing 5 musicians playing one and the same instrument. They all play the same tune and all 5 play perfectly well technically (the right notes, melody, harmony, rhythms...). But you will find one of the 5 as sticking out and see him/her as a good/special musician, better than the other 4. Why would you come to that conclusion?

Most of the participants to the research would reply by saying: "Maybe you will not hear, but the best one plays the notes better than the others. We hear this because we are musicians as well." Then I would answer them that the musicians in this example really play all the notes and rhythms perfectly well.

Some of the interviewees could immediately respond that the 'good' musician is the one who interprets differently, adding small variations or improvisations, a personal interpretation. Such answers come from those who have already a more advanced understanding of the art of music-making, and about music as being much more than only mastering dexterity on an instrument.

I have in this research wanted to look from different perspectives at the main question which was: which role music can play in social work for youth in difficult circumstances, being victim and/or actor of different forms of violence. Some seem to believe that this work is successful when youth starts to make a living thanks to the concerts they give/get. I am

not convinced of this though. I think it can end quickly if the activity is limited to a purely technical execution.

They then have become music technicians, comparable to car mechanics but then in the activity of music. Many musicians are like this, and they are needed as well. Such musicians can be playing together in brass bands and orchestras, all playing the same tunes and notes. In their cases, it is not a problem if they are less creative and inventive musicians. It is enough if they play the notes correctly. One also would not want a mechanic to start improvising too much when mending a car.

I would like to emphasize that it is not easy to be a musician. One can learn well in a classical music school without becoming a good musician. (...) On a technical level, in other professions, the techniques are often static. But in music, it is necessary to know how to make improvisations. (with soloist EMI-CK, focus group with Espace Masolo, 16.07.14, ref-04063)

I recognise a good musician as the person who is improvising, adding things, small details, only to be heard by musicians. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-CL, 30.04.15, ref-09455)

The way I was defining a musician, was different from how some of the initiators of the social music projects in Kinshasa, as well as my assistants in the research team, defined a musician. For them, and for many other people, **a musician is simply seen as someone who makes music and who makes a living from making music.** They doubted whether all the well-known musicians they have in their country are technically good musicians, and whether they care about still wanting to become better musicians. Just the fact that they make a living from making music is thought to be good enough for people to define them as musicians. Someone who gets concerts and gets paid for it, is then considered to be a musician, although this is surely also related to whether they are considered to be good or not so good musicians.

In a meeting with teachers at a well-known music conservatory, I recently had a similar discussion: They were astonished to hear me define someone to be a musician, even when that person was not in the profession and career of performing as such in public.

Furthermore, one can be a good musician who wants to produce him/herself in public, and not at all earn a living with it. And one can be a not so good musician and make a good living with it.

9.5. Difficulties involved in making music

As it has been mentioned a number of times earlier on in this dissertation, the enterprise of wanting to become a musician is not an easy activity to embark on.

This is even more so when music is introduced as an 'instrument' in social programmes which aim at giving support to young people who are trying to build up a new and more constructive position for themselves within the society they are living in.

In this chapter a series of difficulties are listed and shortly commented which one could encounter in the venture of learning and performing music in the context of the Kinshasa social music projects.

9.5.1. Hardly any money gained from music

That not much money is being made from making music, has throughout this thesis been commented many times, and that this is so much in contrast with the survival mode people in Kinshasa are living in.

The brass band musicians earn a bit more than the musicians performing traditional percussion music. Musicians of both projects hope to earn a living with music-making later on, but they are not or hardly for the moment, even though they are in this undertaking since many years (4 to 8 years).

9.5.2. Negative reactions surrounding

Some parents notified us they were not happy their children were pursuing this career which does not pay, because after all these years they hardly bring money home. They all told us they were happy with the new identity of their children, but had problems with them not earning money for their family. They understandably expect their children to play a role in the day-to-day struggle of surviving the poverty so many people in Kinshasa have to deal with.

It often happens that they go to rehearsals and performances without even having the means to cover their transportation costs and to buy food, and so they are also unable to stand up to the needs of their families.

The wives and families-in-law of some of the musicians often do not appreciate this. They were thought of as possibly living in competition with other women whose men buy things

for them, and some therefore bothered their partners and told them to go shopping, instead of making music. For this reason, several men in this research were abandoned by their wives.

The first years of their involvement as members of BM, the musicians were regularly bothered by their friends who were then still members of the violent 'kuluna'-gangs. They called them names such as 'yuma' (fool, weakling), making fun of them for not making any money with their new activity.

All these negative reactions from their surroundings, pressuring them to stop or limit their involvement in music-making, but this had no considerable impact on the musicians. They did not seem to listen or care.

9.5.3. Difficulties to learn music

Learning and mastering music is in itself difficult, and it takes a lot of time, effort and concentration. Not all succeed to keep on making such efforts to continue working on developing themselves as musicians²²⁴, because for some the difficulties are too hard to cope with.²²⁵

Most of the musicians in this research do not possess an instrument at home to work on²²⁶, and for that reason it can take them many years to master the instrument and the music repertoire.

When they do not work on the instrument for a few days or weeks, they will lose a lot. If they want to keep developing themselves and the band, they need to work on their instrument almost every day.

When talking about the difficulties encountered, the word '**normal**' is easily used by the participants in the research. In Kinshasa so many things indeed appear to be difficult, so it could well be that people may be more used to living within difficult circumstances and limited opportunities, and this may then also help them to cope and deal with the difficulty of learning music, more than people outside of this reality would be capable of.

²²⁴ also see 8.6

²²⁵ *Engagement in deliberate practice is not inherently motivating. Performers consider it instrumental in achieving further improvements in performance (the motivational constraint). The lack of inherent reward or enjoyment in practice as distinct from the enjoyment of the result (improvement) is consistent with the fact that individuals in a domain rarely initiate practice spontaneously. (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer 1993:368-369) And: A premise of our theoretical framework is that deliberate practice is not inherently enjoyable and that individuals are motivated to engage in it by its instrumental value in improving performance. (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer 1993:371)*

²²⁶ also see 10.3

9.5.4. Performing at funerals

Performing with brass bands at funerals is bringing in some money for the brass band musicians, but it is not a very interesting activity, nor musically nor socially. In such jobs, they have to go on playing music throughout the night, until early mornings.

Funeral performances are scheduled in a series of sets, each one corresponding to a different repertoire of music. Such series usually start with a first 3-hour session from 11 pm up to 2 am, followed by a set from 4 am to 6 am, then one more from 10 am to 11 am, and then from 1 pm to 2 pm. Playing the first set can be pleasant, but when it gets to 4 am or later, it becomes much less of a rewarding activity. In between sets, they sleep a bit outside, then wake up and continue playing music. They will get tired, and it can - especially in the dry season - be cold at night and early mornings. To succeed to make any sound at all is hard in such conditions.

Also, at such funeral ceremonies alcohol and cannabis are being consumed, something which is not making this an attractive activity in the context of a project with social ambitions for youth coming from living as children in the streets of Kinshasa.

It is doubtful that one can evolve well as a musician in this reality, not only because of the conditions of the work itself, but also in terms of the musical and artistic limits of such work. No rehearsals are needed nor planned in preparation of funeral performances, as the repertoire is mostly the same.

In addition to this, the musicians performing at funerals are not much respected as musicians and artists. Contrary to music performed in concerts or theatre performances, musicians at funerals represent something of a backdrop, and people mourning at these ceremonies are not very conscious of their presence.

I have not myself been able to assist to a funeral, but I have seen videos, discussed it many times with the musicians themselves, and found that musicians are especially there for the animation. They represent a decor. People are mourning and music is accompanying the mourning.

People who come to a concert on the contrary come to listen to the musicians and their music. Much more than a performance at a funeral, a concert or music theatre performance therefore motivates musicians to show the best of themselves, and also

to want to develop themselves to become better than they already are.

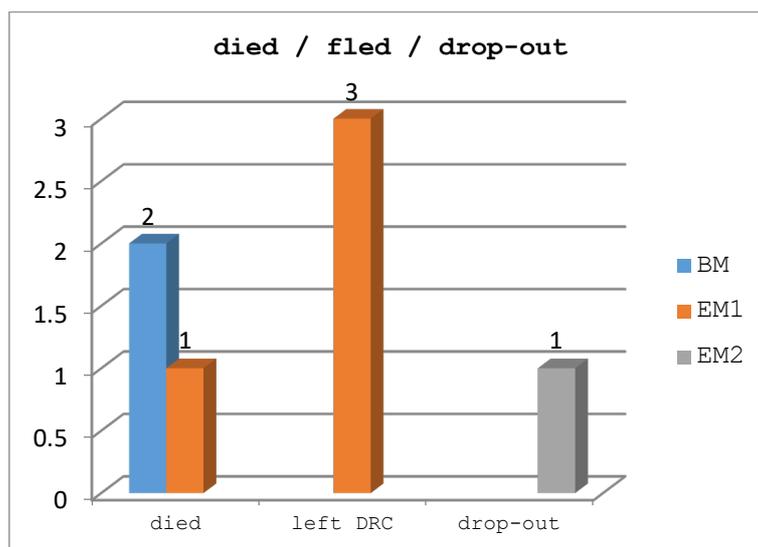
A lot of the brass bands of Kinshasa nevertheless make most of their money in funerals, even though there are also other events for which brassbands are being invited. The social and community workers at the shelters for children in street situations, and the mentors of Espace Masolo, told us they agreed that the young musicians coming from living in the streets of Kinshasa after having fled their families who accused them of witchcraft, should be sleeping at night, not spending the night in a brass band playing at a funeral. They nevertheless ended up allowing them to sometimes participate in such performances anyway, because it made them earn some money. Even though the money is limited, it was something for them, and they all need it so much.

9.6. Drop-outs

What makes this kind of research tricky is the almost inevitability of focusing on the success stories. These social music programmes are based on the idea of social mobility more than social justice - i.e. propelling some individuals up through an otherwise static social fabric. As we focus on the mobile individuals, such music programmes look wonderful. But there is a huge hidden shadow behind that: all those who dropped out, or never even started.

Also, the impact of musicality, talent, 'musical-rhythmic and harmonic intelligence' (the ability to produce and appreciate rhythm, pitch and timber; Gardner 2006) - in other words, the fabric some have to become musician, while others do not - is something which must be an important aspect in explaining why some drop out of such programmes while others persevere. Although I wanted to, I have not been able to study this in detail in the context of our 2012-2016 research in Kinshasa.

There are many possible reasons to drop out from social music projects in Kinshasa. I have tried to collect as much information as possible on dropouts, persons who had abandoned themselves or who had been rejected by those running the projects. Besides the information I could easily get around persons who dropped out or re-entered during the fieldwork of the research, it was much less obvious to get information on dropouts I did not encounter during the fieldwork in Kinshasa.



died / fled / drop-out	BM	EM1	EM2	
died	2	1		3
left DRC		3		3
drop-out			1	1
on total	10	11	11	32

A total of 6 persons out of 32 participants in this research dropped out because of death (3) and because leaving DR Congo (3), which is for sure a high percentage.

9.6.1. Some died

During the 3 ½ year fieldwork, 3 of the 32 participants in this research died (2 members of BM, and 1 of the more advanced musicians of EM). They died of illnesses one does not die of in the part of the world I was fortunate to be born in. Because of being poor they did not have the means to get proper medical care. **This thesis is dedicated to them.**

9.6.2. Some left DR Congo

Three members of the ensemble Les Jeunes Talents (LJT) of Espace Masolo left DR Congo in 2017. Two of them fled when arriving in Brussels for a concert-tour in Germany with Espace Masolo and young musicians from Germany. They now live without papers somewhere between Holland, Belgium and France. During the tour in 2017 a third member of LJT fell in love

with a young German lady, who later came to Kinshasa to get married with him, and they then both travelled back to Germany, where they in 2018 gave birth to their first child.

Espace Masolo was until 2017 proud of the fact that they had succeeded to organise up to 3 tours to France and Germany with former children in street situations having become young musicians, without anyone (except one) having fled the group to stay in Europe. To succeed this, they have talked at length with the youngsters to convince them not to stay in Europe. Until 2017 they had succeeded in this, although it was often against the will of the families of these youngsters, who prefer to see their offspring stay in Europe, so that they can send money to support their families back home. Although the two young musicians who fled in 2017 had done already 2 previous tours to Europe (and once were trusted to even stay on a little longer for a training session), they each time came back to Kinshasa, as agreed upon... except last year. For the ensemble LJT their defection was bad news, because the three musicians who left DR Congo were not only the best musicians, but also those who were best organised, in terms of their personal activities as musicians in Kinshasa, and as representatives who succeeded to get regular concert propositions and bookings for the ensemble LJT.

The musicians of the ensemble who stayed in Kinshasa considered this situation not only as bad news because the best elements were now missing, something which would weaken their ensemble: Being themselves back in the complicated context of making ends meet in Kinshasa, the departure of 3 of their best musicians also gave them the feeling that they had been the stupid ones, going back home instead of trying to stay in Europe. And last but not least, after the escape of two of them, it may become much more difficult for the group to get visas for future tour projects from DR Congo to Germany or France.

Fortunately, I found out in the beginning of 2018 that the ensemble LJT is impressively resilient, reorganising itself well, bringing in new members, and starting to seriously rehearse and coming to new agreements concerning the cooperation between LJT and Espace Masolo.

9.6.3. Girls drop out more easily

The number of girls in street situations was estimated to be about one quarter that for boys. This difference is not necessarily because girls experience a lower degree of violence within their households. Rather, the practice of instilling an attitude of almost complete submission in girls from an early age (Blanchet, 1996) reduces the likelihood that girls will confront abuse. Consequently, fewer girls leave their families to move to the street. In addition, girls usually have lower levels of knowledge about what life is like 'on the street' and, if they acquire useful knowledge, they will find that sexual violence and sex work are likely to

be a major component of life on the street. The 'price' of life on the street is higher, perhaps much higher, for girls compared to boys. (Conticini 2007:218-219)

As many other scholars, Alessandro Conticini and David Hulme studied and described, there are important differences of realities of children in street situations between the genders. This was also found in our research on the reality of music-making by youth who formerly lived in the streets of Kinshasa.

Girls do not have a brilliant reputation in the context of these social music projects in Kinshasa. Many of them are reported to have more problems to find their way back into life off the streets, in comparison with boys, resulting also in more female dropouts from a social music project such as the brass band of EM.

According to the reports of the social and community workers of the shelters for children in street situations, there are many girls living in the streets of Kinshasa, and most dropouts of training programmes are girls. This is also the case in the art training programmes of EM.

Many girls who start the music training programme stop and say they see it as a waste of time. They say that they know better ways to earn money, not willing to accept the sacrifices needed to master music-making.

The girls who did continue the music training at EM tell us that many girls they know prefer to go back into the streets and make a living by stealing or by prostituting themselves for money. Such girls will not accept easily to spend their days at the community art centre with only 700 francs in return to cover transportation costs to get there. Others do not quit because of the loss of income, but they do so because they are accustomed to enjoying their freedom in the streets and do not support the control imposed on them in the centres.

I was informed time and time again by social and community workers from the shelters for children in street situations, by the mentors of the arts training centre Espace Masolo, but also by the girls and boys who themselves were being trained as musicians at EM, that the inclusion and insertion of girls was much more complicated than of boys.

One educator told us that he thought coaching boys as much less problematic than coaching girls. This was later on confirmed by most other educators and trainers. Boys could also resist, but were in comparison supposed to be fairly flexible at the level of their understanding and accepting, and they would forget conflicts and misunderstandings quickly, while girls were seen as often being resentful.

The brass band of Espace Masolo was started in 2009 with only one boy and 24 girls. One month later, all the girls had already given up.

This does not mean though that girls would specifically not be interested in music, because this problem is also noticed in other activities, such as for example the training in dress-making at EM.

I was ill and he took me with him to the shelter. My friends in the streets put together money to help me get hospitalised. I went to a hospital where they asked too much money. I had a problem of appendicitis. When I came out of that hospital I could hardly walk. My leg hurt very much and I could hardly move. That is when the educator Lejeune passed by, an educator of the shelter Sainte-Famille in the streets. He walks in the streets to meet with street children. He asked me whether I would accept to go into the shelter. I accepted. In the shelter I was treated. I was not the only one going to the shelter then. Several of my street friends went with me into the shelter. I was operated. When the operation was done, my friends fled the shelter, and I also wanted to flee. I thought I had to do the same as those with whom I had come into the shelter. Even though the educators advised me otherwise, I fled from there anyway, back into the streets for a period of one week. The educator then came to look for me again in the streets. He talked with me and convinced me to go back to the shelter, which I did. But I did not really want to be there. I really wanted to be out in the streets. The people of the shelter then gave me a responsibility in the centre, so that I would have less reasons to leave. (from individual interview with EM2-GR, beginning musician at Espace Masolo, 27.04.15, ref-12497)

The particular difficulty described to keep the girls in these programmes is also related to them being more fragile than the boys. Some of the girls told us they did not like to stay in the shelters, because they felt suppressed and limited in their freedom. When a girl accepts to be reunified with her family, she will often experience affective relational problems with her family, who might continue to refer to her as being a 'witch'-child. And then girls may quickly go back into the streets. Much more than boys would do. Boys accept such situations more easily than girls.²²⁷.

9.6.4. Dropouts from Espace Masolo

Of the participants of Espace Masolo I have known (because participants in our research) - apart from the 3 who fled to Europe - only one stopped in Kinshasa, a young musician of the group of beginners. He found a job in a cool food store. He said he thought he was wasting his time with the music training.

Some of the dropouts later told their friends who stayed in the music training that they had given up but regretted it later, even though they were in an activity which gave them more money. They told their friends they regretted not having

²²⁷ The A of Acceptation in 'ISAAC' is said to be an important element in succeeding reunification with the families and reinsertion in society (see explanation chapter 9.1.3).

learned to become a musician and also not having benefited from the same social and psychological accompaniment offered by EM and the shelters.

It takes time to master music-making, and some children are said to have dropped out because they were impatient to get results out of the training.

Of most dropouts the educators and mentors do not know why they left the programme, because they lost contact with them. Normally they would be informed about them through the shelters, but when the children go back to live into the streets, also the shelters loose contact with them.

A high percentage - probably up to 80%! - of the children who come from the shelters for children in street situations do not continue the music training after starting it. They are sent to the arts training centre EM by the shelters. They are free to make another choice and leave the proposed training programmes. The mentors of EM see themselves as having the mission to help children in street situations flourish through the artistic and creative activities they propose. Certain children have difficulties making up their minds about which training to enroll into, and others decide to return to their respective shelters for another orientation. They are not imposed to choose, so there are children who do not find any activity that interests them amongst what Espace Masolo offers them, and so they do not come back. I was not able to find out whether those who left, did so because they thought they had no talent for music-making, or because of other reasons.

Manuaku Waku had the experience of trying to set up a musical project for children of the streets. After a month or two he had to stop the project because the children were coming and going. He was there on his own, wanting to give music lessons, but as there was no social coaching accompanying the project, they did not succeed to keep the children from coming and going. There was no one to encourage the children to continue the lessons. Of course, forcing children and adolescents to make music, does not make sense at all. On the other hand, working with children who come directly from the streets or stay in open shelters, is not possible because then nobody can follow up on how things go for them within the training, what works and what does not work for them, and to also encourage them not to give up too quickly.

The strong collaboration and perfect tuning between EM and the closed shelters for children in street situations, was an important element in explaining some of the successes of EM in getting youngsters to go through the demanding and long (6-7 years) music training. This would not have been possible

without the support and accompaniment of the social and community workers of the shelters.

A few children had to drop out of the programme because they could be sent to boarding schools, and therefore could only join the music training during holiday-periods, something most of them did.

A change of master has also been the cause of children quitting a programme. This happened when EM decided to stop the collaboration with their first music teacher and started to work with someone else. After the departure of the first conductor of the EM brass band, many abandoned the music project. Some of them joined the brass band which was created by this teacher after he left EM. The connection master-student can be something strong in mastering music, so it is not a surprise to find students following their teacher.

9.6.5. Dropouts from Beta Mbonda

Two young newcomers started to study music with BM, but left after a year or two. They were young (16 and 17) and they had already gone through difficult times in their young lives, living in the streets of Kinshasa, not with their families. The musicians of BM were members of 'kuluna'-gangs, but they could at least go home to their families at night. These two children did not have much of a family. Their families rejected them and they had to first survive in the streets, then ended up in a closed shelter nearby BM, but fled from there as well. I visited and spoke with the family of one of the young boys. It was an unpleasant experience, because the parents of this boy did not show much interest in the boy, only in what they could earn through him. The boy, whose parents I met, left BM, even though he had convinced us that he loved music a lot. Both children are still around somewhere, and hopefully they will decide to go back to work with BM later on, because the members of the ensemble told us many times about teaching them and how they appreciated doing this.

During my first preliminary visit and first interviews with members of BM, I interviewed someone who left the ensemble to become a hairdresser, and who later explained how much he was sorry that he was not with them anymore, seeing the success of the band.

I was informed of the fact that at the beginning 5 more former 'kuluna' were within BM, but they left. One was the person who became hairdresser. One of them quit because he left DR Congo and went to Angola. One of them came back, re-entered

the ensemble, and participated in our research. I have no information about the other 2.

The fact that the ensemble of BM was such a tight-knit group, might make it difficult for someone from outside to become a new member, as getting along with the founding members might be needed in order to be accepted. It was reported to have been a problem for at least one person, who ended up being excluded for this reason.

9.7. Summary and conclusion

1. It is so difficult in Kinshasa to earn money with music. Some do, but they are exceptions. I also know some fine musicians in Kinshasa who - to my personal taste - make beautiful music, but who are not making much money at all. There are so many musicians in Kinshasa, so only those continue in music who dream of this, who love it and are ready to make sacrifices.

2. I have throughout this research not only wanted to look at how the musical activity could help youngsters to get themselves a job and some earning, although this is for sure something really positive, especially in Kinshasa.

3. I have asked the musicians of BM the same question again and again: "Why do you do this, as you hardly earn money with it?" They would then answer: "One day we will earn money with it", but that day may only come several years from now. In the meantime, they were not ready to let go, they told us. Although they had so many day-to-day problems in their struggle to survive, music-making had taken too important a place in their lives.

4. Despite the many disappointments they are confronted with in terms of possible extrinsic gains they could get from music-making, they stay in this activity anyway. When they stop sometimes, they quickly come back to it, despite the fact that there is no immediate financial nor social benefit of importance to get from it. The reason they give us why they always go back to music-making is because they like it a lot. And when making music, they tell us they experience something which is beautiful and strong, and something they cannot experience anywhere else in their lives. They feel very much

alive when in the act of rehearsing and performing their music.

5. It was not easy for the participants in this research to succeed in finding words which could express well what they meant with their statements that playing music itself gives them pleasure and enjoyment. It is much easier to explain what making music gives or does not give you in terms of social and financial return. The feelings they have of enjoyment when playing music are not easy for them to understand and therefore not easy to put into words. But that such feelings exist beyond the reasons related to the other possible outcome, is something which came up many times during our focus group meetings and individual interviews with them.

6. They are with their music-making in an activity which belongs to the realm of passions. This is most strikingly impressive in our study of the case of Beta Mbonda, who are repeating music during many days at length, even though they do not have that many concerts, and if they have a concert they only get very little money for this (something like 20 USD or less). I have seen that the musicians of this ensemble do have other important social reasons for sticking to music-making, but at the end of the day even those reasons cannot explain why they did not give up after all those years, taken into account the poverty in which they all live and which they need to survive.

7. In the following chapters of this thesis 4 hypotheses are presented which have come out of this research as 4 main elements needed to allow music to play a role of any significance within social work:

- (1) on the need for a double - artistic and psychosocial - accompaniment (chapter 9),
- (2) on the impact of mastering (chapter 10),
- (3) on the need for shared ownership (chapter 11), and
- (4) on music-making for it's own interest (chapter 12).

After studying these hypotheses within the context of this research, I have been able to come to partial conclusions for some of the formulated or encountered sub-questions (see conclusions in chapters 9 to 12), as well as some overall conclusions and propositions for further research towards the end of the research (see chapters 13 and 14).

10. Hypothesis 1: ARTISTIC AND SOCIAL ACCOMPANIMENT

(teaming up of musicians / teachers / mentors / educators)

The first main hypothesis is that to allow music to play a role of any significance within social work, one needs to be able to develop a double and balanced - artistic as well social - accompaniment of those participating in such social music programmes:

The role of the mentorship framework provided by the music trainers and educators surrounding the young musicians is of utmost importance. A double accompaniment is needed by (1) talented artistic and musical trainers, and (2) strong social and community workers who can propose a closely followed social and psychological accompaniment. This can then allow the youth to stay within the music training process and not give up, because such trainings are demanding a lot of discipline, effort, concentration, as well as a degree of constraint and confinement.

10.0. Introduction

1. I have found throughout this research on the possible social impacts of music-making in Kinshasa many examples making clear that social projects with music require a double 'accompaniment'²²⁸: It requires (1) a strong artistic - musical - accompaniment, with good teachers and good musicians, and (2) it also needs a social and psychosocial accompaniment.

2. When one comes from living in the streets or from violent gang-activities, it is not necessarily easy to bend to the discipline of music-making. It requires support from people who artistically, socially and psychologically accompany the learning of music. I have wanted to find out what this represented for the young musicians, in their music training and in terms of their experience performing in the bands, and what were the strengths and weaknesses of the support they received.

²²⁸ The use of the term 'accompaniment' has recently been extensively described by Mary Watson in the many possible contexts it can be implemented (Watson 2015).

3. When music excellence is prioritised in social music projects, the social outcome of participation in the musical activity can be marginalised. This is fortunately not the case in either of the Congolese cases studied within this research, even though they each place their emphasis on different aspects of the work: Beta Mbonda places the emphasis on musical quality, while for Espace Masolo the social outcome and transformation are emphasised. Beta Mbonda is a musicians-run project and therefore they are more demanding on the artistic quality of the musical outcome.

4. Ideally, to make social music projects work, social and community workers should be able to collaborate closely with musicians and music pedagogues. In both cases being investigated here, this is to a certain degree the case. The community arts centre Espace Masolo is not run by musicians but by social and community workers and theatre artists, and they are therefore less connected to the demands of musical excellence.

5. Both projects have nevertheless worked hard to keep all participants included in the programmes and have not excluded participants because of musical artistic failing or weaknesses.

6. I describe in the following chapter the specific sub-questions related to both (1) the social (9.1) and (2) the artistic (9.2) accompaniment within the music social case studies of this research.

10.1. Social accompaniment

It has been impressive to be confronted with what supervisors of both case studies know about the youngsters within their projects, thanks to their strong commitment and involvement, but also thanks to clear strategies which are directed towards allowing this youth to become independent individuals capable of taking care of themselves and their families.

*Field note 31.07.15, Kinshasa - visit shelter Jeunes au Soleil:
Some are older, but a lot of the children in this shelter are small children. I remember a 7-year-old girl who came to sit down next to me and I could lay my arm around. I see 11-year-old boys who are small in stature (maybe because of malnutrition?). There are only 30 children in this closed shelter, including two participants in my research (EM2-ST and EM2-GR).
The house is not big, but there is room for everyone. There are no mosquito nets. They have recited poems for us, and EM2-ST welcomed us by singing and dancing for us.
EM-GR and a boy have led my daughter and me around the shelter.
The children are hanging onto Richard, the educator-supervisor who is running the shelter together with his wife Marie-Ange. I feel a lot of warmth from Richard for the children.*

*They will next week leave all together for a 10-day holiday on a farm somewhere outside Kinshasa.
Marie-Ange and Richard want to buy a house a bit further down in the municipality of Masina (Kinshasa). They have already saved 65,000 USD, but according to Richard 80000 USD is asked for. They negotiate about it.
I am confronted here with a commitment that I do not see myself capable of:
Richard and Marie-Ange moved with their own children to Kinshasa to do this work with street children. They have come to Kinshasa from Paris, where they lived. Richard originally comes from Kinshasa, but Marie-Ange is French.
The misery in which everything is bathed here, and where these young people come out of and end up into again, makes accompanying children and youth extremely challenging.
EM2-ST (17 years old and especially interested in music-making) and Jonathan, a boy we met there (17 years, trained in car mechanics), both are at the end of their possible stay in shelters (maximum possible age in shelters is 18), and will soon end up in a life outside this shelter, where they will have difficulties finding work.*

The community arts centre Espace Masolo considers to have succeeded its project towards a youngster, when that person has become independent, has work and can take care of him/herself and his/her family, through professions they offer training for, such as dress-making and/or music-making.

10.1.1. Strength social accompaniment

When visiting the shelters for children in street situations and speaking at length with many educators and social and community workers there, I was confronted with the incredible talent and capacity for empathy and love these professionals must have to avoid dramatizing and to continue to value the positive points of each child, also the girls²²⁹. Some of the girls persevere and succeed to become musicians, and they express their appreciation for having profited from the social as well as artistic accompaniment they were offered. These children and youth come out of difficult situations, having been in conflict with their own families, and then living in the streets of Kinshasa.

The social accompaniment within this context must be difficult, especially because the living conditions for many people in Kinshasa are and continue to be so bad. The educators are faced with problems they can most often not solve. So they need a lot of patience and love and energy. I imagine they thereby also need to be able to make abstraction of the many problems they cannot really handle (poverty, health, lack of interest from police and politics...), in order to be able to do their work without getting depressed. They do not let go.

It is really difficult to do this work. One moment you think that you will succeed, and then the next moment things change again completely. Look at the example of EM2-FI. When he got here he was very dirty, and look what a good-looking boy he became to be. But now he is gone again. (from mirror-interview with Malvine Velo, mentor and cofounder of Espace Masolo, 23.07.15, ref-16420)

²²⁹ also read about gender differences under 9.6.3

Each kid is a special case and represents a dossier with a lot of information to take into consideration. And we need to work with them bit by bit. Sometimes things advance well, and then there are moments or periods of 'rechutes'. But our task is to continue to encourage them. (from mirror-interview with Malvine Velo, co-founder of Espace Masolo, 23.07.15, ref-16429)

It has been impressive to interview the educators working in the shelters for children in street situations, with whom especially Espace Masolo collaborates closely, and who's main goal is to reunify the children with their families.

The supervisors of the social music projects are remarkable in how close and comprehensive they follow-up on what happens to the children and youngsters within their programme. They speak with passion and love as well as in detail about each individual participant (see example in 16.1, ref-01081).

Maybe more than anywhere else, it is very difficult to succeed true inclusion through social music programmes. Geoffrey Baker (2014) cites a Sistema Scotland report on this important question, which according to Baker's research is very much in contrast to the concerns and practices of its progenitor, Sistema Venezuela: "Real inclusion is much more complicated than simply being open to everyone. True inclusion means putting in place the support, the informal and formal processes and the ways of working, including staff attitudes, to actively encourage and enable everyone who can take part and who wishes to take part, to do so." (Evaluation of Big Noise 2011, p.11).

Of the youth at Espace Masolo, several are now young adults (between 18 and 23 years old) and most have succeeded to reconnect with their families, and several have become entirely independent, at least in part thanks to their work and income as musicians. Those who succeeded to become independent are proud of being able to earn a living and being able to support their family.

In the beginning, but also later on, because of multiple reasons, they did not attend all of the rehearsals, so the mentors had to call them or go get them, talk with them, and encourage them, until they started to adopt the framework and attitudes needed to be in a position to learn and exercise.

Even though discipline and rules and hierarchic organisation were an important aspect of their previous lives, in comparison it was of a different nature. Former gang-members and children in street situations are not used to function within such a restricted disciplined and structured environment asked for within a music training context. It is therefore not an easy task to impose upon them the rules and discipline needed to succeed their musical training.

In Beta Mbonda, the musicians-mentors have a strong social concern as well. They have not looked for outside accompaniment at this level though, something which has been of importance in the project of Espace Masolo: The mentors of Espace Masolo are working in a close collaboration with social and community workers of shelters for children in street situations, where most of the participants of the brass band project are or were living before they succeeded to become independent. This close collaboration has ensured a close follow-up and understanding of what happens with the youth in and outside of the programme. For this study, I also happily included the information and know-how of the social and community workers of these shelters, whom I interviewed at many occasions, in order to understand their perspective towards the music programmes some of the young inhabitants of their shelters were following.

To succeed in their aim to unify the children with their families, the team of Espace Masolo focusses on training programmes in the arts, but also on preparing the children for school through basic literacy programmes. With the support of their diaspora and partners in France and Germany, they cover the transportation costs of the children between their shelters and the training centre, as well as the expenses for schooling.

I found that in the projects which succeed some form of social impacts on the youth within their programmes, such as Espace Masolo and Beta Mbonda, a close supervision is being proposed.

I think that children change behavior mainly through our collective and individual 'chats', regular interviews with children in the shelter. And when the children arrive at Espace Masolo, the supervisors of the EM continue this work of supervision. So I think the impact of our collective coaching work is very important. (from mirror-interview with social and community worker Didier of shelter Pekabo (Barumbu/Kinshasa), 24.04.14, ref-02801)

The supervisors talk to them a lot, follow them closely, look for them when they are absent, then call them, and make them come back. They do what they can to convince them of the need for discipline and concentration... a 'moralising' framework which seems an endless process. The young musicians told us about it, and they insisted that this had been essential for them to hang on to the project and not give up. Especially in the case of the former 'kuluna', who come from a violent world and where the shift represents a major change, the work of the supervisors was considered by the young musicians as being crucial. This aspect of the supervision is considered by the participants as being a paramount element of the success of such social music programmes, which is something apart from the musical and artistic follow-up.

10.1.2. Collaboration with shelters for street-children

The stories of the parents are filled with desperate measures as they are at the sidelines of their children's lives. Not only because their children do not allow them in, but also because of child protection services. (Berckmans 2015, p.11-12)

In research on children in street situations in Latin American countries, it was found that educators over there often work in conflict and even opposition with parents (Berckmans 2015). This is contrary to the position educators take whom I met and interviewed for this research in Kinshasa. They tell us their main goal is to be able to find and connect with the families of the children in street situations, in a comprehensive and sympathetic approach towards the difficulties of the families, not with an attitude of negative judgment²³⁰.

Didier: Yes, I am very happy. I myself managed to reunite many children with their families. And family reunification is the most important part of this work.

Lukas: Because for the child the saddest of all is to be separated from his family?

Didier: Absolutely. Each of us is working on this.

(from mirror-interview with social and community worker Didier from shelter Pekabo in Barumbu, Kinshasa, 24.03.14, ref-02829->02831)

In the case of the project with children in street situations in Kinshasa (Espace Masolo), it was noted how important the strong collaboration had been between the artistic training and community centre (Espace Masolo) and the centres where the children and youth were living (shelters/homes for children in street situations in different neighbourhoods and sectors of the city) to allow the training to be successful.

The best results though have been obtained with children coming from closed shelters. In contrast with open shelters, in the closed system children are totally taken care of and protected - schooling, health, food... and cannot go into the streets at night.

We tell them that the street is not a child-friendly place. That every child has in principle a family. If the conditions for reunification with the family are not yet met, we offer you this middle frame of the center. The center can secure you. We talk to them about security. It's true that they can also eat here, but safety is even more important, because at night they can be threatened and injured, while in the center they are safe. (from mirror-interview with social and community worker Didier at the shelter Pekabo, 24.04.14, ref-02811)

Early on, the community arts centre Espace Masolo experimented working with children coming from an open centre for children in street situations, but they had to break their partnership with such centres. It was proven impossible to achieve the expected results, because the children who came from there did

²³⁰ *Explanatory frameworks have become more sophisticated than earlier assumptions (...) that street children are either "throwaways" or "runaways" because of poverty and family breakdown. Such conjectures stigmatize impoverished families, blaming them for collapsing under the stress of undefined "poverty," and fail to grasp that most poor families do not break down, nor do they inevitably abandon or discard their children. (Ennew & Swart-Kruger 2003)*

not live in this centre but in the streets, and the supervision of these children could not be assured. Early on they decided to only work with children who are not or no longer in the streets. Only children who live in closed shelters or in (host) families can be accepted for training programmes at Espace Masolo.

The streets are not a child-friendly place, even though children who go live in the streets are often strong²³¹. But still, every child should in principle have a caring family. If the conditions for reunification with the family are not yet met though, centres for street children offer them this in-between shelter. Security is an important aspect of what is offered there. They can also eat and sleep and study there. Safety is important, because at night, children in the streets can be threatened and injured, while in the centre they are safe.

The open centres are trying to convince the children to come sleep at the centre, but as they are open centres the children can themselves choose whether they come to spend the night there, or not. The people working at such shelters advise the children strongly to come sleep at the centre, because in the streets they are in danger of being badly treated.

The shelters working together with Espace Masolo are in terms of their ultimate aims well in tune with Espace Masolo, namely (1) to help the children get scolarised, (2) to get them to learn a profession and (3) if at all possible, to reunify them with their families.

In comparison with Espace Masolo, there is much less collaboration between the music trainers of Beta Mbonda and educators and social and community workers from shelters. This is mainly because Beta Mbonda hardly works with children in street situations, although this could change in the future.

The director of the shelter Pekabo for children in street situations in Barumbu, the municipality where Beta Mbonda is situated, was in school with the head of BM (same class, same age). They are friends. That makes the contact between this centre and Beta Mbonda easy. Also for Beta Mbonda the good contact with the shelter is important if they want to keep track and guide the few young musicians being sent to them via the shelter. Street children have started to come to Beta Mbonda, but as they have no contact with social and community workers in charge of them, the mentors of BM cannot ensure

²³¹ One can deplore the street for not being a safe environment for children, but those who migrate to the street might be viewed as children only in terms of their biological age. They have already lost their innocence and they are ready to be 'adults' in their own right and live without the supervision of parents or guardians. (Conticini 2007:222)

their social accompaniment and guidance. As a result of this, these children come, they stay a while, and then they leave again.

10.1.3. 'ISAAC': Importance, Security, 'Amour' (love), Acceptance and Confidence

The educators in the shelters tell us they base their work on 4 crucial elements of what they call the ISAAC system (Importance, Security, Love, Acceptance, Confidence; in French: Importance, Sécurité, Amour, Acceptance, Confidence).

Importance: It is crucial to see each individual as having his or her own special importance in society. Everyone has a place and role to play, within the small surroundings of the family, and in the larger context of the neighbourhood and society.

Security: The interventions of the social and community workers are focussing on ensuring the security of the children, who are at danger when living outside the family in the streets. That is why they prefer welcoming them in closed centres where they are protected from street violence (prostitution and gangs) and illnesses.

Love: Pending a reunification with their families, the educators who are inviting children and youth from the streets into shelters do their best to give the parental loving care they have missed out there.

Acceptance: As situations are extremely complicated and often not entirely possible to mend, it is thought to be an important aspect of social work in Kinshasa to help children and youth to come to an understanding and even acceptance of the limits of possible scenarios for their future lives.

Confidence/Trust: Nothing much can develop positively if the children cannot find trust in their own capacities and talents, and if they cannot find adults whom they think they can trust and with whom they can build up and construct something meaningful for themselves.

My wisest decision was to leave the streets and go to the Pekabo shelter, where I was in contact with a lot of people. There were also people who gave us concerts. What framed us especially in life, in the centre, was learning how to be reborn anew. They taught us how to arm ourselves with courage, that we should not continue to steal, and make decisions for our future... That's how I decided after these tips, to give up stealing, taking drugs... (from individual interview with EM1-MA, advanced musician at Espace Masolo, 18.12.14, ref-06921)

10.1.4. Reunification children in street situations with their family

Many children stay for several years in shelters, even though officially they can only stay there a maximum of 6 months. Not only may the children themselves refuse to go back to their

families, also many families refuse to take their children back. Then the social and community workers will take the time it takes to discuss and try to convince the families to change their minds. If that does not work out well, then there is the solution of finding a 'famille d'accueil transitoire' (called 'FAT'; a transitory host family), or find the child a 'parrain' or 'marraine' (godfather or -mother), or some other solution. And if such interventions do not work out, they will wait until the child will be allowed to live in the shelters until reaching the age of adulthood. At 18 years the child will nevertheless for sure have to leave the shelter. The training (basic schooling and professional training) they are supposed to get during the time they are accompanied by the social and community workers of the shelters is considered to be important in order to help them get on with their lives afterwards.

The social and community workers of the shelters for children in street situations are not policemen who need to know and judge why a child is on the street. They see themselves as mediators between a child with his/her family, the two being in conflict. The social and community workers want to remain neutral, and stay away from positioning themselves as neither for the child nor for the family. Instead they seek a reconciliation between the two parties.

The community arts centre Espace Masolo works closely together with the educators of the shelters where the children live, in order to succeed their reunification with their family. In certain cases, the team of Espace Masolo takes the lead in working on the reunification process. The shelter where the kid is then staying is kept well informed though about all the steps the team of Espace Masolo takes in such cases. When the process of unification is successfully ended, they go visit the family together with an educator of the shelter, in order to write the official form of reunification.

The aim of reunification of the children with their families is at the centre of the work Espace Masolo focusses on, and this is based on the belief that being disconnected from one's family is a handicap for a person's well-being, even in older age.

Reunification efforts can often be difficult though, and sometimes not at all successful, or not possible. Reunification efforts in fact often fail, especially with adolescents older than 13.

Last year, I was told that I was to be reuniting with my family. But I did not want to go back, because my uncle beats me. He does not love me. He does not want me to live there. (from individual interview with beginning musician EM2-EX, 17.07.15, ref-14958)

Some children refuse and some families also just do not accept to take certain children back. In such cases Espace Masolo and their partners in shelters will do everything they can to make such a kid autonomous in society, get them a little job, a small studio to live in, etc.

*Our aim is not to give them shelter and food. Our aim is if possible to bring them back to their families, and to form them so that they can take care of themselves.
(from mirror-interview with Cathy Ekemino, then coordinator of Espace Masolo, 09.04.15, ref-08969)*

In certain cases, shelters help former children in street situations to create community residencies (called 'foyers communautaires'): grouping of youngsters whom are invited to live together but autonomously. They then rent a space together.

The majority of the families of children who end up living in the streets are disrupted, because parents are separated or certain parents died.

Finding families to adopt children who are not welcome in their own families is not easy, because of widespread poverty, and adoption has also become difficult in the DRC because of recent scandals around child trafficking.

After succeeding a reunification of a child in his/her family, it is also important to follow-up on this. Often it does not work out well later on. It can be caused by the fact that the child continues to be seen as being bewitched. In certain cases, it is impossible for the social and community workers to change the minds of the family and surrounding neighbourhood on this belief.

Each case is a separate and different case though, which needs particular study and attention and understanding.

Of the 22 former children in street situations in this study (following the music training at Espace Masolo), only 6 had been reunified successfully with their families (3 girls and 3 boys). Of 5 others I have been able to note unsuccessful attempts, caused by: family not found (1), youngster refusing to be in contact again with family (2), family refusing to accept that youngster is not bewitched (2), conflicts occurred again between youngsters and family after reunification (2). More than half of the former children in street situations who were participants in this study still awaited reunification with their families.

10.2. Artistic accompaniment

The type of music being instrumentalised in social music projects can vary a lot. In the cases I studied in Kinshasa, the ensembles are small, and the music is well known and close to the interests of the participants (traditional Congolese percussion music and popular Congolese brass band music).

The fact that the line-ups of the ensembles are small, gives the possibility to have direct one to one contact between the musicians. They mostly perform without conductor, and therefore have to be carefully connected amongst each other when performing the music, through audio and visual cues and dialogue.

I have not found statistical information on whether the percentage of successful reintegration and structuring of young people is higher in certain training programs in comparison with others. I can therefore not claim that those who became musicians would be better off in life than those who have become auto mechanics, soccer players or some other profession or occupation.

10.2.1. Strength artistic accompaniment

The other 'kuluna' and the 'chegués' often tell me: "Ah master, you must be a sorcerer, to have succeeded to get our friends to reach this level of mastering music." (from interview with mentor Alhim Eyenga of Beta Mbonda, 02.04.14, ref-00980)

Eleonora Belfiore finds that generally "community arts activities, which are mainly participatory, place more emphasis and value on the artistic process - with its empowering effects - rather than the artistic product (Webster 1997, 1-2). This is particularly true of those projects targeted at disadvantaged communities, where often the participants have little or no previous experience of the arts." (Belfiore 2002:15)

This is though - at least partly - contrary to my findings in Kinshasa, where the artistic accompaniment within Beta Mbonda is intense. The musicians are constantly solicited to work more and more.

Alim sometimes challenges us by insulting us, in the learning example of the instruments madimba or xylophone. It is a big job to learn to play the madimba. It also requires strength, especially on stage. (musician BM-GI during focus group #3 with Beta Mbonda, 21.04.14, ref-01999)

The rehearsal is for the mentors of Beta Mbonda not only the preparation for a concert, but an activity on its own. They

call this activity 'rehearsals', but in fact they are 'lessons' which the musicians receive. In fact, if they would only work with them to prepare concerts, a lot of time would be considered wasted.

Lukas: What is the most important goal of Beta Mbonda, your project? And, has it changed since the beginning?

BM-AL: Since the beginning, artistically they evolved, as well as their mentality. And they still continue to evolve. They changed, because they have left their past life. Everything they did, they gave up. Now they are artists and I'm so happy for this.

Lukas: But at the beginning your goal was a social goal..

BM-AL: Our goal before was indeed social. We wanted to remove them from what they were, 'kuluna', to become someone who has a small job, something to do in life. That was our goal, so yes, it was social.

Lukas: And now the goal has become also artistic, right?

BM-AL: Now they have become artists.

Lukas: So now you are concerned about the artistic quality?

BM-AL: Yes. They are really artists now, and I am working on enhancing their qualities as artists. (extract mirror-interview with Beta Mbonda mentor Alhim, 24.07.15, ref-16468-16777)

10.2.2. Challenges coming from preparing concert programmes

Social music projects which are careful about prioritizing the social outcome, are often reluctant towards organising too many concerts, as this will put too much pressure on the participants. Concerts are welcomed, but only as they will allow the musicians to share their skills with audiences, and also to help them become better musicians. Getting concerts is in the context of Kinshasa a priority though.

The brass band of **Espace Masolo** quickly became the most known activity of the centre. They were during the period of my field work nevertheless looking to rebalance their activities and give back more space to the puppet theater they started the community art centre with. The brass band started to 'drown' the other artistic activities of the centre. The brass band is busy, giving regular concerts, and it was often on television. These public performances attract other children to play in the brass band.

The musical level of the brass band of Espace Masolo is not of very high quality. The difference with many other such bands is that Espace Masolo is offering real challenges to its musicians by setting up concert and music theatre projects, sometimes even with foreign musicians. These performances invite the young musicians to work hard and give the best of themselves.

In July 2014 I was surprised to hear the musicians of Espace Masolo perform in Kinshasa together with young musicians from Germany. I could not believe my ears. I did not recognise the same musicians I had heard before in rehearsals. It is surely the strength of Espace Masolo to propose much more than only

boring funeral concerts, but instead create real challenges through music theatre shows and concerts, and sometimes tours in Kinshasa and in Europe.

Now that we have this project, the arrival of the Germans, we have accelerated the pace of our rehearsals, that is to say from 11h to 16h. Normally we only repeat 3 days per week x 2h per day. (extract with EM2-30 during focus group # 1 with advanced musicians of Espace Masolo, 16.07.14, ref-04094)

As this participants in our research explained, they have worked hard during at least 2 months to be well prepared musically for the new programme with the Germans. This was an important and motivating challenge for them.

Most brass bands in Kinshasa do not have special projects and always play the same. They hardly rehearse, because they do not need to. When they have a gig, they go, play what they always play, get paid, and that's it.

Also in the case of **Beta Mbonda** the challenges represented by the concerts are an important motivating factor to develop the quality as well as the adhesion of the group to music-making.

The fact that in 2014-2015 the mentors of Beta Mbonda succeeded to develop two different concert programmes which made them work hard for a long time, represented an important challenge for all the members of BM.

10.2.3. Weaknesses artistic accompaniment

The more advanced musicians of the brass band of **Espace Masolo** - who created the ensemble '**Jeunes Talents**' - have confronted us in this research with the fact that they had become musicians thanks to their basic training within the brass band of Espace Masolo, but that they now were frustrated in terms of the level of their own music-making, and that they wanted to continue and become better musicians, something they could not do within the programme of Espace Masolo.

Well, we always want to go learn, but we are limited. It's almost like an almost incurable disease, but it can be curable. (...) The professional artistic accompaniment at Espace Masolo was good, although it was not ideal. And we experienced many turns, with different people teaching us. Now that we are nearing the end of our training, it's like water that has taken several directions, and does not know where the mouth is. (EM1-CK during focus group with advanced musicians of Espace Masolo, 29.12.15, ref-18510)

I understand and support the aim of Espace Masolo, which is not to be or to become a music school. Their aim is to help children through artistic activities and training to get back in contact with their families and, thanks to the training and schooling offered to them, help them build up something to become independent adults with a profession. Now they wanted to shift their attention from the more advanced musicians in

order to be able to give opportunities to young newcomers at the centre who also wanted to learn music. For that they had reduced the number of rehearsals for the more advanced to only one session per week.

The frustration of the more advanced musicians at Espace Masolo was situated at different levels. First of all, they wanted to become better musicians. They were not happy only playing at funerals. They saw it as going back to the streets, because the atmosphere at such funerals is not always good, with alcohol and drugs taken by the musicians to be able to keep playing throughout the night. They wanted to become musicians, away from the brass band life at funerals.

We can easily perform at funerals, but we will never be recognised as artists of music like we can be in music theater performances or concerts. Theater and art music gives us more chances to be successful. The art of theater and music places more value on someone than music in mourning places. When one plays in mourning places, one is not considered as much as the musician who plays in artistic theater and music performances. The art of theater and music gives a lot of consideration and satisfaction. (from individual interview with EM1-DO, advanced musician of Espace Masolo, 14.07.15, ref-14803)

I then asked the directors of Espace Masolo whether it was their wish or project to follow the young musicians in this, by proposing them certain further training possibilities, (1) via short series of lessons given by professional musicians such as Manuaku Waku or others²³².

Then (2) there was also - at least for a few of them - the possibility to go follow lessons at the music school of Kinshasa, the Institut National des Arts (INAS). Following my personal intervention, Espace Masolo had since 2012 an agreement with INA allowing youngsters from Espace Masolo (and from Beta Mbonda) to follow lessons there for free. They did need to have the certificate of primary school though, something which only 3 or 4 out of the 11 advanced musicians possessed.

The level of training capacity of the head of the EM brass band was limited and this created a discrepancy between the needs for musical training of the youngsters and the capacity of the trainer to respond to these needs.

The youngsters from Espace Masolo who are in the focus group of more advanced musicians had after 4 to 8 years within the brass band arrived at an age and a level of musical development which made them ask questions about the abilities of their teacher. The chief of the brass band could not really manage the expectations for musical development of the

²³² Manuaku Waku would have agreed to come and teach these young musicians without being paid. In 2014 and 2015, a theory (solfège) teacher was invited to teach at Espace Masolo as well as at Beta Mbonda: Gabriel Wadigesila, a fine jazz musician who taught on voluntary basis and regularly.

youngsters, but he had other fine qualities which made him bring these children where they were then. He has a good heart, and is patient and understanding with them. To get them to the level of musical development where they arrived at, was already quite an achievement.

What is for sure positive, is that the training at Espace Masolo has awakened their feeling and ear for music. They can start to defend themselves as beginners. But their training was not very developed in terms of reading scores, musical improvisation and basic dexterity in mastering the instrument.

The more advanced group has a strong desire to learn more about music theory. They want to get away from the position of brass band musicians who can only play at funerals, and want to become professional musicians who can give concerts with other professional musicians. And they know they need to be able to read music for this.

We were stronger than they are in terms of our energy. But they are stronger than we are in technical musical terms and in their capacity of reading scores. They easily read scores, while we have more energy. We also want to be able to read scores like they do. We learned a bit, but still have a long way to go. We are far from their level of reading. But they dream of being able to play with the same energy as we do. (young musician EM2-ST on his experience to perform together with young German musicians, focus group Espace Masolo #2, 10.12.14, ref-06962)

Espace Masolo does not position itself as a music training centre or school, but instead as a training workshop proposing initiative art training sessions. The mentors of Espace Masolo think that the basic music training was strong enough to allow the young adults to find their way in music and somehow develop themselves into better musicians. Maybe they are right in this. Was it good enough to have interested these young people in music-making and can we count on their love for music as the motive which will make them find their ways further into becoming better musicians? Time will tell.

My judgment, after what I have seen and heard during their rehearsals and concerts, is that the musical bases of the more advanced musicians of Espace Masolo are not very solid. Encouraging in terms of the potential for future development of their musical capacities, is nevertheless that most of them - not all - know this well themselves. Those who know their limits are the ones who make a chance to develop themselves into becoming better musicians, the others much less so.

So, the young more advanced group of musicians of Espace Masolo are proud of what they already achieved with their basic musical training, and a number of them are also auto-critical, critical about their own limited capacities. Most of them - not all - expressed their wish for mastery, and their wish to want to become better musicians. I have in this

research wanted to test their understanding of their own limited level of artistry and their wish to develop themselves further, because those who are too happy with what they are already able to achieve musically will probably have less chances to develop further into professional musicians²³³.

For Espace Masolo to become a stronger social **music** project, they will need to strengthen their musical teaching team. Espace Masolo has initiated young people into music, but what then? They miss the know-how within their team to ensure the further musical training needed. If they want to succeed in their project to train youngsters in becoming musicians, they will have to find a way to somehow accompany them further in their need for further training, even if they would not provide it from within Espace Masolo.

We gave them the pleasure to make music, as we do with other artistic forms such as puppet theatre. I am sure that most other Congolese musicians, also Manuaku, have started like that. First they discover the instrument, take pleasure in performing it, and only afterwards they learn the theoretical aspects of making music, such as reading scores. I think we should bring in teachers who during a week or two come to work with the advanced musicians on different repertoire of music. Our conductor EM-KA (and EM-NI before him) is limited in what he can teach them. So we can invite others to complete the training. We need to find people who are willing to step into our logic, our format. It can be musicians such as Manuaku, but also a teacher from INA or elsewhere. I think it is important that we accompany them in their wish to become better musicians. (Hubert Mahela during mirror-interview with co-founders of Espace Masolo, 05.08.14, ref-05740)

The mentors of Espace Masolo also see the frustrations of the young musicians as something positive, as it shows that they become preoccupied about their own future in which they want to become better musicians. After up to 7 years of music training, about 10 of the young musicians created in 2015 their own ensemble under the name of '**Jeunes Talents**', and Espace Masolo is giving them rehearsal time within their facilities, lending them instruments, and also considering what they will be able to offer them in terms of short-term training workshops.

Espace Masolo made them discover the pleasure to make music, as they also do with other forms of art, such as puppet theatre or drawing or sculpture. They discovered the music instrument, started to take pleasure in performing it, and afterwards learnt some of the theoretical aspects of making music, such as reading scores.

Their trainers were limited in what they could teach them. So Espace Masolo could invite others to complete the training. Espace Masolo is where it all started for these young beginning musicians, and in that sense it is considered by

²³³ In this context it is interesting to remind us of the central claim of the research of psychologist Ericsson's teams, namely that *the level of performance an individual attains is directly related to the amount of deliberate practice* (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer 1993:370).

them to be their 'home'. I therefore think it will be important for Espace Masolo to succeed in somehow continue to play a role in accompanying them in their wish to become better musicians.

I encountered a big difference between the 2 social music projects when comparing the level of musical and artistic demandingness and fastidiousness of the mentors towards the participants of their programmes. This was in direct relation with the fact that the mentors of **Beta Mbonda** are musicians, and those running Espace Masolo are not musicians, but social and community workers and artists from the world of theatre. This explained the difference of the importance given by the mentors of both projects to have the participants of their programme succeed a certain level of musical and artistic mastery.

In Espace Masolo the social ambitions come first and musical mastery is seen as the instrument to help them get there, while in Beta Mbonda it is the musical mastery which comes first and the social impacts are expected to come out of that.

It sounds as if these could be 2 pathways to come to a similar result at the end of the day, but that is not the case: Espace Masolo does not conceive its programme as a musical project to start with, but as a social project. The musical development of the youngsters is a subordinate element and has an instrumental role as part of the programme, to help the children from the streets to find their way back to their families and/or find and build up a place for themselves as independent adults capable of earning their living and developing a profession allowing them to find a place in society as adults who can take charge of others.

10.3. Practitioners' position and their needs for training (music pedagogues and social and community workers)

Nucleo teaching should be the best-paid job in El Sistema rather than the worst. (Baker 2014:85)

Field note 15.04.15, Kinshasa: The courage of Beta Mbonda mentors Mr Tshamala and Alhim Eyenga is like Sisyphus' who again and again pushes the stone up the mountain, even though it each time rolls back down again.

The mentors of Espace Masolo are not psychologists, even though they have the talent to closely follow the participants of their programmes psychologically and socially. Mrs Velo only followed some psychology courses at the Catholic University of Kinshasa. They tell us that what drives them in this work is their interest in wanting to help these children. In the beginning they followed their intuition and wanted to teach them something, so that they would not be in the streets anymore. Later on, they started to follow training sessions and workshops, organised by REEJER (Réseau des Educateurs des Enfants et Jeunes de la Rue), the network of up to 160 initiatives working in Kinshasa with children and youth from the streets.

Mrs Ekemino, the other longtime supervisor at Espace Masolo shared with us that she at the beginning did not think she would be able to work with such children. She did not have any experience before starting to work in this project, and she first found it a different and strange world to be confronted with.

I asked the conductor and trainer of the brass band of Espace Masolo whether he ever invited other musicians to help him out when he felt weak in his role as a trainer. He answered that he took part in several workshops which allowed him to acquire the knowledge he needed. To invite teachers from outside is difficult because most of the time they do not have the budgets to be able to pay such visiting teachers. If there would be budget for such invitations, he would be interested to also himself follow such interventions, so that he can ensure the follow-up after the visiting teachers leave. Such workshops would be organized for a short time, and after that it is he who continues to teach the children. Such teachings could therefore also benefit him as head of the brass band.

I came out of curiosity. Two years later I had a lot of ideas. Seeing the children suffer, lacking parental affection, touched me a lot. As they say in Kinshasa, 'the profession married me and I too married the profession'. But I must be sincere: In the meantime, it happens that I also regret doing this work, because, in the position I am in in this shelter for street children, I am not entirely happy with what I can make happen. When I compare the years I spent here with what the friends are doing who studied as social and community workers with me and now work elsewhere, I see that what I wanted to avoid initially, I fell into, a form

of 'apostolate'. (from interview with social and community worker Appison Kapinga, Centre Pekabo, Barumbu/Kinshasa, 15.07.14, ref-03802)

The results the supervisors/mentors of the projects with children in street situations tell us they expect or hope to obtain is especially to succeed to bring a certain number of them back into their families, and therefore recreating the family fabric. Another important goal for these educators is to succeed in scolarising the children, so that they get basic education and can after that also learn a profession.

The work is hard, and it therefore takes love and courage to accomplish it. Many problems exist with the children they supervise. The training they have as social and community workers initiated them in how to accompany such children, and this has been considered crucial for not giving up.

10.4. Summary and conclusion

1. As the title of this PhD-research suggests - "Music Saved Them They Say" - there was something before, a situation which was different from the one in which these young musicians were when I started-off this research with them. They wanted to be 'saved' from something²³⁴. The idea of 'being saved' was in this research not so much looked at from the perspective of the initiators of these music programmes, but especially from the perspective of the young participants-musicians.

2. The focus of this research was to study the possible influence of music on the lives of youth who - for different reasons - have been living in particular situations, in this case, as former members of violent gangs and as children in street situations in Kinshasa. And, in order to go beyond the sloganesque sounding phrase 'music saved them, this research has centered upon seriously debating with the young musicians in the social music projects in Kinshasa about what their music-making had been and still was then concretely about.

3. In the context of our first hypothesis put forward in this thesis, I studied the difference between social music projects driven by musicians (Beta Mbonda) and social music projects driven by social workers and theatre artists (Espace Masolo):

The 'motor' of **Beta Mbonda** (BM) is music. Music is here at the centre of the project. The project is for sure a social one, as it wants to help former members of violent gangs to

²³⁴ *The salvationist vocabulary of the title of this PhD-thesis comes from the youngsters in Kinshasa who are becoming musicians and who participated in my research.*

leave that life and find socially more constructive activities. But the final aim of the project is to train these young men to become good musicians. This is closely related to the fact that the initiators of BM are themselves professional musicians, who take their own careers as a way forward, to be followed by the youngsters they are training.

The situation in **Espace Masolo** (EM) is different. Those who are leading this project are social and community workers and theatre artists. They are not musicians themselves and therefore have difficulties understanding what it takes to become one. They even believe that music has taken too big a place within the activities of EM and that theatre and puppet theatre should again be given more attention within EM. They develop their precious psychosocial accompaniment of the children in a close collaboration with educators and social and community workers of the shelters for children in street situations²³⁵. Their most important ambition is to succeed social reintegration and family reunion of the children and youth, for which they are 'instrumentalising' the arts. But, in order to succeed at the musical level, what is missing at EM is that the musical coach is not really part of the leading team. He has not much of a say in the direction of the project. The leader of the brass band is in service of the organisation and is in charge of only one amongst a series of other activities. The directors are happy with the brass band, because it is a meaningful artistic and vocational activity, it gives hope to the children, and a lot of good vibes and publicity and also some money for the organisation. But the project is not set-up with music as a starting point and as a final aim, as is the case of Beta Mbonda.

4. To make young musicians become better musicians is something which has been well thought of within the project of Beta Mbonda, where teachers/trainers from outside are invited to give extra musical training, and the young members of Beta Mbonda are also themselves invited to go find other musicians outside of Beta Mbonda from who they can learn. Instead of being jealous of others teaching 'their' members, they stimulate it, because - being themselves musicians - they know very well that they also needed to follow this path of confronting themselves with different musicians of different musical styles of music, in order to become better musicians. Within the music project of Espace Masolo, such input from outside has been limited, although they also have the intention and wish to develop it more in the future.

²³⁵ See more details on this close collaboration between the community art centre and the shelters for children in street situations under 10.1.2

5. Conclusion. The artistic-musical accompaniment should ideally be as much as possible in balance with a psychosocial accompaniment. So, best is to have professionals from both worlds, or else, professionals with both types of talents in charge of such programmes. Another possible format is to make sure the social accompaniment is insured thanks to a partnership with professionals from outside of the project. *In this study, we are confronted with two social music projects - Beta Mbonda and Espace Masolo - which do their utmost best to make things work well at both levels of the accompaniment of the participants within their programmes - the psychosocial as well as the artistic-musical. If the strengths of both projects could be combined, it would form an ideal example of what a social music project should look like in terms of the accompaniment needed for its participants.*

The following part of this manuscript is closely related to the questioning discussed in this chapter. When looking at the need for a close artistic follow-up, the main requirement was already touched upon, and is in the following chapter described in more detail, namely: i.e. the impacts mastering an instrument and a musical repertoire can have in helping someone becoming a musician.

11. Hypothesis 2: AT THE WHEEL

(the role of competence and mastering)

The hypothesis proposed here is that the psychological and physical enjoyment/enrichment and the social pride of 'mastering' a musical instrument and repertoire is not only an important reason for these youth to be motivated to become musicians, but that this experience may also have social spillover effects, as it will encourage them to be also 'at the wheel' in other domains of their lives.

Continued involvement develops the competencies that change individual tastes and enrich subsequent arts experience. The (...) factor which is the key difference between individuals who participate frequently in the arts and those who do so only occasionally, is the intrinsic worth of the arts experience to the individual. Those who continue to be involved seek arts experiences because they find them stimulating, uplifting, challenging – that is, intrinsically worthwhile – whereas those who participate in the arts infrequently tend to participate for extrinsic reasons (such as accompanying someone to an arts event). (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras & Brooks 2004:xvii)

In the research that François Matarasso has conducted on audiences at an art event (rather than participants in an arts project) the impact of the arts on people's life appears substantially less remarkable (Belfiore 2002:14).

11.0. Introduction

An important factor is the exceptional amount of time spent in cognitive engagement with the materials and activities relevant to the skill in question (practice). (Sloboda 2005, p.251)

1. Richard Sennett describes how much time it takes to obtain a skill and also the satisfaction exercising it gives (Sennett 2008). One learns about oneself and develops as a human being through making something. Requiring skills needs many hours to perfect though. Psychologist K. Anders Ericsson and his research team already found that to acquire a complex skill would take about 10000 hours or 3 hours per day during 10 years (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer 1993²³⁶). Richard Sennett was a cellist before he became a sociologist and urbanist, and therefore also knows what it takes to become a musician.

2. The second working hypothesis in this research in Kinshasa on the social impacts of music-making (SIMM) can be summarized

²³⁶ *Individual differences, even among elite performers, are closely related to assessed amounts of deliberate practice. Many characteristics once believed to reflect innate talent are actually the result of intense practice extended for a minimum of 10 years. (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer 1993, p.363)*

in one word - 'mastery'. It took a lot of our attention to come to a better understanding of this part of the work which allows the youngsters to start to be active as musicians, and possibly even encourage them to tackle or deal with other aspects of their lives. The young musicians in our research discussed this aspect of their learning and making music a lot, during semi-structured group and individual interviews in which I focused on questions related to this part of the act of music-making²³⁷. I did then not only question the participants in the research about their current level of knowledge and mastering, but also what they thought they still needed to learn and master.

3. From what the participants in our research shared with us, I could understand that, for most of them, mastery and control also played a role in the lives they led before, so links also exist here with their previous lives. Even though mastering music instruments and repertoire was something very new and different, their new activity of music-making did not represent an entirely clearcut break with what came before.

4. Also, one cannot reach a certain level of mastery right away. It takes time, in some cases even a lot of time, months, or several years, before one succeeds in mastering an instrument and a certain repertoire. And such mastery can always be improved. It can somehow be a never-ending venture.

5. Different types of music require different levels of mastering. The type of music practiced in the cases studied in Kinshasa are not examples of 'classical' European music, but the Congolese brass band and traditional percussion music also both require levels of mastering, which I have studied and which I describe in this chapter of the thesis.

6. In order to come to a better understanding of how one comes to mastering music instruments and repertoire, I am in this chapter describing this aspect of learning music-making in detail, focussing on the following sub-questions:

- (1) what are the physical and mental difficulties encountered in mastering music,
- (2) the importance of regular exercise,
- (3) how rehearsals are being organised,
- (4) how music is memorised,
- (5) who takes leads during rehearsals and concerts in order to make things work, and finally also
- (6) whether mastering music inspires them in the (re)organisation of their lives.

²³⁷ see also 8.3.6.2

11.1. Physical & mental difficulties in mastering the instrument and repertoire

When I arrived here in 2013 I could not play anything. I started with the trumpet, but it did not work well. Then mentor EM-KA proposed to play the tuba. In the beginning I really had many difficulties to get near the level of the others who played trumpet in the group here. So I stayed behind and thought a lot and doubted about my capacities. But Mr EM-KA helped me by changing the instrument. The same day he showed me how to play the tuba, the scales and how to play certain songs. I was really happy with this. He encouraged me to work hard because if I would not be able to perform well enough, I would not be selected to perform together with the visiting German musicians. It was really not easy. Sometimes it worked, and then other days it did not. Sometimes one or two songs worked out OK, but the rest not. I had many doubts. I tried to be as close as possible to Mr EM-KA so that I could learn from him. And to play a concert in public was a real challenge. (beginning musician EM2-AR of Espace Masolo, 10.12.14, ref-06968)

Of the 21 young musicians interviewed on this question, 15 participants shared serious difficulties they encountered in the beginning as well as later on in trying to master the instrument(s) and musical repertoire. For most of them the beginning was difficult, and there were then many reasons to stop. It took them time before it became easier mentally, and less hurtful physically to 'fail forward'²³⁸.

Repertoire

The musicians of Beta Mbonda know traditional music from different regions of the DRC, and they consider themselves enriched by mastering such a broad repertoire. They have a repertoire so big that they can play for hours without repeating the same composition twice.

Dexterity and mastering interpretation

What impressed me a lot was that compared to the concert we played before, the last one was really very well played. I realized that we succeeded to add different new layers of quality, and there was also a higher speed of playing the notes and more and better rhythm... All those new elements made our performance so much more interesting and better compared to how we played before." (Beta Mbonda musician BM-MW, 06.08.15, ref-17790)

Beta Mbonda

Certain percussion compositions need to be played fast, and if you do not have the physical flexibility (hands, fingers, arms...), you will be late, make mistakes, and this can disorient the other musicians.

Certain rhythms can be difficult to learn when you start.

²³⁸ Those capable of 'failing forward' are those who are capable of turning mistakes and difficulties into stepping stones to advance in the learning process.

Mentally one can be fast, but the body also needs to be able to follow.

Physical gymnastics exercises are part of the warm-up in rehearsals of BM, to make the body suppler. For some it took at least a full year of rehearsals and exercises, to get used and supple enough to play the drums and to do the accompanying dance movements.

To be able to play the drums one might need a form of musical talent. Some people cannot understand and have difficulties learning rhythms, while others learn it easily. Some have more mental capacities at the rhythmical level and others more at the melodic and harmonic level. Certain persons can learn percussion music more easily who have the ability to easily memorize and learn rhythmical sequences needed to play the tam-tam. While learning the madimba²³⁹ especially involves the learning of melodic and harmonic sequences. Some can have more difficulties in recognizing and memorizing melodies.

You mentally need to remember the notes and where they are on the instruments. I had difficulties memorising this in the beginning. Also, I needed to learn and master the different scales. That also took time. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-DO, 14.04.14, ref-09505)



madimbas (played and built by the musicians of Beta Mbonda)

Espace Masolo

In the beginning young musicians can have problems to produce notes which come out clearly from their wind instruments. The sounds EM1-GL made with his trombone were said to be too 'nasal'.

I found that some musicians can still not play all the notes in the higher range of their instrument.

To succeed to produce the notes well one has to master a complex coming together of the right amount of breath, position of the fingers and of the lips and mouth.

It was not easy for the young musicians to explain this to us, but they did and succeeded well. I took the time to allow them to give us a detailed understanding of the difficulties they

²³⁹ The madimba is a percussion instrument, a kind of balaphone, developed by the Luba in Angola and DR Congo.

encountered in producing notes on their instrument, as they wanted them to sound.

As soon as one gets used to producing all the notes well, it feels like a simple 'normal' thing to make happen.

Fingers-position-back-muscles-arms-lips-mouth-shoulders

Beta Mbonda

The percussionists of BM experienced aches in their hands and fingers when they started learning to perform on the tam-tam. In the beginning their fingers could bleed. They could then not play the tam-tam more than one hour, if not it would hurt too much. Also neck and arms could hurt. A lot of exercise made things better. After some time, the aches would stop, as their bodies, arms and fingers became more flexible, stronger and harder. Also some medication was taken by some of them to make their muscles more subtle.

I always came home tired, and I had too much pain. At times, I struggled to lift my own arms. If we play a long concert, as soon as we get home, many will when they relieve themselves bleed by the anus. If we play really hard for five hours for example, if we go to the toilet, we will poop, there is blood flowing. So we worked a lot on the body, there were too many internal rips. I needed antibiotics. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-KU during individual interview, 13.04.15, ref-09122)

In the beginning, they could not maintain playing more than only one hour, because of the physical pain they would have. Bit by bit they became stronger and got used to it. When they rehearse and perform regularly, combined with regular physical exercise, their bodies have the flexibility and strength needed to do the concerts. As dancing is also an important element in their performances, they need to have full availability of their entire body. Some have aches in their knees, caused by the movements and jumps they need to be able to do when dancing.



the sousaphone, performed by a musician of the brass band Les Jeunes Talents of Espace Masolo

Espace Masolo

Positioning the hands and fingers on the instruments hurt a lot in the beginning, especially with the bigger wind instruments, such as the trombone, tuba and sousaphone (see

picture) which take a lot of energy to carry and move around with.

It took a long time before these aches went away or became sustainable, thanks to a lot of exercise.

Problems with lips aching were reported by almost all young musicians of the brass band.

In the beginning the young musicians also had problems in positioning their lips correctly in order to succeed to produce the right sounds.

When playing for several days in a row, the lips can still degrade a little. Some put palm oil on their lips to heal them.

The beginning was not easy. Especially considering my young age. Holding the instrument was a problem, especially because of the weight of the instrument²⁴⁰. I also had toothache and lips. The neck hurt so much. I also hurt my fingers. I had a tendency to move with too much force and that's why I was in pain. I put the shoulder strap at carnivals, to lighten the weight and to move more easily, but it also requires a lot of exercise. (Espace Masolo advanced musician EMI-CL, 23.04.15, ref-09735)

Those musicians who needed to carry their instrument with a belt (heavy wind instruments, big drum...), would in the beginning have pains in their neck caused by the belt. The percussionists in the brass band are confronted with other problems in mastering their instrument and repertory: When starting to beat the drums, their hands felt heavy. With time, they learn how to make them lighter. To learn the rhythms, they had to go on for long times exercising, and often had the feeling they could not stop doing this. But of course, when one is beating such long periods of time, the hands, arms and shoulders get tired and start to hurt. Also, the weight of the big drum against the belly could give problems with their intestines, but they learnt how to adapt their positions carrying the instruments to avoid this.

When you start to play the drums, after the rolls, you have to start beating. In the beginning, when you start beating the drum, your hands are heavy. But with time, they become lighter. And when you continue, it hurts you. But you can not stop, otherwise you will lose the rhythm. But when we continue to play, the hands get tired. But still, we do not know how to stop. (percussionist EMI-RO of Espace Masolo, 08.07.15, ref-13915)

Specific difficulties with specific instruments

The physical relationship is very different with the madimba (balafon). There it is especially a question of vigilance. There it is especially a question of transmitting the complex movements through your arms. If you miss one of the notes ('lames'), it will sound badly. It takes a lot of time and work to get mental and physical dexterity so the arms play the right notes of the composition. Now I can play the madimba with my eyes closed. I know by heart where the different notes are physically situated. I will not miss them. I even sometimes close my eyes during a concert. I do not miss notes on the madimba, because I have enormously worked on this and arrived at a mastery of playing the right notes. We worked a lot on this. Sometimes we work a full day only on this. And when you are able to

²⁴⁰ He played the heavy sousaphone (see picture).

perfectly play the notes, you then are invited to carry the madimba and dance with it while playing. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-CL, 13.04.15, ref-09374)

In comparison with the tam-tam, the madimba is thought to take more mental effort to master. Several musicians of the percussion band reported taking more time to understand performing the madimba, even though they were already playing the tam-tam some time before.

To master the madimba not only physical dexterity but also a mental dexterity is needed.

Memorizing and mastering the position of the blades and the different scales on the madimba represented a particular difficulty for most musicians of BM, and it therefore took them time to incorporate this.

To play the madimba, it is difficult to play the right notes (blades), and to have the arms, wrists and hands interact in a supple way, not too heavily.

Playing the right blades of the madimba asks for special versatility, control, and concentration.

Playing the madimba was by most musicians of the ensemble considered to be more difficult than playing the tam-tam, and many more rehearsals were said to be needed to master the madimba.

The difficulty there is to learn how to play the 'lames'. It takes a lot of time to learn how to play the melodies and rhythms right. The problem in the beginning is often that one tends to have the arms too heavy on the notes. One learns bit by bit to get the arms supple enough to then easily make the movements. It also hurts. One can play the instrument while it is put down or one can carry the madimba with a band around the neck. This then hurts in the neck. It is heavy. It was first BM-TS who taught us how to perform on the madimba. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-MW, 14.04.15, ref-09637)

One needs more physical force and energy for playing the tam-tam than for the madimba, but for playing the madimba more focus and concentration is needed.

The madimba needs to be lifted and carried, because when the calabashes are not in the air, the sound does not develop well. The belt carrying the madimba could in the beginning cause light pains in the neck.

Instead of physical issues, playing the madimba especially represented difficulties of mental dexterity.

The physical relationship and resulting bodily adaptation is different with the tam-tam and with the madimba. One learns to vigilantly transmit the complex movements needed through one's arms, wrists and hands on the blades. If one misses one of the blades, it will sound wrong and/or off tune. It takes a lot of time and work to get the mental and physical dexterity so the arms play the right notes of a composition. Now the musicians of BM can play the madimba with their eyes closed. They know by heart where the different notes are physically situated, and will not miss them. They even close their eyes during concerts. They do not miss notes on the madimba, because they have done a lot of work on mastering to play the right notes,

often full days only on this. And as they master playing the madimba, they are now also capable of performing the instrument while dancing at the same time. In comparison with madimbas, the tam-tams are instruments which ask for a lot more physical force, and performing these instruments therefore requires physical fitness.



Breath

Beta Mbonda

Problems of breathlessness were reported after performing the tam-tams. Respiration is something important and difficult to master in the beginning.

BM-YA (one of the musicians of BM who died in 2014) was in the period before he died not able to perform the tam-tam because he had a breathing problem.

Espace Masolo

Problems with breath are of course especially of concern for musicians who perform wind instruments, as finding the right way to breath is essential for them when creating sound.

It is especially necessary to concentrate on having the respiration coming from the belly. When you play, you have to position yourself right up and straight. You also have to be comfortable, so that when the breath comes out, it comes out easily. If you bend a little, you can block the breath and you may have problems in the chest. At first, we often played being seated. Our mentor EM-KA explained to us that it was better for us to play the instrument standing up or sitting upright, so that our abdomen could be used more freely - even when sitting down. (from interview on music-making with EM1-GL, Espace Masolo, 17.04.15, ref-11059)

It took most musicians of EM time to find the right way to breath. This is the most common problem reported in mastering the wind instruments.

It was not easy to learn how to breath. But it became easier at one point, after about a month. I got used to blowing in the instrument, even if the sounds did not come out well at all. But little by little, I was moving forward. (Espace Masolo advanced musician EM1-CK, 15.04.15, ref-10626)

It is not only a question of sustaining the breath as coming from the diaphragm, but also learning how to dose the pressure of the breath coming in the instrument, and how to precisely direct the breath thanks to the position of mouth and lips. EM1-CK explains well and in detail the physical difficulties he experienced with breath in the beginning of his training (see citation: ref-10624->ref-10628, chapter 16.1).

I had a problem with blowing my instrument. The breath must come from the belly and not from above, from the heart, so I had to correct that. Maybe I got sick because of this problem of bad breathing, because I had started to breathe badly before my illness. The basis of my breathing was too high in my body (at the heart and not at the level of the belly). (Espace Masolo advanced musician EM1-CL, 23.04.15, ref-09744)

Physical strength and energy

It was really very difficult in the beginning! Learning something you have never done, is something very difficult. The type of instruments we as percussionists play are asking a lot of physical energy as well as force, much more than musicians playing instruments such as guitars, which demand almost only mental energy. In the beginning everything hurt. The first days I really doubted to be able to ever play like our mentor BM-AL does. We also need mental energy, but the physical part is big. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-DO, 14.04.15, ref-09633)

All musicians reported how important it was for them to be in good health when rehearsing and playing concerts. As most of them live in difficult material conditions (poverty, hunger...) or are tired from spending short nights playing at funerals, they often miss the energy needed to perform well.

Beta Mbonda

Several musicians reported the presence of blood in excrements (faeces and urine) after having done long rehearsals or concerts, and they related this to the immense energy and strength produced especially after performing the tam-tams.

When I started to learn music I was physically too heavy. This was a handicap. I was always late. But the more I played, the better I succeeded. Mentally I was fast. My body did not follow though. I lost weight. I did physical exercises. That helped. Also, the physical gymnastic exercises were taken as part of the warm-up in rehearsals of BM, to make the body more supple. It worked for me. It took at least a year for me, to get used and supple enough to combine playing the tamtam and the dance movements. In the beginning I could fall down and I even considered stopping, because some laughed at me for this. But I did not give up. It was not easy. I was taken apart and given special physical exercises to get better in my movements. Sometimes I could work for 40 minutes in the sun on my own. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-CL during individual interview, 13.04.15, ref-09372)

The first time when I arrived at Beta Mbonda, after I had played tom-tom on my return home, I wanted to pee and I peed with blood. I shouted, people came, they

told me because you played drums several hours. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-VA during individual interview, 21.04.15, ref-11790)

Espace Masolo

Musicians of EM notify they had problems with dizziness, especially in the beginning when learning to master the instruments. This may be especially so on days when they have not had enough to eat.

And those who play the bigger instruments (tuba, sousaphone, big drum...) report they need energy just to move around with them.

When I started, I had a lot of pain. It was like I had been hit by someone. When I returned after the rehearsal, I hurt a lot. Well, the trombone is also a big instrument. (Espace Masolo musician EM1-GL, 17.04.15, ref-11061)

In the beginning of their music training, several musicians of EM were a bit worried, because people in Kinshasa say that one can die from performing wind instruments, as they are believed to destroy internal organs.

When we were invited to learn to play a wind instrument, I had some doubts about this, because I was told that performing such instruments could lead to death, that we could experience problems to the internal organs. (musician EM1-MA of Espace Masolo, 08.07.15, ref-13988)

Time needed to master

Mastery does not come immediately. It takes time to master an instrument and a repertoire. It took a lot of rehearsal time to master the instruments, but the time needed would differ from one person to another. Not all musicians mastered the instruments in the same period of time. Regularity in the training was also noted as an important requirement for succeeding mastering.

Impact of the teacher in mastering

The teacher-student relationship is a crucial element in succeeding the mastering of a music instrument and repertoire. It is not only inducing the possibility of learning by imitating, but it also allows one through the contact and identification with the teacher to be part of a tradition of repertoire and performing techniques.

I learnt a lot from interviewing the participants in this research about their personal ambitions to teach others, then or later on. They informed us about how important the role had

been which their own trainers had played in facilitating (or complicating) the difficulty of mastering²⁴¹.

Within EM the choice and possibly change of instrument and careful accompaniment of the beginners was an important encouragement.

To surpass doubts, to not give up in the beginning and to dare to play a concert in public, were some of the serious challenges for beginners, which needed - as described in more detail in chapter 9 of this thesis - careful escorting by the trainers.

Apart from one exception, the critical reflections given on the perceived lack of quality of trainers, came from more advanced musicians, who were frustrated not to be able to develop beyond the level of mastering they had already been able to acquire until then. They were ready to try to find trainers who would better fit the needs that correspond to the level of mastering they now had.

Choice of instrument in relation to mastering

The choice of instrument was something which played a role in performing as part of a brass band, not so much in playing with the percussion band, where only 2 or 3 types of instruments are being learnt and played.

When the children arrived at EM, they would be presented with several instruments, and proposed one or several instruments to try. But they could change later. Some did because they did not succeed to master their first choice of instrument, or did not like the sound of it, but most did not change. Some musicians later on decided to also learn another instrument.

Some think they master already

If one thinks one masters music already, then developing musical skills stop. Fortunately though, I was mostly confronted with frustrations expressed by the musicians in this research for not being good enough. This is positive because - as already developed earlier in this thesis - it indicates a conscience of their limited level of performance and their need to learn more.

2/3 of the musicians explicitly told us they need further training to accomplish a higher mastering. What they said they were missing in order to become better musicians, is i.a. being able to play other types and styles of music, to learn how to read music scores and learn more music theory, to learn to master other instruments than the ones they master already...

²⁴¹ you can find more details on the impact of them becoming or wanting to become teachers themselves under 8.1.4

11.2. Importance of regular exercise

If the person to be trained does not engage, and lacks love of the job, she will not understand. This job requires a lot of repetition, there we can easily master but, when we have no commitment, it is difficult to master the instrument; a reason to make the newcomers aware of how to sacrifice themselves as we did too. (...) (Beta Mbonda musician BM-GI, 14.07.14, ref-03535)

For some young kids wanting to join us the suffering was too much. They fled us. These young kids gave up after a while, because they could not live the difficulties they had to go through in order to master the instruments and repertoire. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-GI, 20.04.15, ref-11358)

Learning and mastering music-making gives regularity, because it needs and even demands regular and continuous practice²⁴². If there are too many intervals in the learning process, the trainee will easily forget what s/he already learned.

Reasons/causes for interruptions

In Kinshasa interruptions of music training and rehearsals are often caused by health problems, because people easily get sick and then do not have the means to pay for medical assistance nor for medication.

To succeed in mastering music, one has to be in good mental and physical health though.

Wind instrument players need to breath from their diaphragm, but when one is not feeling well one will often tend to breath from higher up, something which then handicaps the results.

Malaria is one of the common illnesses, which causes musicians to interrupt their music practice and take a break.

Another reason for interrupting rehearsals is related to a lack of discipline or commitment of certain musicians who tend to come late or not at all to rehearsals.

Absences result in loss of mastery

Even one day already represents a lot of absence. One week is worse. Because even for playing the madimba, you will feel more heaviness in the swaying of the hands. For performing the tam-tam, some of your friends musicians may have already worked on something else, another rhythm which they have perfected, and you must then learn from them in order to keep up with them. (Mbonda Beta musician BM-GI, 13.04.15, ref-09056)

Being absent from rehearsals results in a loss in mastering of certain reflexes and can slow down and decrease their capacity of dexterity and agility. Already after several weeks of absence serious problems are reported, especially related to

²⁴² *The effect of practice on performance is larger than earlier believed possible.* (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer 1993:363)

what the others have learnt and mastered in the meantime. Instead of loosing time trying out things by oneself, it is fortunately possible to get the help of the trainers and from the other musicians, to get back in form and get to where the others are at that point in time.

Absences cause regression

Music requires one to work almost every day. Even after a little time without playing, one or two weeks, it can take a lot of effort to return in good shape. One can have problems with energy, breath, bodily strength, lack of speed, loss of memory, lips that start to swell again, decrease of endurance, mistakes being made in playing the compositions...

When one starts again after an interruption of a certain period of time, one has to force oneself to get back 'at the wheel'. Hands can feel heavy again, and pains can come back (toothache, pain in hands and shoulders and elsewhere...). Rare are those who experience no problems after absences, but one musician told us that after an intermission of one or two months his capacities were stable, and this in fact even made him find new things to create and got him more energy than before the break.

What kind of regularity is necessary to retain the level of mastery, virtuosity, technical dexterity... and avoid experiencing regression? For many musicians the answer to this question is: All your life one has to have a steady pace of working on music. This is also what part of the participants in this research had learnt from their teachers, who tell them they need to continue repeating. Their masters are professional musicians, who also have to continue repeating and practicing. Such professional musicians know they can also experience diminishing endurance, strength, suppleness and memory when working less regularly in certain periods.

Absences weakens ensemble playing

One month is already too much. Sometimes I can have a problem to attend rehearsals during one week or two weeks, that happens. But the 3rd week I have to go back to rehearsals, otherwise I am in trouble. After a week or two I will be able to play, but I will have missed out on certain things the others have worked on during my absence. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-CL, 13.04.15, ref-09376)

A delay in practice can seriously weaken the capacity to make music together with the other musicians of the ensemble. Certain performances can become really complicated, when some musicians are not prepared well for this because of their absences from rehearsals. This then causes problems for the other musicians, as music is being created and produced together, and in tune with others. There can be a lot of different types of failures during the performance, in terms

of speed, melodies, kick-off of songs and dances... In order to avoid being lost when some members have been absent from rehearsals, the musicians of BM learn different parts, not only their own, so that when needed they can take over the part of someone who is failing. This is of course not possible within a brass band, as each instrument requires a different type of mastering.

11.3. How rehearsals are organised

An instrument at home

Not having an instrument to work on at home is a real problem. Even though we requested this before, the ensemble only sometimes allows us to take instruments home with us. We would need to possess our own instruments so that we can seriously develop our mastering the instruments. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-GI during focus group #3, 21.04.14, ref-02067)

It is difficult to learn on your own, and it is so much more fun together with others, because it is easier to make sound and music, when playing together with other musicians. Still, one also needs to be able to work and exercise alone.

The Congolese musicians in this research repeat at home, but not much. The main reason for this is that most of them do not possess an instrument, and therefore cannot rehearse at home. 3 or 4 members of BM do have small tam-tams at home and work on them. A few others told us they worked on rhythms by tapping on their legs. 2 musicians of BM can rehearse on instruments at their church.

In Kinshasa one can find small tam-tams which only cost 10 USD, but being continuously in a surviving modus, even such limited expenses are apparently postponed.

If they would possess their own instrument - tam-tam or madimba - they would nevertheless have more facilities to find work opportunities as musicians.

Thanks to the project with Music Fund, the musicians of Beta Mbonda were the last years learning to build madimbas and ditumbas (instruments from Kasai), and they will therefore soon be able to have their own instrument at home, allowing them to rehearse well on a day-to-day basis.

Individual practice and exercise are nevertheless necessary in order to well prepare rehearsals and concerts.

In the past, the mentors of BM did not want the instruments that are common property of the ensemble to go to the private houses of the musicians. Some instruments were lost and others damaged. In the future, they will be able though to take home an instrument. But if something would happen with the instrument, they would need to buy a new one themselves. If they would make a new one, they would need to pay for the

material (wood and so). Knowing this, the mentors hope the musicians will be more careful with the instruments. The musicians of EM had the same problem as those of BM: only a few have an instrument at home, or can rehearse on an instrument nearby, in a church or a school or somewhere else. If these musicians would have their own instrument, they could also go perform in other ensembles or participate in concerts or rehearsals, for which they would need to be able to come with their own instrument. So possessing an instrument also would allow them to find work as musicians outside the ensemble of which they are now members.

I just bought with what I earned from concerts a set of small tamtams for 20000 FC in Ndili. They now allow me to work at home. I use them to work on the rhythm. I also sometimes hear certain rhythms in groups like Werason, Koffi and Fali, and now try to reproduce them for myself at home on my small tamtams. I really like to do this. These instruments also help me financially, because I started to rent them for 2500 FC or 3000 FC. Even my friends ask these instruments. Of course I do not ask as much from them. 1000 FC or nothing at all. They are so much used already that I will have had to change the skins. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-CL, 13.04.15, ref-09380)

If they would have their own instruments, they would also be able to find work as trainers. Without an instrument of their own and one for the student, they cannot teach. Musicians who possess instruments can also make some money by renting them out to other musicians.

Length and regularity of rehearsals

Beta Mbonda

We repeat Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Tuesday is off. But if we have a production, we also work on Tuesday, and even Saturday too. If you are preparing a major show, you work for six days, except Sunday. But individually, personally, I can need to work on the madimba, by myself in a corner, outside of the rehearsal times, on things we were taught in the group. I can do exercises, because sometimes our teacher gives us complicated exercises to work on. (Mbonda Beta musician BM-GI, 13.04.15, ref-09063)

During the years of our research, BM was working 3 or 4 days per week, and 5 or 6 days when preparing a production, a show or concert or broadcast. When the group was started, they were even obliged to come 7 days per week, because the mentors back then thought it was a way to avoid them from being arrested²⁴³. Also, they would be much too tired in the evenings to be involved in transgressive activities with gangs. To prepare a new show they take from 2-3 up to 6 months of rehearsals, even though they then perform the programme only a few times.

²⁴³ because back then they were still seen as members of 'kuluna'-gangs and sought by police.

They are supposed to rehearse from 9 to 2 pm every day of the week, and sometimes continue until 5 pm, although I have experienced that Congolese timing can differ a lot from Belgian timing.

During rehearsal days they have breaks to rest and eat, because rehearsing this percussion music and accompanying dances take a lot of energy.

Espace Masolo

In the beginning of the research, music sessions at EM were organised 3 days a week for the beginners, but this was reduced to only 2 days per week towards the end of the fieldwork period of this research. When performances have to be prepared, they work longer and extra days.

The more advanced musicians also had 3 days of music sessions per week in the beginning of our research period, and this was reduced to nothing by the end of our period in Kinshasa. By then the ensemble Les Jeunes Talents (LJT) was created by the more advanced musicians, and they tried to rehearse twice a week at the facility and on the music instruments of EM.

All the young musicians of both groups were towards the end of the research complaining about having too little time to work on their music.

One of the beginners was happy with the 2 days of music rehearsals, because she thought that more would be for her problematic in terms of her capacity to remember, process and digest what she was learning.

Some of the more advanced musicians have other engagements in other groups. This makes them perform more, but it does not necessarily make them rehearse more, as most other brass bands always play the same tunes and therefore do not rehearse much.

Rehearsals with other music ensembles

Some musicians of both projects start to also play with other ensembles.

Beta Mbondaq

3 musicians of Beta Mbonda rehearse and perform with groups of folk music and 'ndombolo'²⁴⁴ orchestras. Sometimes they are invited for recording sessions in a studio, when interventions on traditional percussion instruments are needed. One of the musicians had his own traditional percussion ensemble besides Beta Mbonda. The performances demand good preparation and rehearsals.

Espace Masolo

²⁴⁴ 'ndombolo' music is the popular music which is most popular these days in Congo, and has its origins in Congolese rumba and soukous music.

For the brass band musicians of EM, the situation is different. Also there, a few musicians (3) started to have a lot of work elsewhere in ensembles and concerts, but - apart from some rare exceptions - such engagements most of the time do not need much preparation. The brass bands with which they work outside of EM always perform a similar repertoire of compositions for funerals or ceremonies, which the young musicians know already. In rare cases, they will have to rehearse a song outside of the performances, but then they will be confronted with the fact that most of them do not possess an instrument at home. As these musicians have a lot of gigs, they end up well knowing the repertoire performed in such circumstances.

Standard course of rehearsals

Beta Mbonda

Following is a description of how - based on perfectly well corresponding presentations of 5 different musicians - rehearsals are mostly organised within BM.

During the biggest part of the fieldwork period of our research, between August 2012 and January 2016, BM had a rehearsal space in the Kinshasa municipality of Limete: an open space in between buildings inside an industrial compound owned by a supermarket-chain. There they had a container to their disposal, in which they could store their instruments and other belongings. Apart from this open space and the container, there was nothing. When it rained, they could hardly hide out there, and the sun could also be something to want to hide from. But as it was difficult and expensive to find rehearsal space in Kinshasa, they were happy to have this space, without having to pay for it. The supermarket-company offered them this space, in exchange of BM sometimes performing at one of their supermarkets.

When they arrive at their rehearsal space in the morning, the first thing they do is changing clothes. They put on clothes which are made for the activity of making music. They take out the instruments.

Then those who have taken something to eat, **first eat**, and drink some tea, so they have the energy needed to work after that. It depends on what they have themselves taken with them, as it is not BM who offered food in the morning. Each one has to bring or buy what he can. Some bring their food, some bread, and some can make tea, depending what one has. If one has nothing, he will wait until 12 o'clock, when food is offered by BM. Certain periods, BM does not have the financial means though to offer food, or even to cover the transportation costs of the musicians.

Then towards 10 or 10.30 am, they will start with **physical warm-ups**. They do these exercises during 20 to 30 minutes. The physical exercises are meant to make their bodies supple and flexible, to warm up the muscles and get more breath. They can do this part of the rehearsal without a supervisor. One among them can lead the physical warm-up exercises because at least 5 members of BM are sportsmen, who have practiced several sports, such as judo, box, soccer.

Then they start **tuning the drums** by warming up the skins near a little fire. Sometimes they take a moment to pray, before starting the **musical warm-up exercises**. They first start to work on the madimba. They play all the rhythms and songs they know, rehearse them and do exercises on the madimba. After that they start working on the tam-tam. Also there, they do a combination of exercises and rhythms, after which they then start to play faster and faster on the tam-tam. The faster one plays the rhythms, the stronger one becomes. They can end up playing incredibly fast and for a long period of up to 45 minutes. When they finish with this activity, they will need to rest. Often the supervisors/trainers are not present in the first part of the rehearsals, which are then led by the musicians themselves. This part of the musical rehearsal is especially composed of exercises of suppleness, not yet working on the compositions.

Their master Alhim Eyenga will almost always assist to the rehearsals, but Maître Tshamala often comes in later on, after that first part of the training is over. He will then ask the musicians to start again, as he will want to hear what the musicians have worked on, correct them where needed, and teach them new things.

They will have started arriving around 9 am, and after having done all these first activities, it will be around 12 o'clock. At noon they have a break, drink something, and eat something if BM has provided for food that day, then rest. Then from 2 or 3 pm they will start the rehearsal again and go on until about 4 pm.

Espace Masolo

Les Jeunes Talents (LJT), the newly formed group of more advanced musicians of Espace Masolo (EM) rehearse as follows. Although their training is finished at EM, they continue to be welcome at the facilities of EM to rehearse there and use the instruments of EM. This is only possible once or twice per week. They were during our fieldwork only starting up the ensemble and tended to talk a lot to evaluate past and plan future activities. They still needed a lot of time to sort out management and organisational questions and disputes, because there had different views on how to go about things, and as they were all equal, it was not always easy for them to come

to conclusions and decisions²⁴⁵. After such discussions, they start to play scales, warm up their instruments by playing them, and then choose songs to rehearse. They then played the songs one after the other, and asked each other who has difficulties and with which songs. One of the musicians had been chosen as leading the rehearsals, and he was the one who would when needed interrupt rehearsals and help the person who had difficulties, by rearranging his score, after which they continued practising. They work on new songs and work with scores on which they take notes on corrections or adaptations. When I worked with them towards the end of the research, the ensemble Jeunes Talents struggled seriously with disciplinary problems, as many members arrived late or not at all. Leading rehearsals was not something easy for the musicians of Jeunes Talents of EM. One of them was supposed to be leading, but as he was himself musician and therefore himself participating in the rehearsal, it was not always easy for him to combine this with the role of direction.

Rehearsals without mentor/trainer

The musicians of BM rehearse in the presence of their artistic director, musician Alhim Eyenga. He is there most of the time to supervise them. When Alhim Eyenga is absent, the other mentor, Maître Tshamala, can also sometimes lead rehearsals.

When both are absent, three of the musicians can direct the rehearsals (BM-DO, BM-GI or BM-IB). One of the musicians is seen as superior to the others, not only because of his age, but also because he started percussion before everyone else. One out of the group will propose to take the lead and the others will follow him. They tell us they never have discussions on how to go about organising the rehearsals. Everybody easily accepts to follow the lead and orders of that musician that specific day. They get along well amongst each other and quickly come to agreements about what to rehearse and how. In this group some are considered to be better and stronger than others. Those who are the 'best' are those who will take the direction. They tell us it is easy to understand: "If you do not know better than me, you can not direct me. But if you know better than I do, you will be able to teach me something and direct me."

Interesting here is that the direction can be in the hands of different musicians at different moments²⁴⁶. The 'best' ones are probably not at all times the 'best', and that goes for the 'weak' ones too, depending on which type of act or

²⁴⁵ see also in next chapter on the difficulties to get organised amongst peers (11.1.3)

²⁴⁶ in their music-making they have a heterarchic organization (see also in 11.1.1 about heterarchy versus hierarchy)

composition is being worked on. It means that the direction can rotate and fluctuate within the group. Musicians can in a certain period be weaker than others, because they have missed rehearsals because of absences. Those musicians who are considered by the others as being 'strongest' are the more committed ones who come to almost all rehearsals. Also, when a concert is proposed for only a smaller group, the most committed ones are chosen by the mentors.

There is also the aspect of capacity and talent which plays a role. Some will be committed but not so talented. One of them is for example still not able to play a certain rhythm on the tam-tam, even 2 years after it was showed to him. As in all ensembles, also in BM not all musicians have the same level and talent and commitment. Some learn faster than others. I wanted to know how they dealt with these differences within the ensemble, and found out that they were solidary with those who need more time or accompaniment to learn something difficult to perform. The person having difficulties is taken apart and gets the help of one of the musicians.

Finally - coming back to the opening words to this sub-chapter by Beta Mbonda's mentor Tshamala (that rehearsals are not just preparations for concerts, but also, and very much so, lessons) - Frank Heuser also critically focusses on this important aspect of music learning which is unfortunately often neglected in music teaching: "With performance as the primary goal of learning, music classes tend to be structured as rehearsals rather than as lessons through which a variety of approaches to musical understanding might be explored." (Heuser 2011:296)

11.4. How music is memorised

Some of the concert programmes I attended of the musicians in this research were of complex composition, including many pieces and different types of interventions (music and dance). It must be difficult to memorize everything they have to do during a performance of a certain length and complexity, all the different compositions, changes of parts and rhythms, for some on different instruments (madimba, tam-tam, ditumba...), different dances, also words... I wanted to know how they did this, how they remembered the music and complex concert programmes, and how they knew what to play at all times of a programme. Did they take notes on paper? Did they agree on how many repetitions of rhythms they would play, and so do they count? Or is there maybe someone who gives signs during the

concert to indicate when to move on to another piece? So, what were their techniques to help their memory?

Memorising by rehearsing

Memorising compositions and concert programmes is especially done thanks to a lot of time of rehearsals, so that at the end of the day they can do everything by heart. They take the time needed to learn it all by heart.

During the rehearsals of a new programme, they together with the leaders of the group decide which songs they want to include and in which order. Then the compositions are rehearsed in that order, and they agree on how to link one song to another.

BM at one point (2014-2015) had put together two full evening programs, and for this they had taken up to 6 months of rehearsals before finishing these programmes. But besides those 2 programs, they also proposed all kinds of other concert programmes which were composed differently, depending on the situation and on the context of the concerts. It took a lot of time to prepare all these programmes. After having rehearsed it long enough, by the end everyone masters and memorizes each programme.

The musicians of EM inform us that they also rehearse as long as needed to know the pieces by heart. They also remember by simply repeating a lot. They will focus first on the rhythms, because - as they tell us - it is from the rhythm that they know which notes go with it.

BM musicians decide during rehearsals how the passages will be signalled, so that a particular kind of passage corresponds to a particular change within the programme. Everything is memorized by heart, even the duration and number of repeats of certain rhythms. They do not have to count them as they have become automatisms, because they take so much time rehearsing them. On only one particular rhythm they can work a full day.

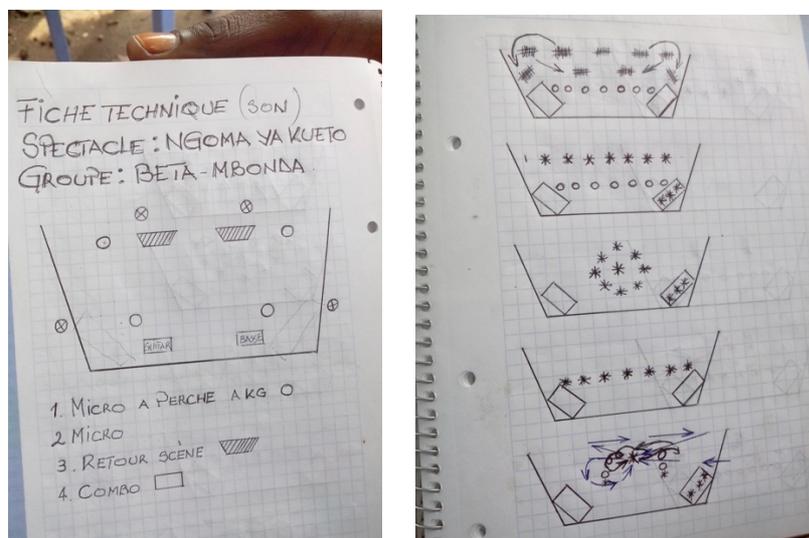
They count. They do not count one two three four, but retain it anyway. They count in the head and then in the heart. When I play, I know that I play four; one two three four. And you have to do four times four, that is sixteen. Four... eight... twelve... it does not rhyme yet... fourteen, that's not it... The more I'm going to repeat it, it'll stay, and I will know how it goes. (from interview with Alhim Eyenga, mentor of Beta Mbonda, 28.04.15, ref-09947)

The way they work and memorize, all comes down to repetition. They also report that when preparing a performance, they commit themselves differently in terms of their energy and concentration, in comparison with regular in between rehearsals, and this special commitment also plays an important role in not failing to memorize a programme and the individual pieces within a concert-programme.

Memorizing with notes and drawings

Although scores are hardly or not at all used during performances, some notes can be of help on the set-up of a concert programme, written on a piece of paper and laying somewhere on the floor.

Alhim Eyenga composed the programmes of BM and he makes drawings of the programme and set-ups so that the musicians can remember the line-up.



technical riders Beta Mbonda (by Alhim Eyenga)

BM concert programmes can sometimes change during a performance. A programme can be composed of up to 15 compositions, but then during the performance the ensemble can decide to somewhat change it by adding or deleting some, taking into account the public's reactions and preferences. The leaders of the band then intervene during the concert and tell the musicians what to change.

The musicians of EM also do not use classical scores but proceed by memorization. Even if a programme is long, they will learn everything by heart, also the order of the songs. During rehearsals they work with written down lists of songs, but not in concerts, as they do not have time to look at lists.

These musicians apparently must have brains that have the ability to remember a lot of complex things! This is what one of the musicians in the research replied to this question: "If you do not master it, you have to write down things. But what when there is no paper, or if the paper is lost, what are you going to do if you do not have it in your head?"

Everyone knows everything

We all learn everything, because in case someone has a difficulty, we can always replace that person's part of the music. (Mbonda Beta musician EM-CI, 21.04.14, ref-02010)

In BM all musicians learn the same thing, so that in case some have difficulties or cannot be there, they can be replaced - certain moments during concerts, or all together when absent - by other members of the ensemble. The musicians master all the instruments. Also, when one of their friends has a better control of an instrument or composition, he will be asked to teach others within the ensemble. In that way the musicians of BM are able to complete and accompany each other in the process of mastering the instruments and the repertoire, on top of the contribution of their mentors.

Following a story-line and choreography

Performances of BM are often built-up around traditional tales and stories coming from certain parts of the country. Knowing the story, helps remembering the rhythms and songs that go with the different parts of the story-line.

Even when the rhythms and songs are known, they also have to retain the displacements on the podium, which reflect the traditional dances and movements of the different parts of Congo. Learning the choreography of a performance is yet another layer to memorize for musicians of BM, but also helps them in remembering the music that goes with it.

When they play, these Congolese musicians also need to know the movements and dance-sections which are an important part of concert performances in Kinshasa. The different movements need to be memorized during the rehearsals. The musician who has difficulties memorizing movements, is put in between musicians who master the movements better, allowing him to follow the movement of those next and around him.

11.5. Who takes leads during rehearsals and concerts

Both ensembles play without conductors.

When they are on stage, they know when to go from one composition to another, because they have memorized this, but also because someone will give cues. Also, the passage can itself include a sign, sometimes a silence or a certain succession of notes. Someone can also be at the side of the stage, and give cues. Those on stage will then know when to change to the next part or song in the programme. It is not always the same musician who will give cues during concerts. Different musicians give cues on different moments in a programme.

Soloists and accompanists

In Les Jeunes Talents (EM) they especially had one soloist, the trumpet-player. The others saw themselves as accompanying him. When they repeat, they know which music they will be playing, and the role of the chorus of accompanists is known as well as the role of the soloist. The soloist directs. He signals when to start and when to stop.

In BM three musicians can take the position of soloist. They rotate in this position, even during one and the same concert.

Musicians give cues during concerts

In the brass band of the more advanced musicians of EM, the percussionists are expected to give the cues during a concert programme. The programme of a concert has been decided upon in advance. During a performance it is the percussionist who will take the lead in giving cues, and the second percussionist, as well as the rest of the band, will then follow him. The soloist of the brass band will often take the position of leader. As there is no conductor during the concerts of the brass band, the percussionist and the soloist play an important role. They both must master the repertoire, because they must know when to give the cues to change the rhythm and songs.

In the performances at funerals, which last many many hours all through the night, they have to play different sets of songs, some religious, some traditional, some related to specific regions of the country... The soloist will be the one who animates and decides on which sequence to introduce when, following his own inspiration. The soloist announces the song by playing the first notes, and then the other musicians follow him. Or he can also give signs by showing certain fingers (for example 2 fingers meaning that they have to repeat something, and one single finger that now one of them will play a solo...).

In BM it is the artistic director and mentor Alhim Eyenga who is in charge of the concerts. He composes the programmes and teaches the musicians how to move from one scenario to another. And during the concerts he is not on stage and can sometimes give cues or indications.

11.6. Summary and conclusions

To arrive at this level of self-assurance one must trust oneself, one's environment, and one's place in it. A good pilot knows her skills, has confidence in the machine she is flying, and is aware of what actions are required in case of a hurricane, or in case the wings ice over. Therefore, she is confident in her ability to cope with whatever weather conditions may arise - not because she will force the plane to obey her will, but because she will be the instrument for matching the properties of the plane to the conditions of the air. As such she is an indispensable link for the safety of the plane, but it is only as a link - as a catalyst, as a component of the air-plane-person system, obeying the rules of that system - that she can achieve her goal. (Csikszentmihalyi 1992-2002, p.204)

1. This chapter dealt in detail with the different aspects of mastering music instruments and repertoire. This part of the research concentrated entirely on amassing and describing empirical data on the specifics of the mastering processes, in the concrete situations of the two case studies of social music projects in Kinshasa. Still, several conclusions came out of this research on mastering music instruments and repertoire:

2. **Conclusion 1.** When one is capable to reach a certain level of control of a music instrument and repertoire, one begins to become musician. Mastery is understood by the participants in this research as a potential motor motivating young musicians to invest more and more in this activity and in learning to become better than they are. If a minimum of mastery is missing, this can create frustrations and can even make beginning musicians stop learning and making music.

3. **Conclusion 2.** For music to be able to play any role in the social movement and becoming of people who are confronting difficulties, one needs a musical practice with which one can reach a certain level of mastering: If one ends up playing not so well an instrument or a repertoire, this is not going to get you anywhere near an activity which will give you satisfaction and pleasure, or maybe some form of revenue. In addition, it will not motivate you much either to get any better.

4. **Conclusion 3.** The young people in this research often referred to the lack of control they experienced in their previous lives and how this had been a major cause of stress. And in contrast with this, their intrinsic interest in music was very much expressed by their pride and pleasure related to the fact that they had succeeded to arrive at a level of mastering musical instruments and repertoire.

5. Already before starting the field work for this research in Kinshasa, the hypothesis was formulated that not any kind of musical activity is considered capable to have social impacts on this youth and help them change their position in society. Learning the trumpet in a brass band is very demanding and takes a lot of time of hard work. Also learning the multiple repertoire of Congolese traditional percussion music takes a lot of time and work, not in terms of weeks or months, but many years. The type of activities chosen at the centre of this research were therefore about 'mastering' knowledge and know-how of complex musical practice and repertoire. Mastering was from the beginning chosen as an element in itself of this research, in contrast to types of music which do not require much mastering or long periods of study, such as certain popular urban forms of music, for which one needs little talent or investment in studies before reaching first results.

6. Whether this was the main reason for encouraging them to get organised in other parts of their lives, I do not know, even though it was something I constantly heard them claim. It has nevertheless clearly been an important part of their motivation: They reported it as explaining their commitment to continue their efforts to study and perform music, even though the extrinsic benefits of becoming musicians were not having such a great impact on their surviving within the extremely difficult circumstances they all continued to live in.

7. The young men of Beta Mbonda, contrary to most others in their surroundings, refuse to take on small jobs, arguing that they would probably get stuck in this kind of survival strategies, which do not make a real difference to their lives. They see their longterm investment in becoming good and respected musicians as offering a better future for themselves and their families. But beyond the survival considerations, becoming and being a musician is also getting in the position of the 'aviator' or 'pilot', in control over oneself and at least part of one's surrounding. It is also about not wanting to be a toy of destiny. The experience of having mastered musical instruments and repertoire is seen as having been a first step in this scenario. The participants of this research shared some side-effects on other aspects of their lives related to their experience to be in the cockpit - at the wheel, in control - thanks to their mastering a music instrument and repertoire.

8. *This needs to be further looked at in the context of future research. Going back to Kinshasa 5 years after this research finished, sometime in 2021²⁴⁷, will hopefully allow us to come to a better understanding of the possible side-effects this period of their lives had on the further*

²⁴⁷ see 14.1 on the need and plans to set up a separate follow-up of this research in the nearby future.

development of the position they could take within their society, as family-members, parents, neighbours or maybe even towards a larger community of which they are part of.

The next chapter proposes the ability to co-master the organisational aspects of the music training programmes and the resulting music ensembles and concert programmes, as a non-negligible element needed in social and community music projects.

12. Hypothesis 3: SHARED OWNERSHIP

(the potential of empowerment through participation in internal organisation and governance related to music-making)

Personal empowerment and agency depend on the possibility of control and shared ownership through participation in the act itself of music-making, but also in the organisation of the music project. When this is missing or limited, it can limit the development and transformative processes of youth participating in such programmes, and therefore also seriously limit the role music-making can play in such processes.

12.0. Introduction

Musicians have little control over the work environment, and research shows that lack of control is a major cause of stress (...) A large body of research demonstrates that in music education and orchestral contexts, musicians' happiness and sense of worth is directly related to their participation in decision making. (Baker 2014, p.114+128)

1. This research was set up around the question of how music-making could have social impacts (SIMM), and as part of this questioning I was interested to understand in which position the musicians were at the organisational level of the social music projects. Because the participants in the research themselves reported how important it was for them to be able to have their say in the organisation of their music ensemble, this theme then became one of the central questions of several focus groups and of a series of individual interviews.

2. I was confronted with conflicts concerning the experienced lack of democracy within the social music projects I studied. The musicians were discontented about not being able to have their say in the organisation of the projects, but as they were at the bottom of the ladder in the organisation, happy or not, they could hardly express their grievances. As long as such tensions persist, they may unfortunately hinder the development of the projects.

3. In separate focus group sessions and a series of individual interviews²⁴⁸ I discussed the subject with which the

²⁴⁸ see the presentation of these interviews on governance and co-ownership in 7.3.6.3.

participants in this research were preoccupied and which they often reported on, i.e. questions concerning the need for and often the lack of participation in the organisation of the social music projects they were involved in.

4. I closely studied the internal organisation and governance of the social music programmes and the music ensembles which resulted from them, and this grew out to become an important new line of inquiry during the research. I worked at length with the participants in this research on their ideas concerning these organisational issues and the possible disagreements and conflicts this could give.

5. The following chapter looks closely at a broad series of organisational matters which in this research came out as being crucial elements of the musical profession. They put into context the hypothesis related to the importance of participation and shared ownership, and include the following items and questions: (1) general questions of democracy²⁴⁹ in music²⁵⁰ (such as heterarchy versus hierarchy²⁵¹, directors versus members, the difficulty of discipline amongst peers, and the power of the management board versus the directors), (2) questions concerning the financial management and transparency (or lack of it), (3) organisational matters concerning the management of the social music projects themselves (social and/or artistic focus, how participants are being selected, who and how the music ensembles are represented towards the outside world, questions related to the sales of self-made music instruments, the feeling of ownership the members of the music ensembles have, the importance of being able to speak out and have a say within the organisations, the possibility of co-governance which includes the members of the projects, and how the future of these social music projects is imagined), and (4) how the participants in this research imagine their future careers as musicians.

6. An explanation of the reasons why the factors announced here were selected, is described in detail in the consecutive parts of the following chapter.

7. The discussions on the subject of democracy were animated, in both groups (within BM as well as within LJT), and it even

²⁴⁹ see Belgian political scientist Chantal Mouffe's book 'The Democratic Paradox', in which she describes - and vehemently defends - the inherently conflictual nature of democratic politics (Mouffe 2009)

²⁵⁰ The interest in democracy in music-making and -education is growing. See Patrick Schmidt's article 'Democracy and Dissensus: Constructing Conflict in Music Education' (Schmidt 2008) and Nancy Love's book 'Musical Democracy' (Love 2006), and also information on the international symposium on 'Finding democracy in music', organised in September 2017 by scholars Robert Adlington (University of Huddersfield) and Esteban Buch (EHESS, Paris) (<https://democracyinmusic.org>).

²⁵¹ see Crumley 1995

worried me a bit at first in terms of the potential of break-ups within both ensembles/projects. But at the end of the different sessions I concentrated on this subject, both groups succeeded to come to - animated but also - serious and constructive exchanges of opinions and ideas on possible scenarios for co-ownership. Since they are still together after all these years, and since they until now always ended up talking to each other, I can hope they will continue to find common ground.

12.1. Democratic organisation

What makes man a political being is his faculty of action; it enables him to get together with his peers, to act in concert, and to reach out for goals and enterprises that would never enter his mind, let alone the desires of his heart, had he not been given this gift - to embark on something new. (Arendt 1970:82)

The members of BM expressed mistrust concerning the capacity of their directors to take the positions and opinions of the musicians into account, and also considering their capacity to ensure an equitable share of the income of the ensemble. Unless the mentors of the projects succeed to find solutions for this lack of trust of their directors, BM may split up, as most other musical projects quickly do over there.

During the time I was doing my research, things were still somehow easy, because there were not that many money-questions to be solved. But when success of the ensembles will be confirmed and some money starts to come in, the distrust towards the directors may grow and may lead to more serious conflicts.

It is indeed somehow easier not to have conflicts when things are not going too well. Then musicians will groan because there is no money and not enough concerts and so. But it becomes a lot more complicated, when things start to go better, when some money starts to come in, and the question comes up how this income and success has to be shared. An understanding and agreement between the management on the one hand and the musicians on the other hand is then not only crucial for the survival of the ensemble, but also for the further development of the career of the young musicians.

The question I confronted both the musicians and the directors of the social music projects with was how they thought they could and would solve this problem. Although I did not come to clear and simple answers or solutions, the fact that we took so much time discussing and reflecting upon these questions, surely helped the groups to advance somewhat in looking at

certain aspects of this complicated reality of shared ownership.

Beta Mbonda

Beta Mbonda was set up as a not-for-profit association with a board of directors, in which the musicians are represented, even strongly so.

The musicians did not realise that - contrary to how things were run within BM - according to Congolese law imposed on such associations, the general assembly has more power than the management team²⁵³. If one is faced with a serious problem, it is the general assembly which has the decision-making power more than the directors and management according to the statutes of such not-for-profit organisations.

The management board of BM is composed of 7 members, and 3 musicians are members in this board. By convincing one of the 4 other members to join their position, they would have a majority and would be able to pass a decision. But meetings of the board are not held.

The organisation format - as it exists in Beta Mbonda - is therefore a democratic form of organisation which allows to give the floor to the members of a group in a structural way, but it does so only on paper.

The musicians of BM feel they are treated as 'subordinates' (they call it: being treated as 'labels'). They say it is difficult or even impossible for them to have an organisation imposed on the chiefs, as it is the elders who are the leaders and who impose the management mode on them, because they have the money and control the contacts with the market. Whatever the director says, the musicians feel they have to listen to and obey. They feel they can not impose a line of conduct on the director, especially not in terms of the financial management of the ensemble.

The musicians of BM do not have contracts with the direction, even though many unwritten rules are being imposed, accepted and followed.

We discussed about which type of organisation would be needed to avoid future conflicts, and the possibility of participation, and the feeling of shared ownership this can procure, was on the top of their list.

Espace Masolo / Les Jeunes Talents

²⁵³ This corresponds very much to the Belgian legislation for not-for-profit organisations.

In Espace Masolo all the 'anciens' became member of Les Jeunes Talents (LJT). They consider themselves as musicians, even though they still have a lot to learn. Their previous trainer, the conductor of the brass band of EM, did according to the musicians not want to let go, and tried to impose himself as their coach, something they did not want.

Missing instruments was experienced as one of the most important handicaps for starting up and further developing LJT. They could rehearse and perform on the instruments of EM, but EM did not allow the instruments to leave their compound for rehearsals elsewhere.

In 2015 LJT did not succeed to agree on choosing a leader amongst themselves and instead decided to work as a collectif ('en college').

In 2015 LJT did not have many concerts, only some performances at funerals and received little money for this (100 USD for the whole ensemble).

Even though they in 2015 did not yet succeed to sort out all these questions, they were confident that they would find solutions to all their organisational problems and questions, and - being in contact with them since then - I understand that bit by bit they seem to succeed to build up something in terms of their organisation. The conditions in which they work are also complicated for them, (1) because of the overall situation of life in Kinshasa, but (2) also because this ensemble has been confronted with a serious brain drain, as three of their best musicians in 2017 left the country and are now in Europe.

Sharing money that comes in, is because of the fact that everyone is so poor something which is also within this ensemble a crucial and difficult item to tackle. In 2015, they were nevertheless confident that they would also be able to handle this part of their internal organisation. And indeed, in 2018, one of the girls took this in her hands, even succeeding to have all members of LJT to agree to cover their transportation costs themselves and pay a contribution of a few hundred francs for each rehearsal they attend, in order to create a common fund to cover certain expenses of the ensemble. Amazing.

12.1.1. Heterarchy vs hierarchy

Heterarchy is a breakthrough of hierarchy, in which the lower regions also play a co-decisive role. In practice, this amounts to overcoming rigid systems by more flexible ones. (...) To claim that this form of participation is always authority-undermining would prove a lack of understanding of the need for feedback in human relationships. (Van Praag 1985:45-46)

I have observed that the organisation of music-making, especially in chamber music line-ups in ensembles such as BM and LJT, is often of the heterarchical type: musicians can take leading positions depending on whether they are the most apt for a specific task at a specific moment of the music-making itself. This has in itself all the ingredients of participatory democracy which could inspire the overall organisation of such ensembles, although it did not for now in the cases studied in Kinshasa. Participation in governance is in fact a weak point in these projects. This phenomenon often comes back in studies in very different countries on music projects and their lack of democracy. In this context it can for sure be related to a strong local culture of 'chefferies', leading to hierarchical rather than heterarchical forms of organisation.

Alhim Eyenga, the artistic head of Beta Mbonda, did not nominate one of the musicians as 'captain', and did not want to do so. In the act of music-making, the positions constantly change within the ensemble, and this is something which the mentor likes and wants to preserve. Sometimes one person will take the lead, and other times someone else. Instead of nominating someone as the captain of the ensemble, he prefers to treat all of them equally and train them as musicians who can all take leads and can replace and can be replaced.

They are chiefs. To get to their level, we need more time. As Lukas said, five years of training is not that much. BM-TS has so many years of experience behind him. He deserves to be 'general' after all those years. But as simple soldiers, we hope to be able to be upgraded from our low ranks and bit by bit get more and more responsibilities within BM. They themselves always tell us that when they will not be there in the future, we would need to continue what they started. They get older, they can even die, or they can start to travel more. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-GI, 20.04.15, ref-11442)

Some think that music needs a type of discipline which involves leaders who take decisions, but there can be members leading certain components or aspects of the activity, such as leading parts of rehearsals (physical training, rehearsing certain songs...), being in charge of logistics, of repair and maintenance of the instruments... The person in charge of the overall leadership should then work with those who are knowledgeable regarding the different subactivities or aspects of the work.

Who takes the lead depends. In our group some are considered to be the best. We know each other well and we know who is stronger than ourselves. Those who are the best, are those who will take the direction. It is easy to understand: if you do not know better than me, you cannot direct me. But if you know better than I do,

you will be able to teach me something and direct me. If you do not do things well, those who know better can correct the others. The direction can be in the hands of different musicians at different moments. Sometimes it can be me, sometimes BM-GI, sometimes BM-DO. When I myself take the lead, everyone will follow me. The same goes for BM-DO. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-CL, 13.04.15, ref-09386)

During rehearsals different musicians will lead and give cues to the others. During performances such cues will be given without words, but instead with a sign of the eyes, by for example closing his eyes towards one or two musicians near him, who then passes on the sign to the others, so that everyone is ready to change towards another part of the song or to the next song.

Because the person who is at a certain moment in charge of giving a cue can also forget, the others need to be attentive and able to remind him to for example give his cue to accelerate the tempo at a certain moment of the piece. Thanks to the attention of the others, the musicians can overcome such potential temporary flaws, and get back on track.

During rehearsals the cues of one and the same composition can even be given by different persons according to how each feels himself. If the one used to take the lead in a particular song does not feel himself very energetic one day, someone else can take over the lead in that particular piece. It is something which one will feel coming, already before one starts to rehearse and play. When preparing the instruments and finding the others busy talking and drinking tea, you might feel in shape to take the initiative that day, and the others will follow you. They may start with only 2 or 3 and then bit by bit the others will join. Those who take the lead or also those who love this part of the work and became good in it. If you like music-making, you will when arriving at the rehearsal-space immediately want to take out and prepare the instruments. It will put you already in a lead position to take other initiatives later on during that rehearsal-day.

It was a choice of the coaches to train the musicians of BM at all different levels of the art and craft of music-making, and this is very much appreciated by the musicians. When certain percussionists are absent, others can easily fill the void.

If only the organisation which the musicians are capable of when rehearsing and performing music could inspire them to get organised in a similar way in terms of their management.

Strong leaders know their musicians well and know the capacities of each and every one. The members of the ensemble also know each other well. They know each other's abilities and weaknesses, and they know who they can trust to take a lead.

A good leader is seen as someone who can listen to those with whom he works, asks questions to know what each one wishes to contribute, so that the organisation goes forward.

When one has the possibility to become a leader, chiefs nevertheless often become somewhat dictatorial, and have difficulties accepting what 'subordinates' have to say, and expect them instead to respect and follow the course of action decided upon by he who directs. To avoid this, one needs rules and regulations which force the leader to listen and take into account what the members of the music ensemble have to say.

During the sessions on shared ownership, I interviewed the musicians on what type of organisational line-up they would want to introduce if they would in the future create their own music ensemble. Would they introduce a hierarchical or instead a heterarchical-like system? Would they allow their musicians opportunities for interaction? Their answers all go into the same direction: They imagine themselves as leading their own group as leaders who:

- listen to everyone,
- discuss all the questions raised about instrument purchases,
- and rhythms/compositions to choose as part of the concert programmes,
- would not impose themselves,
- would not want to be above the musicians composing the ensemble,
- would listen to everyone in order to move the group forward, because the more they can think together, the more they will be able to be strong and move the group forward..

This is for sure a wonderful list of good intentions.

Not everyone is able though to function well in a more open, heterarchic and democratic style of organisation. I recognized the discussions between those who manage and those who compose the ensemble. Our ensemble Ictus in Brussels was (and still is) democratically organized, with the many meetings and exchanges and discussions that go with it. Also in the Brussels ensemble, some would take a lead on certain matters and activities, and then lead, while others would prefer to follow. This could create tensions, discussions, agreements and disagreements.

The organisation of the management of BM is hierarchical, even though this is strangely enough in contrast with their music-making practice in which they prove to be fine practitioners capable of an heterarchical form of organisation.

The fact that all musicians were taught all the different parts of the music, in order to be allowed a great versatility within the ensemble, does not mean that everyone is entirely

replacable. The musicians of BM consider themselves to be all capable of taking the role of soloist as well as accompanying musicians, although it is doubtful that this is something real, or rather something they imagine and hope for.²⁵⁴

12.1.2. Direction versus members

Keith Grint, Tourish and Vatcha argue that "the most successful leaders are liable to be those with the least compliant followers, 'for when leaders err - and they always do - the leader with compliant followers will fail". (Baker 2014, p.89)

A democratic form of organisation which allows for participation in decision-making by the musicians can be seen by some as weakening the direction, because a director can unfortunately prefer to be able to make decisions alone. If you have to listen to what musicians and other people think and want, it makes the CEO's life more complicated.

In this research I also asked the trainees to share their experiences and ideas on how to train others, as some already have experiences with teaching. These interviews also helped to better understand their relationship with their trainers, their frustrations and how they themselves would go about giving training.

When I would have my own ensemble in the future, I would speak with all the musicians in my band because the ideas put forward by the musicians can make the band move forward as a whole. A good leader listens to those with whom he works. He asks questions to know what can be the contribution of everyone, and how to think so that the organization goes forward. (Mbonda Beta musician BM-DO, 30.07.15, ref-17457)

I was told - and also sometimes witnessed myself - situations in which it became clear that the musicians were indeed not listened to, when they had complaints or suggestions about things concerning the management of the ensemble. This does not contribute to the smooth running of the organisation and leaves the musicians with bad feelings.

'One finger does not wash the face, it takes all the fingers', meaning that pupils can also teach something to his master and be in support of making things happen. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-KU, 09.07.15, ref-15884)

I reacted to the many complaints coming from the musicians, by telling them that it was really up to them to try to find solutions with their direction, or else to leave and start up something else elsewhere. I told them I very much hoped they would be able to find solutions within their ensembles and encouraged them to try. I also refused to be the intermediate between them and their direction, although I did discuss these matters with the direction towards the end of the research,

²⁵⁴ I am for example sure not everyone within BM could easily take the place of the soloist who died in 2016.

advising them to allow more participation of the musicians into the decisions and general strategy of the ensembles. Towards the musicians I defended the direction by telling them how difficult it must be for their mentors to make things work. I told them this was just my advice, and that it was their choice and decision to do what seemed best to them in terms of possible solutions.

12.1.3. Discipline difficult amongst peers

Although the young musicians of LJT (Espace Masolo) still had a lot to learn as musicians, and also as young adults in life, they were already in a position to have to organize themselves and their ensemble, and this was for sure not simple. There was within LJT at the time of our field work no leader who directed. They were also not organised in a hierarchical way. This was making their situation interesting, but also complex.

In 2015 they had not yet made final agreements among themselves concerning who would be in charge of what, and - being amongst peers - this appeared to be a difficult decision to agree upon. They spoke a lot about these matters, but they had not made decisions on how to get organised. A bit later, in 2016, they succeeded to elect amongst themselves the different persons to take leading positions within the ensemble.

In 2015 LJT had a problem with discipline, as only 3 or 4 of the 7-8 members regularly came to rehearsals. These irregularities did back then not allow them to evolve well. At the end of the research period, it even came to a point where some considered splitting up or even stopping the ensemble because of this. Sometimes they could not rehearse because they simply did not have enough musicians present. The minimum quorum was not reached to be able to execute the music they were preparing. And when the irregular ones came after all (late or at later sessions), they had to start the work all over again and resume what those who were present at the previous rehearsals already worked on, making them go around in circles.

Even though they knew some of the musicians were still weak and needed to learn a lot, they wanted to go ahead together. They were not able to tell anyone to leave. As they had been together in the training, they could not let go of anyone by sending him or her away. Someone would only be able to leave the group, when that person took the decision by him/herself.

Although the fact that they were taking their friendship as the first most important reason for working together surely handicapped their artistic and musical capacity and strength, it might take them further than anything else.

Such findings did push us to go deeper with them into questions concerning the organisation of their group: One of them at one point would be chosen as their leader, because s/he took the lead and because s/he had certain abilities. The others accepted it, followed that person. Did that mean this person would really be in a position to lead, or would it still be a community where everyone had an equal say at all levels of the organisation and of the decisions related to the group? How would democracy be conceived in Les Jeunes Talents?

Their answer to these questions was that everything could be discussed by everybody. The leader could and should also be criticised, and could even be suspended for not acting correctly. Everything could be subject of collective debate, in which each of them could give a point of view and they then would try to find a consensus together.

The leader becomes the leader of LJT, not because that person is imposing himself, but because the group recognize him to have the talent to lead. Two types of talents were principally expected from someone who could be seen as a potential leader of the band: (1) the ability to find markets for the brass band, (2) the capacity to have musical and artistic ideas which can allow him or her to take a lead during rehearsals and concerts, helping the ensemble to develop artistically, and (3) the ability to talk with the members of the ensemble, and motivate them to commit themselves seriously.

Besides a leader, LJT decided to also nominate one of the musicians to be the 'disciplinary': this person was appointed to make sure all logistics were in place (rehearsal space, instruments...) and he controlled and noted who was present, who was not, and who was late at rehearsals. He was also in charge of making sure the communication between the members went smoothly and he was expected to try to bring peace within the group, when this was necessary. They clearly chose the person who as mostly apt to perform these tasks.

I suggested LJT to consider rotating mandates of leaders and 'disciplinary' for limited periods of time, so that they would be able to try out different members within such positions for certain terms and then try others.

Beta Mbonda

The musicians of BM did not organize meetings amongst themselves, although their three representatives in the

General Assembly of the organization expressed their desperate need for such meetings²⁵⁵, so that they could represent the musicians with a good understanding of the position of each and everyone, and would therefore also have more authority towards the direction of the ensemble. They would then be able to propose things in the board which came from within the group, after being thoroughly discussed, knowing they were strongly backed by all musicians. It was not enough to only ask a meeting of the board. The musicians needed to know what to propose in such a board meeting and needed to prepare this amongst each other. The musicians of BM were - as the musicians of LJT - a group of close friends, but confronted with money problems they could be divided. They were together, but to find solutions to the financial and managerial problems they were confronted with, was difficult for them.

12.1.4. Power of management board vs direction

The direction of BM dominates, so it was the management that had more power than the General Assembly of the organisation.

Those representing the musicians were fed up with their in-between position which was not been taken seriously by the direction nor by the ensemble, and they seriously thought to resign as members of the general assembly.

In our discussions with the musicians, I shared my opinion that in order to avoid a collapse of BM in the future, they would need to find an understanding with the direction. They would somehow have to be able to get organised with them in order for things to work out. So during the focus groups and individual interviews on this topic, I tried to move the discussions away from the complaints and invited them to think of and imagine possible solutions.

The musicians were often in disagreement amongst each other. One thing which did help them a bit to get what they wanted, was to decide not to come for a while in protest. One of the musicians of BM was suspended because he complained about a lack of financial transparency. The musicians then went on strike, stayed at home and did not go to a few rehearsals. Then the direction of BM agreed to discuss again.

Some of the musicians were starting to understand that if they wanted to get out of their subordinate position within the organisation, they needed to speak in one voice and conduct their actions in unity, something which they did not do

²⁵⁵ They expressed this regularly during focus group and individual interviews.

enough. If the direction were confronted with a united front of musicians, they would listen and start to take into account what the musicians propose or demand.

12.2. Financial management and transparency (or lack of)

Discussing the financial management with the musicians in the focus groups in both case studies was not easy, because it gave way to loud, emotional and even chaotic discussions. The musicians are poor and very much in need of money. Some of them have families, to which they again and again come home empty-handed. This creates a lot of stress and bad feelings, and they then - rightly or wrongly - let off steam towards the management of their music project. If only the management would regularly tell them what is done with the money coming in, this could help them understand their financial management better and lower possibly unnecessary suspicions towards them.

When a group falls apart, it is most of the time because of the attitude of those who direct the groups. We amongst each other do not imagine to separate ourselves. But the relationship with the chiefs is often complicated. We also sometimes received a lot of money, money that did not arrive with us. Although we did not make much money, we did not leave the group until now. We did leave the group sometimes for short periods, out of protest. BM-DO stayed close to the staff of BM and has seen certain sums of money arrive, which did not trickle down to the musicians. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-GI, 20.04.15, ref.11353)

Discussions I had with the musicians of BM about financial transparency made clear that they had no idea at all what the expenses could be to run the project (rental material, transportation costs, making costumes...) and that they were suspicious about whether the money was spent as it should be spent.

Of a concert in December 2015 which was paid 1000 USD, each musician received only 35 US. It made me ask the direction whether they practised towards the musicians a form of transparency with respect to the income of concerts and the expenses. I was also myself interested to find out how the money was used, as I was a little surprised that of a fee of \$1000, only \$35 would be paid to each musician. My question did not come out of mistrust but out of curiosity to understand which expenses they needed to cover with the rest. Probably this income was especially good news for the management, as it could cover a series of expenses which had not been covered by concert fees, sponsoring or subsidies. The management explained they indeed throughout the year needed to cover a series of expenses out of their own pocket, which could not be or not entirely be covered through income

generated by the activities of the ensemble: transportation costs of the musicians to their rehearsal space and to the concerts, rental sound equipment, repair costs of instruments, drum skin heads, fees musicians and management, administration costs, legal advice and permissions..

The mentors of BM informed us that the revenue of BM comes from different sources: sometimes from the salaries of the mentors themselves, sometimes it is someone who gives support, a sponsor, from their concerts, the sale of cards and cds... Although all this does not end up to represent an important sum of money, they wanted to rethink ways to redistribute the income: They wanted to be able to put some money at the side and create a reserve which would be able cover certain unexpected depenses or investments. They admitted not discussing these things with the musicians and promised us they would, following my advice to better inform and explain the financial strategies of the management to the musicians.

When there is money, also the heads of projects become nervous. When there is no money, they all get along fine with each other. But when money comes into the picture, the management has difficulties accepting questions related to it and easily get angry. The musicians then complain that they are not informed about financial questions and are not allowed to ask questions about it. They are only allowed to take what is proposed to them, without asking further questions. They can even be punished when they have been too curious about the finances, so this is a dangerous field to enter for them.

Also in EM, money-questions are reserved for the direction only. Musicians are not or hardly informed, and because of this lack of transparency and concertation they also tend to be suspicious about the financial management of the organisation.

12.3. Project management

In this part of the chapter, you can find more information on a series of aspects which are related to the organisation of the projects, in order to contextualise the hypothesis concerning the need for participation and shared ownership.

12.3.1. Social and/or artistic focus

Beta Mbonda

At the beginning, Beta Mbonda was created for young people active in violent gangs. But by the end of our field work in

Kinshasa, the ensemble already existed for eight years (created in 2009) and the members were not anymore defined by their surroundings - and by themselves - as former gang-members, but as musicians. They were eager to include new members from different worlds and were ready to teach them what they knew. When they left the world of violent gangs, there were at first many who did not want to follow them, but later on, when they saw that it was a serious and respectable activity, some tried to become musician as well. Not only youngsters with a transgressive past would in the future be welcome in BM, but they would also want to welcome good musicians, in order to strengthen the musical backbone of the ensemble.

The musicians of BM see themselves as those who made the path, but now want to open up the ensemble and welcome newcomers, provided they would respect one of the most important and difficult principles of the group: patience.

I asked the musicians of Beta Mbonda whether it bothered them that the director of BM often presents Beta Mbonda as a group of former 'kulunas'. Some did not like this, while others did and were even proud of their transformation and switch. It depended on when and where such presentations were given: in certain places it made them feel ashamed, while in other places it made them feel good and proud. They were worried that, in certain cases, to hear that these musicians were gangsters attacking the population, might make people in the audience feel uncomfortable or even afraid.

Beta Mbonda started as a social project in the sense that at the beginning Alhim Eyenga had the idea to propose music to these young men, hoping that the activity of mastering music could help them to leave the world of violent 'kuluna' gangs. Beta Mbonda is now still presented as a group of former gangsters.

I asked all members of Beta Mbonda what they would prefer their heritage to develop into in the future: still very much a social or much more an artistic project? Do they want it to develop especially into an artistically strong and well-known group, or do they consider it more of a priority that the social aspect continues to play an important role? The question was whether Beta Mbonda should also continue - as it was originally conceived - to be able to accommodate people who are in crime and is proposed to become a musician to help them rebuild something else in life. Almost all musicians - as well as their mentors - answered that future members could be artists as well as youngsters coming from gangs ('kuluna') or from the streets ('shegues'). They imagined the future of Beta Mbonda as not solely a social

project, but rather a combination of both a social as well as a strong artistic and musical project, although most of them also stressed that they hoped BM would become stronger as a musical project.

BM is an all men's band, and they would very much like to be able to welcome girls and women as well as future members.

Espace Masolo / Les Jeunes Talents

The project of Espace Masolo had always been presented to us as first of all a social project, having as its most important aim the unification of children in street situations with their families, if at all possible, and also the scolarisation and teaching an artistic or artisanal profession.

When taking a closer look at the musical training within Espace Masolo and the results they had obtained with the more advanced group they considered as being at the end of their training, I concluded that the level they arrived at was not very high. Their level of music-making allowed them to participate in performing at funerals, an activity which the team of EM - rightfully so - did not appreciate as a constructive setting for their young musicians. But for them to be able to perform at real musical or music theatre performances, they would need to develop themselves better and differently. As an example: some of the young musicians dream to also be able to learn to play jazz. They all expressed the wish to be able to develop themselves towards and into the world of music, while they were now limited to the world of brass bands performing at funerals and ceremonies. I understood and shared the worries the team of EM had, for example about one of the young girls performing long nights at funerals and being exposed to alcohol and cannabis and late night atmosphere, while the aim of EM was to offer girls like her a more stable life at home, with a family and a job to make a living. The problem is that these young musicians were not good enough to be able to be engaged in orchestras which perform concerts, even though they dream of this. The girl in the example is only one of the many examples. All of them dream of becoming musicians, and this dream represents a real potential. The choice of Espace Masolo to prioritise the social and have the artistic come in the second place is nevertheless respectable as well.

12.3.2. Selection of musicians and repertoire

It regularly happens that not all musicians of BM can participate in a project, so that difficult choices need to be made in terms of selecting the happy few who can. Mostly this

is done by the direction, but once they proposed the musicians to choose themselves, and this went well. They were invited to give 2 names of musicians who should be chosen for a particular project, apart from themselves. Some were not chosen by any of them. To avoid that they would choose those with whom they got along with fine (friends instead of good musicians), they were obliged to consider certain criteria in their choice: to choose someone who would be a good soloist, and someone who would be a good accompanist and able to play a good basso continuo. Even though it was a secret vote, the musicians did not like to have to make propositions for selecting them or not for a project. They preferred that their mentors would do the work of selecting musicians for upcoming projects, something which they do based on their capacities as well their commitment:

Our leaders know the capabilities of each and every one of us. We also know each other, we know each other's abilities and weaknesses. We can understand that when some are identified to join a project, because between ourselves we can say that those selected people are the ones who deserve it. (Mbonda Beta musician BM-GI, 09.07.15, ref-14091)

Alhim Eyenga believes that BM can perform well with only 3 musicians, and had several experiences of performances with only a few musicians.

Composing a programme takes a lot of time talking about it. All the different scenes and rhythms used are then written down. In BM the musicians are sometimes also asked to make proposals, for example with regard to the repertory of certain regions, but it is mostly the artistic director Alhim Eyenga who composes the shows and decides on what to perform when.

The musicians of BM were not yet able to compose a programme, although they also wanted to reach that level of expertise. It could be that sometime in the future their mentors will be absent and they might then need to propose a programme themselves, so they need to be able to do this, and Alhim Eyenga is preparing them for this.

The performances of BM are theatre shows, with different energies, sometimes loud, quiet, very soft... It takes a series of decisions during rehearsals to see how things works. Alhim Eyenga also makes these decisions, although the musicians are invited to formulate propositions as well.

12.3.3. Selling concerts / representing the music ensemble

I asked the musicians whether they could imagine taking responsibilities at the level of the sales of their ensemble, each one having his/her own little network to put into action. Instead of waiting for mentors or anyone else to get them

concerts, could they imagine working on this themselves as well? I imagined certain musicians in both groups to have the talent to find concerts and other performance-projects, and some of them were already actively doing so. I asked them whether they were willing to play a more active role in the production and PR-work, instead of waiting until the direction took initiatives to find concerts. They could go out and find concerts for the group, because they are themselves the best ambassadors of their ensemble. But apart from those who already took this role on themselves most musicians answered that the musician is not the person to look for concerts. They say they are artists who need to focus on their rehearsals, and they would have no time to look for concerts. They also think they do not have the level of contacts which their mentors have. They only imagined themselves being able to bring in a few concerts related to their private friends and family, such as funerals and certain ceremonies, but that would not bring in much money. They think a musician cannot easily combine activities. After rehearsals they need to rest. It is not possible for them to then go out to meetings with presenters or sponsors. The leader of the orchestra can sign the contracts in their place. In the mean time they need to work hard on their music.

Musicians of BM contested the fact that certain gigs were refused by the management, because they represent not enough income. I often had similar discussions as the ones I noted within BM and LJT with the musicians of my ensemble in Brussels. They could also reprove of the fact that I would refuse concerts which I considered as being too poorly paid, or not well presented or produced. When you try to develop the career of a music ensemble in the long run, one needs to impose certain minimum conditions when selling concerts. It is annoying though for those musicians who want to earn money right away, even if it is not enough.

12.3.4. Selling self-made instruments

The sales of the instruments which were since 2015 being constructed within the workshop of BM could represent a future source of income for the ensemble. I was curious to find out whether they would be able to create through these sales a small capital which could allow them to better their situation. Would they give a certain percentage of the sales of a particular instrument to the person who built the instrument, or would they end up giving a percentage of the proceeds to everyone? And what would be done with the rest? In what would the rest be reinvested?

By the time I ended the research, no final decisions had been taken on this, but Master Tshamala told us he sometimes cannot sleep at night because of all the questions he has, such as: Someone who buys a new instrument from BM for for example 500 USD must be happy with the quality of the instrument. If not, that person will not buy anything after that nor make good publicity for the instruments BM makes.

Further down the road of the training in constructing traditional percussion instruments, Master Tshamala imagines to give each student a 'kit' of tools, and also to teach them to master the dimension of marketing and sales management of the newly constructed instruments. He hopes to keep the musicians who become luthiers of percussion instruments in a corporation attached to BM, in order to keep them with them and together with them open markets allowing them to respond to larger orders of 10, 20 or 50 instruments at once. Such markets could be schools, other groups, certain ministries.

12.3.5. Feeling of ownership

Although one or two members of BM start to dream of having their own ensembles or join other orchestras, leaving BM was for most musicians not an obvious option, even if they were displeased about certain aspects of the management. The reason for this was that after all the years and efforts they had gone through, they considered the ensemble as their home.

The musicians of BM expressed a strong feeling of ownership towards the ensemble. They said their heart was with Beta Mbonda which they also considered as their heritage. It was seen as their ensemble, which they co-founded and built up together with their mentors. They said they might want to also be elsewhere, but that compared with BM they would be like a stranger in another group. It gives them pride but at the same time also a sense of responsibility, and even of property.

Alhim Eyenga, the original founder, agreed with this, saying that without the musicians, Beta Mbonda simply does not exist.

One more reason why the musicians feel an ownership towards their BM is not only because they were at the start of it, but because they have suffered a lot in order to succeed to master the instruments and the repertoire to become musicians, and therefore also made the ensemble succeed.

A similar expression of pride was expressed by the more advanced musicians of Espace Masolo, who in 2015 created LJT, calling themselves the 'elected' ones (Fr: 'les élus'), because they were the ones who were at the very beginning of

the creation of the brass band section of Espace Masolo. They named those following them the 'called' ones (Fr: 'les appelés'), referring to the fact that many young people have been trained in music at EM but later abandoned, but the 'called' ones can later become 'elected'.

12.3.6. Importance of being able to speak out

Beta Mbonda

The musicians of BM complain that they have no possibility whatsoever to speak out about the things they want to be able to share with the direction. They say that for this reason they feel treated as 'labels' (FR: 'étiquettes'), as if they only exist as filling for a décor, a scenery:

We the musicians are are treated as 'labels', practically as subordinates. It's difficult to impose or even suggest a different type of organization to the chiefs. It is the leaders who impose us their mode of management. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-CL, 30.07.15, ref-17492)

Likewise, the General Assembly of the organisation never meets, so the musicians also feel at that level treated as 'pawns' and not listened to. When they want to express themselves and ask to be listened to, the direction does not have the time. They have a series of claims and propositions, but do not manage to pass them onto the management of BM. They feel they have become mature and experienced as musicians, and think they can play a more active role in running the ensemble and the organisation.

When I discussed this with the direction, I got a different picture, because they told us they want the musicians to do exactly that: to play an active role within the organisation. They say they even wanted the musicians to prepare themselves to take over BM in the future. But what the direction claimed to aim at, did not - at least for now - seem to be put into practice by them.

Although not in an organised way, the musicians still talk a lot amongst themselves about how they want BM to be developed, and they have propositions for this. When they talk with each other about this, they always talk about 'their' orchestra, 'their' BM. They have a lot of love for this work and for BM, but because they do not get the chance to speak out, they do not feel the same warmth from the direction towards them.

They understand they can not control everything in detail, and understand they have their limits in understanding everything concerning the running of the ensemble. But concerning the things they can understand, they want to be able to have a minimum of a say.

Les Jeunes Talents / Espace Masolo

In certain brass bands in Kinshasa meetings are held weekly, during which the musicians are invited to vent their concerns about questions concerning finances, schedules, programmes, etc. Such groups also ask the members each time they participate in a rehearsal or performance to pay a fixed contribution to the ensemble which serves to cover expenses such as food and drinks, maintenance instruments...

12.3.7. Co-governance including members

The musicians of BM tell us that although they have things to complain about, they can still not imagine that a break-up of the ensemble could happen to them. They think they are different from the other groups in Kinshasa. They tell us that other music ensembles can more easily fall apart, because they are composed of people who come from different realities. Instead, the musicians in this study have been very close since a long time, and they saw themselves as also having been trained at a 'moral' level: They tell us that their mentors have 'moralised' them on how to behave well in group. They say they were not only trained at the professional level as musicians, but also at the 'moral' level. Their trainers have - so say the musicians of BM - played an essential role in forming them as persons, while in other groups the musicians have been trained and formed outside the group. They come into the group with their own and different backgrounds. They will come to work as an employee. For the musicians of BM it is felt to be much more difficult to oppose themselves to their supervisors, because they feel that they came "out of nothing and learned everything from them", as one musician said. Beta Mbonda has been experienced not just as a group of musicians, but also as their school of training musicians, and personal development as human beings. This conclusion could explain why the musicians may despite their complaints not want to push the direction too much, as they do not want to seem ungrateful for everything they have to thank them for.

Flamme Kapaya is a young but already well-known musician from Kinshasa, who is, in part thanks to his close collaboration with choreographer Faustin Linyekula from Kisangani, since several years being produced and presented in fancy contemporary performing arts festivals and theatres in Europe and the US. Flamme made music for several of his Faustin's shows. I could meet Flamme several times to discuss my research-project in Kinshasa. Flamme started his career as musician (guitar) and composer working for the famous Werason and his band Wengue Musica Maison Mère, for whom he performed and composed almost 10 years, from 1997 until 2007. He considered himself as the artistic director of Werason's band. Flamme is now 37 years old and since 2007 successfully developing his own projects in and especially outside of Kinshasa. He travels a lot and has his home in Paris. Flamme tells me that in most bands in Kinshasa musicians are exploited by the leaders of the bands. Flamme wants another type of organisation for his own band, in which each member has his say. He organised his band as an 'association' of musicians. The associated musicians discuss a lot before agreeing on projects. (from field note on meeting musician Flamme Kapaya, 09.08.13, Ostend, Belgium)

12.3.8. Future of the social music projects and the individual careers in Kinshasa

The city of Kinshasa has a lot of problems in terms of street gangs ('shegues' and 'kuluna'), and Beta Mbonda and Espace Masolo can be considered as fine examples to follow.

Towards the end of our research, I asked everyone to share with us the dreams they had for the future of their project.

1.

The ambition of Beta Mbonda is to develop itself in the nearby future into an ensemble which is especially respected for its artistic quality, so that they can start touring more in and outside DR Congo. To become better musicians, further training will be needed and to be provided by outside teachers and/or by following training at the city's music school (Institut National des Arts).

2.

Besides their artistic ambitions, they also want to continue to develop BM also as a social project which can welcome children and youth from the streets and from gangs who want to learn traditional Congolese percussion music.

3.

If asked by local governments, Beta Mbonda wants to help start similar social music projects and will propose its musicians as advisers to accompany such projects in the city of Kinshasa, or elsewhere in the country.

4.

Beta Mbonda also wants to become known for producing and selling certain traditional percussion instruments (tam-tam, ditumba and madimba).

5.

Beta Mbonda wants to develop into an African music training centre in which the musicians with whom the ensemble was created will equally be trainers. They will train at the Beta Mbonda centre, but also elsewhere in Kinshasa in cultural centres, in schools and also in shelters for children in street situations. More and more young people from different neighborhoods already asked to be trained. Some already lie and claim they are a 'Beta Mbonda', even though they have never been to a rehearsal! They come to the concerts, and follow BM on television. Small children are seen playing BM in the streets, taking boxes and playing on them, like drums.

12.4. Future careers

Some of the musicians of both projects/ensembles imagine they could become independent musicians.

I have wanted to know what idea the participants in our research have about developing a career as musicians and confronted them in certain sessions with professional Congolese musicians to find out whether they had an idea about what it takes.

Some were well-known musicians, such as Felix Wazekwa and Manuaku Waku, and others were less well-known but fine professional musicians such as Gabriel Wadigesila, Sidi Kiala and Djonimbo Bilansa.

I organised these special meetings in order to allow them to exchange the questions and ideas they could have concerning the career of a musician.

12.4.1. Strong management needed to run music ensemble

To develop a career as musician depends in part on the opportunities they find, and for this having the right network is considered to be important. Some can be really good musicians, but not find the right people to help them further. Some spend a whole year working and preparing themselves, but get only one concert.

These young musicians are luckier, as they have a management (BM) or members within their ensemble (LJT) finding concert for them. Not having enough performances can in itself destabilize groups, as performing music in public is the aim of becoming a musician.

The promotion of these ensembles is already pretty well done. They can both be found on internet, and they are regularly on TV. Sometimes BM will be seen 3 or 4 times on TV in one month time. Other musicians never are on TV.

12.4.2. Time needed to develop successful career as musician

In general, developing a career as musician takes time, wherever you are. First it takes a lot of time to learn and master music. Those who end up succeeding are those who do not only work hard, but who can also be patient. Being impatient

is not a good method to succeed in this profession. One has to have time, and gradually build things up. All these young musicians with whom I spent 2-3 years in this research have something to be proud of, and I think most of them have a potential to develop something in terms of a career as musician, at least as one of their professional activities.

For sure, the conditions in Kinshasa are difficult. Poverty, the political situation, police officers and soldiers who are to be avoided... One has to be patient, but one also must move on and take many initiatives to make things work over there. They at least have already proven that they do not need results too fast.

The career of a musician can be long, and some start it only later in life. In Kinshasa, musicians need to be perseverant, and accept to suffer. Musicians know it can take a long time before they can do anything with their music-making. Good management can help to find concerts. But musicians also need to keep up the energy when they go through meagre periods without concerts or concerts that do not or hardly pay. The musicians in our research have a vision of their future, and invest in it, even though the meagre years can seem forever.

Alhim Eyenga, the founder of BM, also suffered a lot, and he tells his students. He did not have an easy life at all. The music he plays did not have much support back when he started. Times are a bit better now. There is more interest in traditional music now, says he, although this is contradicted by other sources.

The objective of their intense and lengthy work and study is to succeed and become musicians who can make a living from this activity, but it is not sure that this will happen. Not all people who invest in becoming musician profit from it. Some die before having profited from it at all (of the 31 participants in our research, 3 died during the research!). If they would not get any money at all for all they do, they would most probably stop. But even though they do not earn much (the brass band musicians more than the traditional percussionists) they earn a little bit, and come by. They hope that in the future things will get better.

12.4.3. Philosophy of enthusiasm

"I started first to write songs for Koffi. When these songs came out, I saw that people loved them. Then I also wrote songs to Papa Wemba. I worked a lot with him. Seeing that my songs for Koffi and for Papa Wemba were appreciated, encouraged me to continue and to try my own solo career. Your question is how one can obtain success in this profession. I think it can work when you can offer something different, something new to your audiences, something which surprises them as well as yourself. You first need to be happy and enthusiastic yourself with what you do and what you make. You have to be happily surprised with what you make. "Is this what I succeeded to make, to perform!?" You need to be yourself convinced and enthusiastic about what you are making." (from interview with Felix Wazekwa, Kinshasa, 04.05.15, ref-13428)

Towards the end of the field work I allowed myself to advise the participants in our research, as well as their mentors, to be careful in how they present their work to others. I advised them to take into account how the 'philosophy of enthusiasm' works: They should not lie or exaggerate about their work, but instead honestly communicate that they are at the beginning, building up something new, but that they have a strong project, and a lot of ideas. The 'philosophy of enthusiasm' is about making sure that you can talk to someone about something you are seriously enthusiastic about. When you are excited about your music-making, you have a good chance that this excitement will have an impact on others, as it will make other people want to be near and with you. When you are sad and poor, some will throw you some money, and then they will quickly leave. People may also want to be with BM or LJT because they go through hard times to succeed their projects, so they should not lie about the conditions in which they work. But what needs to stick out is the enthusiasm with which they persevere, against all odds, and create artistically strong work. Then people will want to not only throw them some money to get rid of them, but maybe also want to be with them and think about how they could become partners.

12.4.4. Successful career depends on type and repertoire of music

Very different types of activities exist within the music scene in Kinshasa. Some can be seen as 'music for survival': musical activities with which one can make some money, but which are not very challenging artistically. On the other hand, there are those performances which demand musical and artistic talent. The first category comprises performances at funerals, ceremonies, elections, and most performances in churches... In the second category are the concerts (traditional, jazz, popular, reggae...) and performing arts (dance and music theatre).

One can not do everything well. In order to reach a certain level of quality, an artist-musician needs to work really hard and focus on a specific repertoire. One can 'visit' other

styles of music, and those who have the capabilities to do this, do it. But one can not be good in everything. Musicians will always need to make choices and prioritise certain style(s) of music.

The chances to be successful depend of the type of music one plays. Ndombolo music is now the type of music which has most success in Kinshasa. It is in this period therefore easier to make a career in that type of music, then it is in traditional music.

12.4.5. Hard work needed to develop successful career as musician

Ideally, also in Kinshasa, the promotion of a musician has to be taken care by an office. Certain musicians prefer to avoid working with an office, because it costs them money, and they try to do things by themselves, but it makes them loose a lot of rehearsal-time. It is important though that audiences as well as presenters see that the musicians get better and better, because they work on their art. That is the best of publicity for the musicians and their ensembles.

Many musicians in Kinshasa are busy working on their music, and at the same time combining this with other activities such as 'la coop' (little jobs here and there in the informal economy). However, a difference of quality can then be noticed between those who work only a few days and those who work the whole week on their music. That is why musicians prefer to limit engaging in other activities than rehearsing and performing their music. When one can work every day on music, one becomes better and stronger as a musician. Alhim Eyenga is for the musicians of BM the example they want to follow in this. When they see him at work in other groups, they notice he is much better compared with many other musicians. Certain musicians are busy taking care of business, while Alhim Eyenga has been entirely focusing on his music-making. Seeing his example, they understood that a musician needs to be almost exclusively focused on his music-making in order to be a good musician, even when this means that one lives in difficult circumstances materially.

The young musicians in our research are beginners, who are in a learning phase of music-making and who may at a certain point be able to start to earn a living from this activity.

The professional musicians shared in the meetings I organized with the young musicians that they need to work at best many hours per day and at least 5 days per week, as it is so important to be regular in one's work everyday. It is of

course so much easier to say, and so much more difficult to do, to make happen.

"One jazz-musician I know one day told me that even if he did not work for only 2 days, his wife would know that he has not worked. And if he will not have worked during one week, then the other members of his orchestra will know it. And after one month, his fans will know, and will react to his playing, saying that he is less good than he was before." (from focus group #8 Beta Mbonda with musician Gabriel Wadigesila, 04.05.15, ref-13270)

Life has many constraints though, especially in Kinshasa: Certain days they do not have electricity, some other days there are problems to get in time to rehearsals because they do not have transportation, etcetera...

12.4.6. Why indeed make music at all?

Contrary to the young musicians of EM, who start to make some money (some of them already have performances every week at funerals and ceremonies), the musicians of BM have much more difficulties finding concerts in the field of traditional Congolese music. So they earn almost nothing at all. In the best of cases, they can have one concert every other month, sometimes more, but mostly less than that. They come from a past of life in violent gangs, stealing what they could put their hands on, and therefore had a much more lucrative activity than now as musicians. I asked them the same question again and again: "Why do you do this activity?" I saw and could conclude that they experienced an enormous pleasure from the act of making music itself, and of working on becoming better and better musicians. They have ideas, as well as illusions and dreams about their profession, career and future lives as musicians. I was astonished and at the same time found it positive that these former 'kuluna' were now so busy and captivated by their musical activity, without it really bringing in much money at all. And their musical activity (training and performing) went on since already 6 years. If they would only be practising music in these conditions for a period of only a few months, one could understand that they still kept doing it. But although these young musicians sometimes live in complicated living conditions, they still do not want to let go of music.

The experience of the young musicians from LJT/EM was mostly limited to playing at funerals or at ceremonies ('collations'). Only rarely they performed in a real concert. Fortunately thanks to EM they have had the experience of real concerts and music theatre performances, and I congratulated EM for this. When one hears what brass bands are involved in, it is often artistically limited, because mostly there is not much to rehearse. They know the songs they need to know for the funerals and ceremonies. For the funerals they have to

spend the night there, which is in in terms of socialisation not very interesting for these young musicians. They also do not earn much with this activity. Not much, but something anyway. For some of them, this playing at funerals and ceremonies has become a job, and my understanding is that this type of work can in some way kill the artisticity of playing music. There is a danger that playing a lot in brass bands who almost only perform at funerals makes music-making less important as an art which needs to be continuously developed.

12.5. Summary and conclusion

1. Above all, it must be said that both cases in this research show a high level of organisational expertise, because to have succeeded over such a long period of time (7 to 10 years) to develop and continue to exist in the difficult reality of Kinshasa, shows strong and inventive organisational skill, something which not many initiators and practitioners elsewhere would be capable of. Studying the missing elements and weaknesses of internal organisation of the different formats did not and should not make us loose track of this main characteristic of these projects. The management of these social music projects in Kinshasa are under continuous strain and stress, as it must be an immensely difficult job to make things happen and even more so to succeed in continuing these projects, something the initiators and mentors of BM and EM have succeeded to do since many years already.

2. It is nevertheless considered important that musicians also have a say in the running of their organisations, so therefore towards the end of the field work in Kinshasa I advised and encouraged both parties (musicians and direction) to not let go and do their utmost best to come to an understanding about this, within BM as well as LJT of EM, not in a confrontational and conflictual way though, as that would not solve anything.

3. The musicians know well what is important to provide in these programmes, so it is good for those leading the projects to continuously be aware of what they have to say, not only in order to make things work out better, but also to show respect and trust towards the musicians in what they know would be best for the music ensemble. This will address their wish for shared ownership and thereby strengthen them as well as the ensemble and its projects. To have the musicians participate in the governance of the ensemble is something important for the future of the ensemble. It can make it become stronger²⁵⁶.

²⁵⁶ See 11.3.7 on co-governance including members.

4. The musicians of BM reported they had nothing much to say within their organisation. They complained a lot about not being happy with their relationship with the direction of the ensemble, about a lack of financial transparency²⁵⁷ and a lack of democracy. Although they represent an important part of the general assembly of the organisation, this organ within the organisation does not meet and has therefore no say. The musicians complained that the direction decided everything without consulting and taking into account the opinion, desires and needs of the musicians who are members of the music ensemble²⁵⁸.

5. Democracy and participation of the young musicians in decision-making was also reported to be missing in EM. For the more advanced musicians within Les Jeunes Talents (LJT) things also were difficult towards the end of the research: They were quarrelling amongst each other as well as with the direction of Espace Masolo. With Espace Masolo they discussed about the fact that their music training could not continue, and about the instruments and rehearsal time they wanted to obtain from EM. Amongst themselves they had disagreements about the lack of discipline and commitment and about who should take the direction of the ensemble²⁵⁹.

6. The direction of EM sees it as its ambition and aim to empower the young people who follow their programme, and was therefore happy that the more advanced musicians now tried to organise themselves by creating the ensemble Les Jeunes Talents, and thereby took their life in their own hands. EM did not want to continue to manage them forever. The most important aim of EM was their reinsertion within their families and society and them becoming independent adults who can take care of themselves.

7. Writing this thesis, and again going through the lengthy discussions with the young musicians on their complaints and ideas concerning the possibilities and limits for shared ownership within the organisation of their projects, again confronted me with the harsh and fragile conditions in which these young people try to survive, but also with their astonishing clinging to music-making²⁶⁰. I was writing this part of my thesis while at the same time reading about the enormous difficulties the population of DR Congo was going through because of the armed conflicts, corruption and ongoing political crisis, something which in many ways felt like being so much in contrast with the commitment and ambitions of the

²⁵⁷ See 11.2 about financial management and transparence (or lack of it).

²⁵⁸ See 11.1.2 about the direction versus the members of the ensemble.

²⁵⁹ See 11.1.3 about the difficulty to get organised amongst peers.

²⁶⁰ See also hypothesis 4 on the impact of the intrinsic benefits of music-making, music-making for itself.

young people I did our research on in Kinshasa from August 2012 to January 2016.

8. It is my opinion from reading other case studies and from studying the social music projects in Kinshasa, that personal development and agency depend on the possibility of participation in the act itself of music-making²⁶¹, but also in the organisation of the music project or ensemble. As Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire studied and described at length in his oeuvre, if the possibility of being and feeling oneself an actor of change is missing or limited, it can limit the development and transformative processes of the young musicians, and therefore also seriously limit the role music-making can play in such processes (Freire 1970).

9. The organisational format in many Congolese music ensembles (and also many other musical surroundings outside Congo²⁶²) is extremely hierarchical around a direction of the ensemble who takes all the decisions. In the act of music-making itself, especially in smaller ensembles, the organisation can nevertheless be both hierarchical as well as 'heterarchical'. So the organisation of making music in the chamber music setting could be the example to learn from in terms of setting up or re-organising the management of the projects.

10. Last but not least, the following chapter proposes to come to an understanding of how music-making in itself is motivating the participants in this research to keep on practising and developing their capacities as musicians, even though they experience limited social and financial benefits from it.

²⁶¹ Also see chapter 10, in which the process of mastering music-making is presented in detail.

²⁶² Geoffrey Baker also discusses this at length in his study of Sistema Venezuela (Baker 2014, chapter 9; Baker & Frega 2018)

13. Hypothesis 4: BEYOND SURVIVAL – MUSIC FOR ITSELF

(the role of enjoyment / play / flow)

The young musicians in this research are not only interested in what music brings them as extrinsic gains, but they are also - and very much so - interested in the act itself of learning and performing music.

13.0. Introduction

1. In my research in Kinshasa, I have focussed on coming to a better understanding of the role music can play in social work which is aiming to help young people to establish new positions within their society, after having lived a life as members of violent gangs or as so-called 'witch'-children in the streets of the city. They told us music 'saved' them and I have during a period of 3 1/2 years of on the spot fieldwork, interacted with them at length about their experiences in mastering music and becoming musicians.

2. In my almost 20 years as director of the soloist ensemble Ictus²⁶³, I had already been intrigued about the fact that there was no clear answer to the question why our musicians were doing what they were doing, as creating and performing newly composed music was - and still is - so far away from any form of logic of efficiency and productivity. In our research in Kinshasa, I came across very similar questions, but within a suprisingly different context: How can it at all be possible that music-making survives as an activity in a surrounding in which surviving is or should be a central day-to-day concern?

3. The former members of violent gangs who have become musicians of the percussion ensemble Beta Mbonda were under the spell of music, even though this activity was not really yielding them money or much other capital, not enough at least to explain why they were spending so much time in music-making, while hardly surviving in the complicated surroundings of Kinshasa. Throughout the research period they complained to us about being poor and not having the time to make money, because too much time spent in rehearsals and music-making.

4. I called this chapter of the thesis 'Beyond Survival' because I noted that in their investment in music they seemed

²⁶³ see: www.ictus.be

to go beyond the standard survival modus most people in Kinshasa need to be in. This constitutes an exceptional contrast between at one end their need to live in a survival modus, and at the other end their activity of music-making which they see as an investment in a better future: The musicians of Beta Mbonda complained a lot about their financial difficulties, but at the same time indicated that they lost a lot of time in vagrancy, and decided to stay faithful in mastering music, because they see it as an investment in a possible better future for themselves.

5. External (extrinsic) reasons for making music, can be that thanks to music:

- one has found another position in society,
- it got some out of violence,
- it gave them respect from their neighbours,
- it brought them on television
- they are respected as artist-musicians,
- one is no longer seen as 'gangster'' or 'witch'-child or 'street child',
- one has opportunities to earn some money here and there,
- one can hope to make a living with it in the future,
- maybe even succeeding in developing a career as musician,
- become well-known...

All these extrinsic reasons are for sure valid in explaining at least in part the motivation of these youngsters to continue to engage in the act of becoming musicians. But throughout this lengthy fieldwork I more and more came to the understanding that what motivates them above all is that - somehow quite simply - they take great enjoyment in doing it: **They derive enjoyment from the activity itself of making music.** And - even though this was not an easy task to embark on - I wanted to come to an understanding of where this came from. The main reasons they gave us for wanting to continue making music anyway, were: (1) one day they will make money, (2) their new identity, (3) the respect they get and the potential this represents for being sponsored, and (4) but most important, their passion for making music.

6. Music-making can only in part be explained by means of its functionalities, its purpose, its aim, or its possible social impacts, but - like with any form of play - it is at the end of the day also there just for itself (Huizinga 1938), interesting in itself, for the joy of performing it, for the joy of the 'flow' it offers (Csikszentmihalyi 1992-2002), and also for the control it gives. Music is being 'played'. **'Play' is at the heart of music.** Most musicians are known to be motivated by the quality of the experience which playing music offers in itself, not - at least not above all - by the expectation of its future utilities (Huizinga 1938; Caillois 1962; Rodriguez 2006; Sutton-Smith 1997). 'Play' was already many years ago described by Dutch historian and cultural theorist Johan Huizinga as an activity with no particular

material interest and profit that could be gained by it. Play imposes rules to be followed though, and creates order. And music is a form of pure play (Huizinga 1938; Rodriguez 2006).

7. Still, it was striking to find that the importance these specific characteristics of 'playing' music - studied in very different contexts by scholars Johan Huizinga, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Roger Caillois and Brian Sutton-Smith - also appeared to have in the difficult circumstances of the participants in this research in Kinshasa: In this research in Kinshasa, all the possible - although real - benefits of playing music nevertheless did not explain conclusively why these musicians play music, considering their need - and the need of their surroundings - to have them on a day-to-day basis bring in money in order to simply feed themselves and help their families to survive.

8. Besides the concepts of 'enjoyment' (Haworth 2016 and Csikszentmihalyi 2002) and 'play' (Huizinga 1938, Caillois 1962, Rodriguez 2006; Sutton-Smith 1997), the other important concepts at the basis of this chapter of the research, and their links to existing research and literature, are: 'mastery' (Sennett 2008), 'group dynamics' (Forsyth 2017), 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi 2002) and 'positive fatalism' (Pairon 2016).

9. The musicians of Beta Mbonda came out of a previous life in which they were doing well materially, because they were terrorising people and then stealing their belongings. They discovered music, and agreed to submit themselves to seriously work on mastering it. Their moms told us: *"We're glad our son came out of crime, but now after all these years, we have enough of them almost always being in music. They work a lot, but they hardly bring anything back to the family. They do some odd jobs at the side, but not much, because they work really hard on their music and have rehearsals almost every day."*

The musicians of Beta Mbonda hope and even expect that they will one day make money and have an interesting and promising future thanks to their activity as musicians. But, in the meantime, many years are passing by²⁶⁴, during which nothing much came out of this activity in terms of financial or material gains.

10. But, even though they have moments and periods of discouragement, most of the time they continue to be incredibly motivated and engaged in this activity. It is amazing that the Beta Mbonda musicians continue to work on

²⁶⁴ when we started the research, more than 6 years had already passed since they joined Beta Mbonda

their music, despite the fact that they do not have that many concerts²⁶⁵, even though they are becoming appreciated musicians. If it were for the money, they should be performing other types of music, such as some of the more popular music of Kinshasa (Ndombolo or Coupé Décalé) which brings in a little more. They are therefore in financial need. The music does not pay at all in terms of money. But despite this, and despite periods of discouragement, they continue anyway.

11. What I found, is that music-making is an occupation which also gives meaning to their existence, beyond what they can earn financially with it, and I decided to try to come to a better understanding of this phenomenon by focussing on it during a series of focus group sessions and individual interviews²⁶⁶. In this part of the research, I invited them to look at what the experience of making music brought them in itself: not in terms of its external advantages (income, new identity...), but in terms of the activity in itself. I understood all the possible external reasons and advantages to also be good reasons for wanting to make music, and for helping them to be motivated to concentrate on this activity. But it was not satisfying and conclusive as an explanation for the enormous efforts they all put into this activity since many years²⁶⁷, without most of the extrinsic results they hoped could come out of it. This made us want to understand how the sheer enjoyment of the activity itself became an important motivation for them to cling to music.

12. We have seen in chapter 10 that it takes a lot of work to succeed in mastering music-making. This therefore requires a considerable commitment, especially when the extrinsic benefits are limited. It is difficult to master the instruments and the repertoire, so newcomers are confronted with important sacrifices. This is one of the reasons which confronted us in this research with the question why they kept on being so attached to this activity.

13. The question which imposed itself more and more within this research was especially in relation to the situation of the traditional percussionists of Beta Mbonda, because the brass band musicians of Espace Masolo have more chances in making a living with their music. Brass band musicians are sought in Kinshasa and in other parts of the country. After their basic training at EM, several of these young musicians already succeed to earn enough money from their musical activities thanks to being engaged in different brass bands at

²⁶⁵ *The reason why it is not so easy for them to get concerts seems to be due to the fact that traditional music is less appreciated than it was before. See also 4.4.*

²⁶⁶ *see also 7.3.6.2 for information on these interviews*

²⁶⁷ *at the expense of other activities which could help them make a living, because not much time left besides their music-making*

ceremonies and funerals. They know that if their own project - Les Jeunes Talents of EM - does not work out, they will manage to find opportunities with other brass bands. Some already succeed in earning enough money to take care of themselves as well as part of their family, thanks to more than 2 performances per week in different bands. This encourages others in the band to follow their friends' example, and invest in mastering music. The question which imposed itself more and more within this research was therefore especially in relation to the situation of the musicians of Beta Mbonda, although also towards the musicians of Espace Masolo, but to a lesser extent, because being musicians of a brassband they have more potential to make some money from this activity.

14. Even though they were attached to their musical activity, they nevertheless regularly felt discouraged and thought of getting involved in other activities. In comparison with some of their friends who make money with their business, they were (and still are) in a music ensemble and do not make much money at all. It could at times make them doubt about continuing or giving up, or could at least seriously spoil their temper. What kept them from quitting is that they love making music so much, saying things such as "My music is my life", or "I love music beyond any consideration about my position in society".

A machine may one day be able to play Beethoven and Bach beautifully and convincingly, but will it be able to enjoy it? Will it have its own consciousness? Will it be affected and changed by this activity? Will machines/robots be able to experience enjoyment, fun or flow? If not, then the understanding of such experiences by the young participants in our research in Kinshasa might give an inside in what makes man different from any future machine (if such a thing can be said and/or predicted at all). Reflecting on 'singularity' (the moment artificial intelligence of machines will surpass that of man) may be stimulating in this context. One important key to this questioning is what kind of intelligence we are considering here. As Nick Bostrom says: "Smart technology does not necessarily mean wise technology" (Bostrom 2014). Good and bad means something to man. Man makes moral choices. And man has a highly developed consciousness, and experiences feelings. Wisdom is also about not always do what one can do. Besides that, many of the most outstanding achievements we men remember from our past have come out of ecstatic and often artistic realisations. they often did not come out of logical linear development of thought or production, but thanks to unexpected irrational leaps. (field note 19.11.14 on 'singularity' and this research)

13.1. Music itself gives enjoyment

If it were only for the money we sometimes get for the music we make, I would have given it up a long time ago. (musician EM1-MA of Espace Masolo, 08.07.15, ref-14057)

My pleasure is to be able to play. The sound that comes out is what gives me pleasure. And then, if there are people listening, it's even better. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-KU, 13.04.15, ref-09196)

The concept of 'enjoyment' is in this thesis used as it was and still is being studied by Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (Haworth 2016²⁶⁸, Csikszentmihalyi 2002).

The act of performing the sounds of the instrument and the melodies and rhythms of the songs gives enjoyment in itself. In other words: You do not play music to end the piece, but to play best the next note or next part of the piece. The music-making in itself can therefore be the reason and the aim of the activity, not only all the external advantages such as possible material gains or possible (and real) gain of 'symbolic capital' (respect, hope for a career as a well-known artist, being already recognised on the streets after television broadcasting...). Not only musicians, but 'players' in general "are typically motivated by the quality of experience that playing affords, not by the expectation of some future utility" (Rodriguez 2006).

I already have pleasure when listening to music, but when I can play music myself, the pleasure is much bigger still. Even when I am doing other things during the day, I will often think of my music. It is in my blood. I am doing other activities which allow me to make some money, but without much enthusiasm, because what really counts for me is music-making. When I make money otherwise, it is because I need it for now, immediately. But what really counts is to succeed in making music. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-CL, 30.04.15, ref-09406)

The musicians of Beta Mbonda at one point came back after a break of 2 months, not because the situation had so much changed in terms of the extrinsic gains they could get from making music, but simply because they missed the activity itself too much. Playing the music itself, is something they loved and something which made them come back to rehearse and work.

In music, what gives me most pleasure is the feeling I can have when I go out to play somewhere and have a song which carries me away. The spirit is in the song and then you play - and you dance at the same time. If it is a good song in which I can put all my mind, that gives me a lot of pleasure. (from interview on music-making with EMI-DO of Espace Masolo, 23.04.15, ref-12066)

Several musicians tell us that when playing music they feel as if another spirit inhabits them. They feel so strongly focused, and this concentration makes them feel enjoyment.

Their mentors do not tell them lies about their financial future as musicians, only that by working hard they might manage a decent life, like their teachers. They share with their students that the real enjoyment also for them comes from the music-making itself. This positioning of the trainers counts a lot, because besides the sheer enjoyment of making music, there is also the knowledge that they are not alone in this experience. They find out that their elders have lived

²⁶⁸ A good overview of recent literature can be found in John Haworth's article on 'Enjoyment and wellbeing' (Haworth 2016).

and continue to go through similar experiences, and so they are as beginning musicians in contact with and belong to a long tradition. This belonging to the tradition and world of musicians has often been expressed by the participants in this research as an essential element in their motivation to hang on to this activity.

13.2. Playing music is addictive

I consider music as a drug. At school, we were told that music made the heart happy. When you have a problem that bothers you, there are songs. When you sing them, automatically, you forget these problems. Or, it relieves you. (Espace Masolo musician EM1-DO, 23.04.15, ref-12078)

The musicians in this research also reported regularly about the mesmerizing effect music-making has on them. It is for them as if a spirit inhabits the music and has also entered them. They say they feel in connection with the music, not through their body, but in spirit.

Their expressions of dependence to music were often so strong that they came across as excessive.

Me apart from music it's hard to live. I do not know how I will live without music. Without music, I'm going to die. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-VA, 21.04.15, ref-11772)

I do not know how to express what I feel in music, because it is impossible for someone else to understand it if he does not enter in me. But that is impossible, only God can do it. It is as if on stage a spirit animates us to the point that when after a production we visualize the images, we do not realize that it is we who played this way. On stage I forget myself, because transported to higher spheres and only regain consciousness at the signal: stop! (from focus group with Beta Mbonda, 16.09.13, BM-GI, ref-00747)

When I play music, I feel like I'm no longer EM1-GL. I'm another person. I really get a little crazy. What interests me is the rhythm. It makes me go crazy. (from interview on music-making with EM1-GL of Espace Masolo, 17.04.15, ref-11106)

Music itself is comparable to drugs. (...) Even fetishers resort to music to make incantations. When we are on stage, it is no longer we who play but it is as if there is a spirit that goes into a trance. We forget our children, our women, our problems etc. (Mbonda Beta musician BM-GI, 07.12.14, ref-07708)

I asked them whether they could imagine to stop playing music, when they would not need it to make a living, and without exception all participants in this research answered they would still not want to give it up.

Without music, life would be a mistake (Friedrich Nietzsche in 'Twilight of the Idols', 1889)

They all say they want to continue to make music, even if they will be involved in other activities. They in fact hope to be able to develop other professional activities allowing them to make ends meet, and also allowing them to continue their musical rehearsals and concerts besides that.

Many participants in the research compared music-making to taking drugs, in the sense that they felt addicted to it, not being able to live without it, claiming that even if they did not earn anything at all, they would still want to make music on a voluntary basis.

Comparing music-making to taking drugs, is faulty if one thinks of a form of loss of consciousness. Even though other types of consciousness are being reported during the act of making music, one stays conscious, as one needs to be extremely focused in order to perform the music well.

13.3. Enjoyment of mastering / performing well

When you take drugs, you feel madness, and you see yourself as if you were the master of the world. Exactly like that, when playing music, I also feel that I am the one. (from individual interview with BM-IB on music-making, 04.05.15, ref-13483)

The pleasure I experience from mastering what I am doing is very strong and intense and I feel it coming from very deep inside myself and my heart. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-MW, 30.04.15, ref-09683)

It happens so often and surely not only within concerts, also during rehearsals. When I have had difficulties playing something and then succeed to master it, this gives an immense pleasure. I do not need the presence of an audience to experience this joy. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-MW, 30.04.15, ref-09685)

The enjoyment of making music is strongly related to the quality of the music they are making. As a result, the more they play and the better musician they become, the more enjoyment they experience.

The more they succeed in mastering their instruments and repertoire, the more they are astonished and happy that they are capable to play these instruments and to know the music they play. Realising this mastery gives them a lot of enjoyment. It is reported as another important reason for having pleasure in playing music. Also, when they did not master something they have to play well, the enjoyment will be absent, and instead stress comes in.

What counts as part of the pleasure is that I have suffered to learn it, to master something difficult. It can take weeks before one masters certain rhythms or songs. When you have then mastered it and you play, this as such gives you a lot of pleasure. Then when we play all together, and we all together share this pleasure of having mastered a certain piece of music, that gives then even more pleasure. Somehow it is more difficult to get lost, when everyone is in the same rhythm. The conscience of knowing that everyone is in tune and all of us mastered it, that gives a lot of pleasure. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-CL, 30.04.15, ref-09408)

Each instrument gives one different degrees of enjoyment, also because - as in relations between people - each person has stronger connections to the sound and feeling of performing certain instruments in comparison with others.

Too much control can nevertheless possibly cause a drop in enjoyment. Mastery is said to give enjoyment, but routine and automatism can be a nuisance. When one plays on autopilot, because one plays the same repertoire so often - such as the repertoire for brass band music for funerals - one can end up being bored and no longer motivated. That is why besides mastering instruments and repertoire it is also important to also allow for creativity and inventiveness as an important part of music-making as an artistic activity.

field note 02.08.15, Kinshasa - concert Beta Mbonda in Barumbu: They were never so good. They are making huge leaps forward. It was a surprising programme with many new elements, and incredible energy.

The fact that their performances went better and better, gave them a lot of enjoyment and encouragement to continue developing themselves as musicians. Pleasure has thereby also been reported as coming from things starting to come easily when making music. When one does not need to force, one is beginning to master.

13.4. Polyphony - the impact of group dynamics and of being 'rooted'

"Music-making is something you do together with others. You make a 'sound' together, and when certain instruments are missing, it becomes difficult to create the 'sound' you need." (from life story interview with EML-RO of Espace Masolo, 16.04.15, ref-10587)

We can learn from the extensive experience of musicians who accompany singers, dancers, and other musicians. The musical accompanist must listen acutely to the unfolding song or melody or carefully watch the movements of the dancers. Usually the accompanist recedes from the limelight, taking a supportive role. He often plays in a lower pitch, and sometimes does not play in the final performance. He provides the background for more important parts, supplying harmony and rhythm to the melody. He is successful to the degree that he is in alignment with the unfolding music. One exception to this necessary subordination occurs in what is called dialogue accompaniment, where the accompanier engages in a call and response to the "lead," being silent or providing rhythm as the lead plays, and playing himself when the lead rests, but always playing in relationship to what has come before - not breaking free of the whole unfolding composition but working in concert with the featured musicians to articulate the evolving music. (Watkins 2015:11)

When hearing the young musician of the brassband of Espace Masolo, and reading Mary Watkins taking playing music together as a dreamt of example of how psycho-social accompaniment should work best, it comes close to the music-making I am studying in this research: ensemble music. Most of these musicians are not performing as soloists, even though they can

at certain moments be soloist during their performances. Their music very much starts to sound when performed **in 'resonance'**²⁶⁹ with each other.

For all musicians, the possibility to create combinations of sounds together with the other members of the ensemble represents a pleasure in itself. Although during rehearsals the sounds and melodies of the different instruments may not immediately come together well, when they finally succeed to play in tune, this is experienced as something 'magical' (a word Congolese people like to use!) and gives a lot of enjoyment. And when someone gets out of tune or out of pace, this spoils the flow of playing together. It is nevertheless somehow difficult to get lost when everyone is in tune with each other, and that also gives special enjoyment.

'Resonance' is central to the act of music-making. When what each musician is playing is resonating well and in tune within the ensemble, when their different contributions 'marry' well, this can result in the polyphonic²⁷⁰ sound and melody which is expected by the ensemble or by the composition.

The phenomenon of a group of musicians being 'in resonance' can also be experienced when a musician comes into an ensemble to replace someone last minute and needs to rehearse a piece of music s/he did not know. Mostly, this newcomer will need much less time to master the music, in comparison with the time the other musicians needed and took to master it. Somehow s/he profits from the work the others did before him, although it is unclear how this comes about.

"Trees care for each other, because one tree is not a forest." (Suzanne Simard, in: TED-conference 'How trees talk to each other', June 2016)

The impact of the group dynamics within Beta Mbonda and Espace Masolo can also not be underestimated. It concerns mutual friendship which results in a feeling of security and respect within the group²⁷¹.

Apart from making music together, just being together is - especially for the musicians of Beta Mbonda - clearly also of great interest to them. They are a closely knit group of young men, who were - apart from one - in their previous life

²⁶⁹ 'resonance' in Collins Dictionary: if something has a resonance for someone, it has a special meaning or is particularly important to them / a resonance is the sound which is produced by an object when it vibrates at the same rate as the sound waves from another object / word origin of 'resonance': from Latin 'resonāre' to 'resound' / the quality or state of being resonant / reinforcement and prolongation of a sound or musical tone by reflection or by sympathetic vibration of other bodies / the quality of having an intensity of emotion or richness of expression that evokes or reinforces a sympathetic response

²⁷⁰ 'polyphonic' = many-voiced / in Merriam-Webster: since 'poly' means 'many', polyphonic music has 'many voices'. In polyphony, each part has its own melody, and they weave together in a web that may become very dense

²⁷¹ Research on group dynamics was recently brought together Donelson Forsyth (Forsyth 2017).

already together in the same 'kuluna'-gang before becoming member of BM.

When they work on music, the direction is constantly moving from one person to another, according to the needs of a particular moment in the music-making (see also 11.1.1). Some take a lead at certain moments, while others take over the lead at other times, related to their capabilities and know-how and knowledge of a certain repertoire or instrument. It is a form of organisation which can be effective in managing organisations. When making music in these (non conducted) chamber music line-ups they are working as a collective in which certain members take charge of certain aspects of the work, because they are more capable for those particular parts of the work. Nobody is good in everything. Some might be better in accounting, others can be better negotiating, somebody else would be good in coordinating and communicating with the trainers, etcetera. In such an organization, their friendship is an asset. This format is contrasting with the hierarchical form of organization, which is pyramidally structured. In a hierarchical structure, you have a Kabila or Mobutu or Assad. But the type of organization I saw here - at least during the act of making music - can be called 'heterarchic' ('hetero' means 'different', 'other'). Besides what was already wrote about it (in 11.1.1), it is very much a collective form of organization, in which the responsibilities are not fixed, but can move, according to the situation and the needs. During a certain period of time someone can have the responsibility over a specific task, and after some time, it is possible that someone else takes over, because the one who is in charge is needed for another position in the organization, or for other reasons. The collectivity is in service of the organization, its strategy and its needs.

The musicians in BM do their best to master all the instruments. Those who have more facilities with certain instruments or certain compositions are helping others to master these.

"Without roots in the earth you can grow as high as you want, but one gust of wind and you fall over. You have to be deeply rooted and then you are firmly in your shoes." (interview with philosopher Dennis Vanden Auweele in De Groene Amsterdammer, 4.5.17, p.38-41)

There is a strong solidarity and friendship among the young musicians, mostly within BM because they were already together in their previous activity of 'kuluna'-gangs. Their roots within the ensemble gives them a strong basis from which to flourish as persons.

The musicians of BM touch each other physically and respect each other during conversations and focus groups. Their mentor

agrees when I share this observation with him, and even complains about this, as they also tend to cover each other when things go wrong.

They are like an extended family. When one of them died in 2014, this was a drama as well as an opportunity to come out as a group:

BM-CL: "The disappearance of BM-YA was very painful. We were very affected and at the same time we were afraid to see that one of us, with whom we evolved, had left us. His disappearance meant that we even changed our attitude, that is, we now think twice before acting. We ourselves took care of his funeral, his biological family, who did not know us before, was surprised at our presence, at the way we were crying and at the way we had organized this mourning. We told them that we spent almost fifteen years of friendship with BM-YA that he was for us like a brother and that it was only natural that we would cry him as we had done." (from focus group with Beta Mbonda, 07.12.14, ref-07651)

When we call BM our 'patrimoine', we do not mean with this that BM should only exist with and through us. We only say this because we started the group. We are the co-founders of BM. This does not mean that we would not appreciate other persons to become member of BM. We compare our situation with other groups like Werrason's group or others, where you can distinguish between those who founded the group, and are leaders of the group, and those who joined later on. Even though musicians who come in later can also benefit from the success and money which comes in at a certain point, we should be considered as the pillars of the ensemble, as we co-founded it and worked hard for years to build it up. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-MW, 20.04.15, ref-11354)

This musician of BM called BM 'our heritage', meaning that they feel a strong and proud ownership of the project and the ensemble, even though they are frustrated about not being enough in charge of it at the organizational level. As they were the ones who incited the mentors to found the ensemble, stayed with the project, and invested a lot of effort in it all those years, they feel intitled to call it their 'heritage' (Fr: 'notre patrimoine'). This appreciation also explains in part their engagement to not let go, even though it is so difficult to make things happen in terms of developing the career of the ensemble.

I once took one of my friends, a Congolese banker, to a concert of BM and we were both impressed about the talk we had with the ensemble after their performance. Even though the mentors of the ensemble were not there, the musicians were so well able to enthusiastically and clearly talk in group to an outside person about their ensemble and their projects. In that situation they also felt to be a strongly connected group of young men.

The phenomenon of 'resonance'²⁷² makes one of course first of all think of music and sound, but it has in this reality also a meaning in relation to the connections and interconnections which exist within these ensembles, as well as between these musicians and their surroundings (families, neighbourhoods, audiences...).

²⁷² Arturo Escobar writes that certain forms of music open up new possibilities for being-in-sound (Escobar 2018:130). (...) and the concept of fusion implies the disappearance of worlds, yet in musical collaborations the worlds do not disappear but are reenacted in dialogue (Escobar 2018:247n20).

"If you only live for yourself, life becomes empty. Without roots in the earth, one can grow as high as you imagine, but you will fall down with one wind-blow. If you are deeply rooted, then you will be well and strongly positioned. (...) What people need most is to be able to feel connected." (from interview with Dennis Vanden Auweele in De Groene Amsterdammer, 04.05.17)

13.5. Enjoyment of performing for audiences

When you have pleasure playing, you also 'contaminate' the audience, who will also experience pleasure seeing and hearing you play. I have a pleasure in transmitting my pleasure and enthusiasm to the audience. (Beta Mbonda musician BM-DO, 30.04.14, ref-09577)

In concerts people in the audience often start to cry because they are so emotional in reaction to certain words or sounds they hear, which relates to his or her own life. This is an example of how audiences may react, but musicians can themselves also be emotional and happy while playing.

When asking them whether they needed the presence of the audience to enjoy making music the musicians in this research stated they also experienced this enjoyment without the public being there, during rehearsals with the band, or when working on their own. But performing for an audience is for sure experienced as something special. Giving enjoyment to audiences is part of the enjoyment of music-making, and it is also related to the pleasure they experience being observed and appreciated and admired in their new identity as musicians (instead of being seen as gangsters or 'street children' or 'witch'-children).

When there is stress related to not being well prepared, the pleasure of performing in front of an audience vanishes, as I saw happen during a concert of the musicians of EM at the American Embassy in April 2015 (see field note 12.04.15, chapter 17.1).

The young musicians in our research tell us they enjoy a lot when being on stage to be able to 'contaminate' the audience with their enthusiasm for making music. The determination to please the public drives the musicians to be highly focussed and concentrated.

The pleasure to play in front of an audience for sure also comes from feeling valorised - and recognized - as persons with specific qualities. Even when they do not earn much, or sometimes even nothing at all, to be able to perform for an audience which is looking at them, motivates them a lot. And when an audience is enthusiastic about the performance, even

if they will not have made much money that day, it will still motivate them, because in terms of their work and recognition, they have made progress, and this is experienced as a form of pay.

To the question how they would react when they play well, and that the whole ensemble plays well, but they are in front of an audience which does not really seem captivated or interested by what they are performing, they answered that what counts most for them, was whether the musicians themselves were happy with the quality of their performance. In certain cases, when audiences did not seem enthusiastic about what they played, or even not interested at all, they could keep on having their pleasure and satisfaction in playing what they were playing, because they were happy about playing it well. Also, they found that often only the musicians themselves may hear when things go wrong. They noted that audiences often do not hear mistakes and the music continues to sound well for them.

Even though the presence of an audience may not be necessary in order to experience enjoyment in performing music, it is an additional enjoyment, and if the public reacts positively, it is even more appreciated. The interest of the audience is a plus, but most important is whether they are themselves happy with the quality of their performance. This defines their enjoyment more than anything else. So even when there is no audience and they play well, they will experience enjoyment.

It is really an enormous advantage of the performing arts that they allow them to come into contact with very different milieus, not only with celebrities, even though meeting celebrities can be impressive. Once the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France came to a concert of our children at the Halle de la Gombe, and after the performance he went to speak with them. They were so proud of having been able to speak with him. (from interview with Malvine Velo, co-founder of Espace Masolo, 23.07.15, ref-16384)

Another aspect of performing in public, is that it allows these young people to be in direct contact with an audience which is composed of many different layers of society. It is for example impossible for most common people to come into contact with a Minister of the Government. You need a series of contacts, appointments and references to succeed such a meeting. But when these musicians perform their concerts or theatre productions, often well-known and highly positioned people are present from the world of politics, society, economy, the arts... They can then not only perform for them, but they will most of the time after the performance be able to talk with them on a one-to-one basis. This is something they often mention during the interviews as something they are particularly proud of. Pictures were shown of them together with such celebrities. And when they are on stage there is the audience which admires them. When they talk, sing or play an

instrument, all these people listen carefully to them, and it makes them feel admired and respected. They then realise that they are at that moment being taken seriously. It helps a lot in helping them to build up trust in themselves.

The audience can nevertheless also be just one person. One person interested and enjoying their performance is enough. I remember when the musicians of BM performing in December 2014 outside of the supermarket which sponsors their rehearsal space (see field note 24.12.14 in chapter 16.1). There was hardly anybody interested in what they were doing. Most people just passed by and did not show much interest, busy as they were going about doing their Christmas shopping. Still, the musicians did not seem to be less motivated and enthusiastic, and had a lot of energy and enjoyment in performing. There were one or two persons in the audience, my assistant and myself. We were their audience.

The punctual interest of audiences, foreigners and neighbours is for sure an appreciated element, but it does not explain their interest in continuing their music-making. The survival mode they need to be in day in day out is too much in contrast and in conflict with this activity. Most of the time such audiences are absent, and since many years now the participants in these projects continued their music-making practice anyway.

13.6. Music in troublesome periods - an alternative reality

Music can console those who play it and those who listen to it. You can have problems, as soon as you are in the music, you forget a little and it can calm you down. (from interview on music-making with BM-KU of Beta Mbonda, 13.04.15, ref-09211)

"What makes me smile is the present, all I am developing thanks to Espace Masolo. Outside of that, when I was in the street, I did not laugh as you see me laugh today. People called me "the one who kills the fire". I was very mean; I was small, but I was mean. I knocked, I easily hurt people. When I first arrived at the Espace Masolo, they saw that I was an angry person. Then they gave me a role in a theatre play of someone who was always laughing. I had a month of rehearsals, during which I laughed every day. And when I played that performance, I always laughed. It stayed with me, like in my blood, and I forgot all my past." (from Life Story Interview with EM1-CL, 23.12.14, ref-08523)

The phenomena encountered here correspond very much to the phenomena which Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and his international teams of scholars have studied at length²⁷³. When in the 'flow', it is as if time stands still, and many things which are outside of the activity at play seem to fall away,

²⁷³ See literature review in chapter 3.3.2

disappear. Abraham Maslow studying man's 'peak experiences' encountered this phenomenon as well, and described it as the sensation of 'being lost in the present' (Maslow 1973:63-64).

Sigmund Freud already taught us that creative and artistic activities can be seen as forms of sublimation. When you have a problem that bothers you, singing or playing certain songs can help you forget it a bit, or at least, it can relieve your sorrow or worries.

When successfully mastering music - in rehearsals or on stage - the musicians in this research report it can feel as if there is a spirit taking possession of them, which brings them into a trance, making them - at least for the time they are performing the music - forget the many problems they had and still have in their lives.

In a series of occasions reported to us, even when they were ill - depending of course on the gravity of the illness - musicians could and would continue to work, and even perform in public. After the performance they got back into their 'skin' of ill person. This is surely at least in part caused by the impact of the thrill of a live performance²⁷⁴.

When on stage or in a captivating rehearsal, they forget and do not feel ill. The same goes with worries they may have. They will be concentrated on their music-making and forget about their worries. But immediately after leaving stage or the rehearsal these worries will come back to them.

Music is something complex, 'mystical'²⁷⁵, it really is. You can learn the news that somebody died, but when you're on stage, you'll forget that. It's only after you can cry. (from an interview on music-making with BM-CI of Beta Mbonda, 21.04.15, ref-11986)

What we are seeing here is not escape behaviour though. The chaos and poverty of Kinshasa will certainly not disappear through making music, but these young men and women tell us that playing music brings something valuable into their lives: not extra financial resources (at the very most a tiny profit), but there is definitely a certain freedom.

They declare themselves to be steadfast in their attempts not to be 'dispossessed' by the barriers which poverty impose on them. Within their physical 'bondage', they want to guard and

²⁷⁴ And this phenomenon is in the medical profession known and attributed to the effects of what is called 'performance adrenaline', a heightened level in the body of a mixture of chemicals such as endorphin, serotonin, dopamine and andadrenaline.

²⁷⁵ In the postcolonial 'Afrique fantôme' that Congo seems to have become, it is increasingly frequent to designate people and situations as 'mystique', difficult to place, interpret and attribute meaning to. (De Boeck & Honwana 2005, p.189)

preserve their precious psychological freedom²⁷⁶. They have decided to live their lives at a deeper level than simply 'surviving'. And it is precisely the strength and energy they need for this which they gain from opting for a philosophy of life that accepts, at least to a certain extent, their fate and the limitations on their opportunities.

When I think of occasions that I can me ill, it depends of the gravity of the illness. If I have a fever, I can continue to work. But there are other illnesses which prevent me to work on my music-making. Sometimes I will also force myself to work anyway, even when I feel very ill, thinking that without me in the band it would be too difficult, as they would have difficulties replacing me. In such cases, I will take a medecine which will allow me to play, and after the performance I get back into my skin of ill person ('je retrouve ma peau de malade'). (Beta Mbonda musician BM-DO, 30.04.14, ref-09598)

The musicians in Kinshasa are very much used to the phenomenon of music taking them away from their day-to-day worries and problems, not being able to take care of their families, confronted with people suffering or dying. When finishing their musical activity this all comes back, as music is not that much changing their material lives for the better. It feels like music works as a drug does: One can be angry or nervous about something that happened to you at home or elsewhere, and music-making will make this irritation disappear. The moment the musician starts to play, all irritations and anger fall away. It will come back though after s/he stopped playing, but it will then not have the same extent. The musician will be immediately captivated by the music, by how s/he plays it, by his pleasure playing it... even more so when there is an audience. S/he will forget his worries even faster then.

Music makes me forget all the worries of my past life. When I play music, I forget the bad things I've lived. (Espace Masolo musician EM1-GL, 17.04.15, ref-11102)

The musicians in this research report finding in the activity of music-making a world which holds together, a world which feels more whole than the broken one they lived in.

²⁷⁶ Following his personal experience in the Auschwitz death camp Viktor Frankl learned that every human being has the freedom to change at any instant. Therefore, we can predict his future only within the large framework of a statistical survey referring to a whole group; the individual personality, however remains essentially unpredictable. The basis for any predictions would be represented by biological, psychological or sociological conditions. Yet one of the main features of human existence is the capacity to rise above such conditions, to grow beyond them. (Frankl 1959:131)

13.7. Summary and conclusion

1. After studying the extrinsic and some of the intrinsic benefits of making-music for the population of young musicians in our research (chapter 8), the interest of bringing together both a social as well as an artistic-musical accompaniment (chapter 9), the process and possible impact of the learning and act of mastering a music instrument and repertoire (chapter 10), the importance of allowing young musicians to also have their say in the ongoing development of the music programme and activities of the ensemble (chapter 11), we surprisingly arrive towards the end of this thesis in a domain which could be summarized as follows:

2. The possible social impacts of music-making was for the participants in this research - at least to a certain extend - real, in relation for example to the new status they obtained in their society by becoming a musician, and possibly also some money and career opportunities which could come with this new identity sometime in the future. But, considering the very difficult living conditions in which these social music projects are proposed and developed in Kinshasa, the activity of music-making gives only limited benefits in terms of social and material improvements in the lives of the participants in such programmes.

3. I arrived at the unexpected finding that the main reason these musicians report for having continued working all these years hard and continuously on their music, was the enjoyment of making music in itself, not the other outcomes. The attraction of music-making in itself has been reported as the major reason for musicians to continue this activity, more than any social or financial benefit resulting from it, and I have throughout this research in Kinshasa focussed on coming to an understanding of this finding.

4. It has been a significant outcome of this research to find the intrinsic benefits of music-making to be decisive in the context of the extremely difficult living circumstances of the reality of Kinshasa. I imagine them to possibly also be of major importance in other environments. The main reason why our contribution is important, is because it means that studying this further appears to be a priority²⁷⁷. I want to make sure that this finding will in the nearby future be studied in other contexts, and I will propose our qualitative descriptive methodology, its questioning as well as the

²⁷⁷ Although their book is not about the impact of making art, but about the impact of 'consuming' art, Eleonora Belfiore and Oliver Bennett come to a similar conclusion in their overview of the intellectual history of claims made over time for the value, function and impact of the arts in Western societies (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008:176-190).

details of the transcribed interviews, to researchers interested in developing similar research on these questions.

14. CONCLUSIONS and summary of the main points of the study

14.1. Evidence

With the descriptive-analytic research methodology of this research I was not preparing myself to provide evidence to support certain principles of effective social music projects, but I chiefly wanted to focus on the more modest but valuable goal of being able to describe and analyse the studied real-world events in an accurate manner, and thus gaining a better understanding of them (Nassaji 2015). Margarete Sandlowski views the descriptive mode of qualitative inquiry as "producing a complete and valued end-product in itself, rather than as an entry point" (Sandlowski 2000, p.335).

Furthermore, when launching my fieldwork I thought it was important to record and transcribe all the interviews, so that other people would be able to read them, but I came to understand that it is very difficult when reading the interviews with these people in Kinshasa and understand what they are really saying/meaning: If one has not like me been there for several years, not knowing the persons talking... then words are just words. In the beginning of the research I was myself in that situation: the participants in the research were explaining things which back then I thought I understood, but when I read or hear them back later on I would grasp what the meaning really was about, that they were saying certain things to please me, etcetera... This is an 'understanding' I developed over the years I was with them. My perspective on what they said deepened, because of seeing the connections between different things being said, but also my on-the-ground knowledge (some of it which could be quiet implicit), the cultural context...

14.2. Description/understanding

The main and overall question of this micro-sociological and ethnographical research was what the social impacts of music-making (SIMM) could be when proposed within social projects

with young people in the poverty-stricken and often violent surroundings of Kinshasa, DR Congo. This research was therefore especially interested in producing an as detailed as possible description and understanding of a potential social impacts which the experience of long-term and structured music practice and education could have on the social re-positioning of young people in Kinshasa.

14.3. Focus on participants

The participants of the social music projects were the main focus of the research: Especially the voices of the 31 interviewees are being reported here, their experience and perception of their music practice and their position in society, as well as the way their surroundings look upon their new 'habitus' (Bourdieu 1998).

14.4. Liquid fields of realities

As in most research in this field, also I have been confronted with the unpredictability of human behavior, which in the best of cases has led us to only probabilistic instead of exactly predictable conclusions concerning the social impacts of the music projects studied in Kinshasa. Social realities are like fields of patterns influenced by a complex interaction with other realities. Such realities are liquid, constantly on the move and changing. This is fortunately the case, because it also means that it is not possible to easily have control over social situations. One-size-fits-all approaches do not work. This research has also been typically one which does not lead to a few simple conclusions. The reasons for this are not only linked to the limits of the research and its methodology, but especially to the interesting complexity of the realities studied²⁷⁸.

14.5. One main question remained

Our 3 ½ year fieldwork in Kinshasa raised more questions than it answered, but this became - as time went by - in itself the main interest of the research. Many questions about the complex realities studied imposed themselves in the course of the fieldwork, but especially this one question: At the starting point I was looking at how social change is at least in part made possible by making music or becoming a musician. But at the end of the research I find out that even though there is very little social impacts, these people want to continue to be involved in making music anyway. Why did the musicians in this research continue to make music at all, even

²⁷⁸ Isaac Bashevis Singer, one of my favorite authors, wrote that *our knowledge is a little island in a great ocean of nonknowledge.*

though they encountered so many reasons which could make them want to stop²⁸⁰?

14.6. Murky waters of enjoyment

I have tried to come to an understanding of their reasons for not abandoning, and then came into the murky waters of forms of enjoyment in music-making, which were not easy to formulate and pin-point in rational terms. But in the course of this research I have been able to come closer - and then to describe and articulate in this thesis - the reasons the young participants in this study had to stick to the activity of making music, against the odds of the lack of concrete and impactful social and financial benefits resulting from this activity in Kinshasa.

²⁸⁰ see also chapter 9.5

14.7. Four main conclusions

Music-making was seen as playing an interesting role as an instrument in social work in Kinshasa, and I discovered i.a. 4 main concerns and conditions for this to work:

1.

The role of the mentorship framework provided by the trainers and educators surrounding the young musicians is found to be of utmost importance in relationship to the influence the activity of musicking can have on the young people's lives. This framework presupposes a double encouragement and accompaniment - **at the artistic-musical as well as at the psycho-social level** - to allow the youth to stay within the training process and not give up this activity and learning process which is demanding a lot of discipline, effort, concentration, as well as a degree of constraint and confinement.

2.

The role of competence and mastering: The psychological and physical enjoyment/enrichment as well as the social pride of 'mastering' a musical instrument and repertoire is not only an important reason to be motivated to become musicians, but I expect this experience to also have social spillover effects, as it may encourage youth to be at the wheel as well in other domains of their lives²⁸¹.

3.

Personal empowerment and agency depend on **the possibility to have control and shared ownership** through participation in the act itself of music-making, but also in the organisation of the music project. If this is missing or limited, it can limit the development and transformative processes of youth participating in such programmes, and therefore also seriously limit the role music-making can play²⁸².

4.

The young musicians in this research are not only interested in what music brings them as extrinsic gains, but they are more than anything else **interested in the very act itself of learning and performing music, and this is seen as the most important attraction to wanting to make music.**

²⁸¹ Even though it could not be independently verified, the respondents in this research attested that it had this effect.

²⁸² Respondents reported that in the cases examined here, there was a mismatch between musical control (which at least in some cases was high) and organizational control (which was low).

14.8. Other points of interest

Besides these 4 main conclusions, several other important elements were at stake to understand why in a place like Kinshasa young people, such as the participants in this research, want to make music to impact their positions in their society: A close look was taken at - and reported in this thesis on - a series of possible extrinsic as well as intrinsic outcome and benefits, how they began music-making, what makes someone a (good) musician, the many difficulties involved in making music, and also the reasons for many to drop out of the social music projects studied in Kinshasa.

14.9. Provisional findings

The findings arrived at in this research are nevertheless provisional. Even though the field work went on for a total of 7 months, spread over a period of up to 3 ½ years, it still corresponds to only a short period in the lives of the participants of the research. Longitudinal as well as comparative research is needed, in order to follow people participating - or having participated - in social music programmes over longer periods of their lives, and in comparison with others who live in different but somehow comparable circumstances.

15. FOLLOW-UP

15.1. Future SIMM-research needed

15.1.1. Development of longitudinal research

Many commentators expressed the need that in this field of research on possible social impacts of music-making (SIMM) longer-term effects be assessed (Belfiore 2002; Heuser 2011; LeCompte & Goetz 1982; McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras & Brooks 2004; Sloboda 2015).

John Sloboda reminds us that it is "important that longer-term effects are assessed" even though "it is always difficult to track people over months and years" (Sloboda 2015):

I am confident that long-term effects are recordable. My own experience as a musician, supported by a range of research (e.g. Sloboda 2005; Gabriellsson 2011) is that single short-lived musical experiences can be transformational across the life-span - and remembered as such decades later. We now know enough about the antecedents of such "peak experiences" to understand what situations are more or less likely to engender them. I have an intuition and a confident hope that many musical experiences devised with social justice in mind may have a similarly life-transforming impact, and be explicitly recalled by participants as such. But in this area, as in most, good intentions and hope are not sufficient. Rigorous and assessable results are what count.

Even though the length of our fieldwork for this research (7 months spread over 3 ½ years) was considerable, it still does not represent that much time in the life-time of a person.

Also Frank Heuser warns us in this respect, following the precious SIMM-research he himself developed in the US:

"One must be careful with assuming that the attitudes and caring interactions seen among the North Park band students will be integrated into their daily lives as they proceed into adulthood. Undoubtedly, there may be long-term changes in many of the students that will eventually be considered transformational. However, after leaving the middle school these band students will have many other life experiences that may mitigate the positive effects of Mr. Wakefield's teaching and the work they do at the homeless shelter. In the absence of long-term data, there is no way to determine what the enduring impact of this approach to teaching might have on the band members. It is also tempting to assume that this work will have lasting impact on the homeless participants. (Heuser 2011:303)

According to Eleonora Belfiore "an evaluation method that really places outcomes at its heart should rather focus on long term monitoring of the participants and the effects of the arts on their lives is needed", even though "long-term monitoring is a very complicated and expensive form of assessment, as it involves repeated interviews with the participants over the years" (Belfiore 2002:12).

15.1.2. The missing element: research on intrinsic benefits

In McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras & Brooks's 'Gifts of the Muse. Reframing the Debate About the Benefits of the Arts' they call research on the intrinsic benefits 'The Missing Element' which is in need of being studied. Future research should according to them not continue to be limited to the instrumental benefits (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras & Brooks 2004:xviii):

People are drawn to the arts not for their instrumental effects, but because the arts can provide them with meaning and with a distinctive type of pleasure and emotional stimulation. We contend not only that these intrinsic effects are satisfying in themselves, but that many of them can lead to the development of individual capacities and community cohesiveness that are of benefit to the public sphere. (...) We challenge the widely held view that intrinsic benefits are purely of value to the individual, however. We contend that some intrinsic benefits are largely of private value, others are of value to the individual and have valuable public spillover effects, and still others are largely of value to society as a whole. (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras & Brooks 2004:xv-xvi)

As it is with play in general, the musicians' primary motivation is the experience of intense immersion which it uniquely offers. When we are in this purely playful mindset, the experience of playing itself is its own justification, and no means for the next end. "Play thus resists any form of narrowly instrumental analysis" (Rodriguez 2006).

15.1.3. Development of comparative research

Although I personally had the ambition to also embark in the context of this project on a research comparing SIMM-like practice in different countries (DRC, Palestine, France), the sheer complexity of comparative research made me decide against it. Comparative research is nevertheless very much awaited for in this field, and our international research platform SIMM is planning one from 2019 on.

15.1.4. Research by teams of researchers from different academic backgrounds

As is explained in chapter 3.7, the interaction of the inter-subjective perspectives of a pluri-disciplinary composed research team as ours is something which could and should be developed more in this field of research.

It is not easy and costly, but it will make research on the possible roles of music-making in social and community work all the more reliable and profound.

The complexity of the processes to be studied, as well as the diverse know-how needed to come to an understanding of the

different aspects of these realities, exceed the capacities of most individual scholars, and require therefore teams across disciplines and over sustained time periods.

15.1.5. Open access to research data

The developments around 'open science' and 'open access' have been important recently, and I also need in this new field of SIMM-research to open up my research data and make them accessible, so that they may be critically re-visited by others. All the data of this research will be made available publicly on DANS (Data Archiving and Networked Services; <https://dans.knaw.nl/en>).

15.2. Post-doc follow-up of this research in Kinshasa in 2021

The field work for this study ended in January 2016, and 5 years later (if possible sometime in 2021) I plan to go back to Kinshasa in order to try to meet as many of the young people as possible who participated in the 2012-2016-study, to try to find out where everyone will then be with/in his/her life. Almost all of them said they were sure they will still be musician in 2021. Whether they will be, will not be such an important question for the post-doc research though.

I have often speculated during my field work that certain members of the brass bands of Espace Masolo, in the nearby future to get bored with music-making and give up. Although some of them have concerts and make OK money, I do not expect them to continue to be musicians in the future. It is not at all inspiring for them to play at funerals. They do not seem to be really interested in music, because they are satisfied with the level they have now. Their development therefore already stopped a bit. So I expect that as soon as they will get some other opportunity to earn a living, or when they will start a family and get children, get another job which pays better and is more interesting than spending nights at funerals, then their musical activity will quickly finish. If they were more passionate about music-making, they would organise themselves so that they could do more interesting things with music, whether it brings in money or not. That is why I see some having more potential to be and stay musician than others.

The general research question of my post-doc research will rather be how music has played a role in a certain period of their personal development, and whether music ended up playing a role in helping them to reposition themselves in their

social lives, whether as musicians or otherwise. The question of social healing and reconciliation will then also be focussed upon²⁸³.

Over time many changes occur in the lives of those who participated at a certain point in time in this research, and revisiting them during a post-doc research project will confront us with different perspectives to the data originally collected. Data collected and phenomena encountered rarely remain constant. Certain data will have remained relatively stable over time, while other data will have changed. To come to an understanding of the nature, pace and direction of change, long-term research periods are needed (such as the one originally embarked upon between 2012 and 2016), but our project of a post-doc follow-up 5 years later, will allow us even more to get a different perspective of the reality I am studying.

In my post-doc research project, I will give priority to the methodology of **participatory action research (PAR)** because I will as a researcher partner up with members of the groups I want to revisit and study, and invite them to assist me actively in the research. I will follow Mary Watkins description of Participatory Action Research and propose the research to be in close connection with the questions to which they seek answers: "Instead of participants serving the research agenda of the [researcher], [s/he] serves the research needs of the community. The research is [then] undertaken together to assist in the achievement of mutual goals." (Watkins 2015:18) Also, I will involve participants as facilitators/assistants in the post-doc research in Kinshasa and invite them to *undertake some of the interviews, facilitate group discussions and suggest changes in the research process* (Conticini 2007:206).

²⁸³ Social healing and reconciliation is an emerging field of research, and the question of how becoming and repositioning themselves as musicians have helped the former 'witch-children' and 'kuluna' (members of violent gangs) to not only connect but also reconcile themselves with their surrounding communities and families. John Paul Lederach and Angela Jill Lederach write about the 'seed-like quality' which can arise from such forms of repositioning (Lederach & Lederach 2010).

15.3. Publication of book for musicians and social and community workers

This research has had the ambition to be engaged and 'instrumental' because one of its aims has been to come to a better understanding of the reality studied in order to help practice in this field to be improved. I want my academic work to have social relevance²⁸⁴ and to be easily accessible to others, and I therefore plan to publish a small book for practitioners developing social music projects. The book will tell about the projects studied in Kinshasa, and what I think we can learn from these fine examples.

The book will have links towards a website on which pictures and filmed interviews and other audio-visual material can be found in relation to the content of the book. The ambition is to have this book published in 2019 in English and in Dutch. A version in French is also planned to be made available for free as e-book, as well as in a print-on-demand format.

It is believed by a number of Congolese interviewees in this research that up to 20 to 30% of Congolese youth could be seriously interested in participating in social music projects. They think that - more than copper does - music represents - an until now gravely underestimated - potential for the development of the country. I do not know whether this is the case, but I do have the ambition to communicate well about the fine work of the two projects I studied in Kinshasa, hoping that reading about them will inspire others to set up similar or somehow differently conceived social music projects in Kinshasa and elsewhere.

²⁸⁴ *The question of whether the concerns of practitioners (that is, people who are part of the social setting being investigated and who are likely to have a vested interest in the research question and the implications of findings deriving from it) might be an aspect of considerations of relevance. (Bryman 2004, p.277)*

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17. ATTACHMENTS

17.1. A selection of quoted transcriptions from interviews + field notes:

ref-01081 - (EM-MM)

What she does not find in her family, she wants to find elsewhere, eat elsewhere. She has just been reunited with her family since only this year. We follow up on her situation. The state also requires a follow-up of 6 months after reunification with the family. Depending on the situation, we continue for longer than that the mediation. When the child arrives at our centre, we listen to him/her, listen to his/her story, look for his/her family's contact details, seek contact with the family, and consider a possible reunification. In some cases, this is very difficult and we then keep them for a long time. But when we achieve reunification, as in the case of EM-DO, we do a follow-up of at least 6 months, to see if the child adapts, if there are no other problems, because in most cases these children are taxed as 'witch'-children. When the child returns to the neighborhood, the entourage may be wary. Reintegration must therefore not only be at the level of the family, but also at the neighborhood where the family lives. If the neighborhood does not welcome the child, the child will be uncomfortable and may relapse and return to the street. We must be in contact with the child and also with the parents to take their responsibilities. We continue to support them and follow them at the level of their training, because it is thanks to the training that they will be able to get by in the professional life. We do not stop with that when the child arrived back in his family.

ref-05027 - (EM1-RO)

All was well until the day my cousin (son of my maternal aunt), who was selling goat meat at Matete market and who took care of the family, became ill and died later on. The whole neighborhood rose up against me. They brought tyres to burn me alive. I was 7 years old, my mother was in Bas-Congo. In the evening, I went quietly through the window of the room, to escape these threats. I went to hide in a family, but my family chased me there and even destroyed the house of these people who had helped me to escape. I then went to live in the streets, in a market in Kisenso. One day returning from the market, my grandmother found me in the street and brought me home. A few days later, she took me to an Pentecostal church where the pastor demanded sheets, nails and plastic chairs for my deliverance. I stayed there for three months, submitted to fasting and praying. As I could not stand this exercise anymore, I had to flee. When the pastor's son caught me in the street, he took me back to the church where I was then seriously tortured before being submitted to another 2-month fasting period and praying at the end of which they 'delivered' me. For this ceremony of 'deliverance', they were all dressed in white. The pastor asked me to wash myself with water on which he had previously pronounced a prayer. He then slaughtered a pigeon, sprayed me with its blood and made me drink a spoon of pigeon blood mixed with olive oil. I started to vomit and he made me still drink a second spoon of this solution. For the pastor, the fact that I was vomiting proved that I was bringing out the human flesh that I had swallowed. After this 'deliverance', I returned to my family where I continued to be tortured by my maternal aunt, the one whose son passed away. I decided to go back to the street. They came back a second time to pick me up in the market of

Kisenso where I lived and, brought me back to the house. But as the tortures persisted I decided to go further away, to the market of Matete so that they do not find me more.

ref-07464 - (BM-IB)

A priest helped me. One day I was sitting out here in front of our 'parcelle'. I see this man walk by. He goes to the end of the street, and then walks back, and back again. I was curious and wondered what he was up to. Then I heard him pray. And somehow I was touched in my heart by what I saw. I was that very moment preparing myself to go fight somewhere in some sort of vengeance. But I saw this young man, about the same age as myself, walking and praying, and was touched by this sight and the contrast between him and myself. I was not the only one hearing what he was saying/praying. Then he left. I stayed behind and did a lot of thinking. I asked myself many questions about myself and about the life I was then living. My conscience was awoken and spoke to me. I told myself that I should also be able to act rightfully in my life. I thought a lot. I spoke with myself, and told myself that it was time to change my path and become a better person. It is then I decided to change my life. That evening my friends came to get me to go fight somewhere, but I refused to join them. They left without me. That night two of them got hit by police bullets. I went to see my mother, kneeled in front of her and asked her to forgive me for what I did to her and to the family. I did not come home anymore since some time. I stayed in different places with friends. Following this, my mother decided to take me to church to pray. This helped me to change my attitude more and more. After a period of praying regularly, there was a party to which I was invited. At the party I started to drink beer, too much beer. I was drunk. I even pissed on myself that day. I fell asleep. The next day I came across BM-AL who was constructing a small tam-tam. BM-KU was there as well. We both stayed to look at BM-AL doing what he was doing. And BM-AL started to talk to us about our bad habits. He invited us to learn his art of making music. You will profit from it in the future. We told him that we did not see it that way. We saw music-making as a form of distraction. Then later on we heard that BM-AL had made a trip to the United States. We were astonished to hear this. We said to each other that since he left, he would not come back. But he did come back. We quickly went to see him to welcome him and to ask him about his journey. BM-AL explained us that it was thanks to his art that he was invited to travel. The next day we asked BM-AL to teach us. There were not many instruments. We started on small tam-tams. But the 2nd day we already stopped. We only came back to BM-AL the 5th day. BM-AL was angry towards us. We asked him to forgive us, and he continued to speak upon us about our habits and the need to discipline ourselves if we wanted to become musicians. Later on instruments arrived (tam-tams). We then also got acquainted with Maître BM-TS. We did not know him before. He looked at us, said hallo, but did not speak with us. He only told us to work. But we stopped working again. In the meantime the project of BM-AL and BM-TS developed. But our hearts were not ready for it. We were one foot in and the other foot out of the project. So we continued with our delinquent activities at the same time. BM-AL kept an eye on us and continued to speak with us, trying to convince us to stop with our gang-life and come back to his music training. What has impressed me a lot at a certain moment was this. I was imprisoned for something I did not do. There was a fight and I intervened to try to stop it. But they took me in because I was known to the police as a gangster ('un voyou'). But since I was innocent in this case, I really defended myself fiercely. The police then hit me very hard on my legs and in my neck. I still have scars of it on my legs. They kept me 3 weeks in prison. My family was refused to get me out by paying money. They wanted to teach me a lesson. During those three weeks I again had a lot of time to reflect on my situation. It was not my

first time in prison. I was imprisoned a number of times. But that last time was very frustrating because I was working on different projects which I had to abandon. One of the projects was even a journey. In our neighbourhood everybody hated us. Nobody wanted a person like myself to be in touch with their children. I was considered bad company. I was chased away wherever I came. People were against me. There is so much to tell you about all this. So much.

ref-08226 - (EM1-NA)

When I was two to three years old, mom died. I stayed with my brothers until I completed five to six years. Dad decided to remarry. When he remarried, this woman came home. At first, we lived normally. But at one point, she began to mistreat my older brothers. The eldest in the family fled the house, and then dad did not have a job anymore. He worked in a chapel. When he was out of work, the stepmother decided that it was me who had made daddy lose his work. She told daddy this. Dad had not said anything at first, but my stepmother was abusing me and even deprived me of eating. It was really a great suffering. I had lost weight until I had scabies on my skin. Dad traveled, my stepmother took me to church. When we went to church, they decided to buy the salt and dissolve it in the water to give me. It was put in my eyes... Every time I slept, they scattered salt around me. I was six to seven years old then. Afterwards, I saw that the suffering was very hard for me and I had no one to confide to. So I decided to flee the house. I fled the house. At night, I met young boys in the streets. These young boys took me and they raped me. I had nothing to do, I started to walk in the street. I found a mother who took me and with whom I stayed. I told her about my story, and this mom said it was not a problem for her. She then brought me to a shelter for children in Matete. I was then seven to eight years old. Dad came back from a trip, and asked my stepmother, "Where is EM1-NA?" Stepmother answered: "She is a witch. She blocks everything, and is the cause of why you do not have work. So daddy decided to pick me up. He said: "She is my daughter." He came to take me. I was eight years old then. We went home. There suffering started all over, even more than before. I fled again. Because this stepmother had herself three children, plus four that daddy had, we were a family with seven children in all. Another day, the stepmother passed away. We then stayed with one of her sons. I told him I did not want to stay with him, and I ran away again into the streets. I found young girls in the street, big girls. There was nothing to eat. They said: "If you find someone, a boy, you do a little prostitution, you have a little money." I started doing that, I had nothing else to do. Then I arrived at the shelter Sainte Famille and I stayed there. But in this shelter I also suffered. There were only boys. If you did something, they would hurt you and sometimes they attacked you. But I decided not to go home anyway. I stayed in the centre. I started selling water to make some money to survive. When Dad came again back from one more trip, he asked where I was. They told him I had fled again. Dad then decided: "As she flees like that, she stops being my daughter. Let her go, I will not look for her anymore." I stayed in the centre. They decided to let me go to school. I started studying. I was eleven to twelve years old then. I was in a group which convinced me to leave the centre of Sainte Famille. We left this centre to go to another centre in Limete, but I did not like it there, and after a while I went back to the shelter Sainte Famille for schooling. And then, at one point, people from Espace Masolo came to recruit. And I found myself here. After a while, I was informed that daddy passed away. I was told no, because you did not see your mother at death, it would be good to come and see your father's corpse. I went to Matadi, and buried my dad. That's about all.

ref-10624 -> ref-10628 (EM1-CK)

EM1-CK: I actually had difficulties in the beginning to learn to master the instrument. When you breathe in the band for two days, your lips degrade a little. You have to put some palm oil to get them back to normal. And besides that, I had trouble getting a good sound. It takes a lot of energy, a lot of physical strength. And if you force yourself, you have trunk pain - especially if you have not eaten, you can experience dizziness. And goes on a lot of time like this. When you feel dizzy, sometimes you prefer to give up at first.

Lukas: Can you talk about breathing?

EM1-CK: Breathing was not easy for me. But it became so at one point, after about a month. I got used to blowing in the instrument, even if it did not come out at all. But little by little, it was getting better.

Lukas: Tell us how you should do it. We do not know.

EM1-CK: At first, when I started, I blew a little lower and made notes that were not at all full. So it were like half notes. After a week, two weeks, a month, I imposed myself a duty: when I arrived here at Espace Masolo, I had to do at least two notes in a very good way. When I tried like that, little by little, I started feeling dizzy.

ref-12751 - (EM2-ST)

No, but she did not see well at all. She then started to love this one man. The family of this man did not want me to continue to stay together with my mother. They told the new husband of my mother that he should not be involved in children from before his marriage to my mother and that he should instead have new children with this wife. My mum then decided to send me to live with her friend. That is where I then went to live. Then one day I was told that my mother was ill. I went to see her, but her door was closed. She had gone to hospital. I went back to where I lived. I stayed there. I played. Where I was living they did not allow me to go play near the river. But I had gone there anyway and I was reprimanded, and so was the son of the family who went there with me. I was told to leave and go back to my mother. I arrived at my mother's house. The door was still closed. I stayed outside waiting until the evening when I saw papa Jojo who married my mother. When he saw me he started to chase me, saying "you witch-child, it is you who is causing us all these troubles here". Many people arrived at the compound. He hit me hard. The owner of the compound intervened and protected me. I could stay there with him. They washed me and gave me something to eat. That night we found out that mum died at the hospital. I do not remember the name of the hospital. As they do not have a 'morge' over there in Tshikapa, they take out the body the same day and burry it the next day. We arrived at the hospital, took the measures for the coffin, made the coffin, and went to burry her. I did not go to the cemetery. When the family of my mother and the man whom she married arrived, they said they could not take care of the child. The man did not have children with my mother. There was a lot of trouble between the families, related to the fact that my mother had more property than her husband, while the family of the husband was claiming the contrary. The chief of the neighbourhood 'a tranché' and confronted them with the question of who would take care of the child. They all refused. According to the customs, the families needed to stay on for a week before going back to their homes. I stayed there hearing them fight over material things and nobody wanting to take care of me. I stayed nearby but in the darkness so that nobody could see me, as nobody wanted me around. Then at one point they started wondering "where is this kid?". I was called, and then they started to hit me. They had been taking chanvre and alcohol. I fled. I went to hide at the police office. It is a very long story. I stayed there at the police office until dawn. Then I started to walk around the city. I

then remembered the day, I was 10 years old then, when I had insulted an orphim child, and realised that I now was like this orphim myself. I roded around the city, begging, sometimes receiving some money. I was about 9 years old I think when my mother died. Then I became 10 years old, living in the streets. One day I came across a friend who made me suffer a lot. He took me into his group, which was called the 'Erosions', near a cliff ('ravin'). He told me that to be part of the group, I needed to follow something which could be compared to a military training. You have to choose to play the 'guardian' or to play 'player'. What do you choose? I did not understand what he meant and answered that I would choose to be a 'player'. Then they place a big stone and told me to kick it with my leg in order to try to mark a goal. I answered that I could not because I would get hurt. Then they took me, hit me, took my arms, my legs, and threw me into the 'ravin' ('érosion'). I then ran away. After this, I succeeded to get myself a little bit of money by becoming carrier of merchandise ('porteur'). Later on I came across the same group. They had older boys behind them who sent them out to steal for them. I started to join them. They took me into their group and I also started to steal. They taught me how to steal. I stole a lot. Then one day we had stolen from a businessman who's name was Tirosia. We stole 15000 USD from him. He was a money-changer. A congolese man from Kasai. Then all 'faseurs' (street children) were arrested. Some succeeded to flee. The guys I was with had stolen the money and I knew where the money was to be found. We were all arrested. They started to hit us and then we were all interrogated by the police. As I had suffered too much from being hit by them, I denounced those who had stolen the money and they went to arrest them outside of Tshikapa. They had bought motorbikes with the money and even constructed semi-durable houses over there near the cemetery. When they were arrested they were found with only 9000 USD left from the 15000 USD which they had stolen. The police confiscated the 9000 USD and the motorbikes. From that moment I was considered a wanted person by all the gang members in Tshikapa, a person to be killed. I stayed a while within the police prison facilities in order to profit from police protection. They gave me a job in the prison. They called me 'kadogo' (child-soldier). When food needed to be brought into prison, it had to pass through me, I would take of my part, and gave the rest to the prisoners. And when money had to go out for buying candels, I put it in my pocket. The jail was very large. Many prisoners were in there. They had to shit and pee in the same place in which they were held. Then a police officer arrived from another town as the new officer in charge. He freed me from prison and took me home into his family, where I could stay, eat and wash myself.

ref-12755 - (EM2-ST)

Well no, but I was working for the police as an informant. I joined patrols but stayed behind, unseen. People in town then were afraid of me, because I had police protection. I was known in the streets over there. I knew the 'belici', those children living at their homes, and the mothers of the 'belici' I knew as well. One day one of these ladies took me and made me help her sell things. I first started to carry her merchandise, and when she stopped selling at the end of the day, I took her stuff to a storage. Later on she started to let me sell in her place when she herself was absent because travelling. In the meantime I continued to sleep at the police officer's house. The lady I worked for did not have children of her own. Her name was Thérèse. She then started to send me to school. When I got to the proclamation day of the 3rd grade of primary school, there was an old man who asked me to help him push a car which was broke. It was a bakery car and I was promised to get some bread if I helped him push the car. We were 4 children helping him. We pushed the car, helped it start and drive

again. We jumped into it, and so did others. When the car arrived at a parking lot, the old man told us that we could come with him to Kinshasa, where we would be able to meet with white people and other people whom would allow us to live a better life in houses with swimming pools, etc. I got into the car to join him. They gave us food and clothes. They were really kind with us. The journey started. We arrived at the river Luange. We slept there. Then we continued our trip up to the city of Kikwit. We stayed there for 2 days. From there we took a bus up to Kinshasa, and arrived at their place at Limete. These people who took us were 'businessmen'. They kidnap children and bring them to Kinshasa where they are initiated to become thieves. They have exceptional techniques for stealing. They did not use any fetish at all for this. When I arrived there I was given the name of 'canailleur', because I was told I had a spirit/mentality of 'canaille'. I was taught how to steal bags of saleswomen at the market. I was told not to steal and then run away though. They operated in teams, with some walking in front and others in the back. When a bag was spotted, a certain gesture was made, raising an arm, signifying to the others following that a bag was there which could be stolen. Another sign of an arm meant 'get closer'. When the arm touched the head, it meant I had to take the bag right then. I would then take it and put it on my chest and immediately cover it with clothes I was wearing on top of my other clothes. Then I was expected to just continue to walk calmly. And quickly the bag would be passed on to another one of the team whom you would find on your way, and who would then go to a space within the market in which they could immediately open the bag and take out the valuables. I was taught all this, and then it was time for me to into action at the market place. Before starting we were given food and some last-minute advice, like what to do when we would be caught for questioning. I would then have to answer that I was waiting for my older brother who is buying something somewhere on the market. The first time I stole, I stole a bag of a lady who was selling 'babouches' (slippers). I received the code signs to get closer to those ladies selling at that particular location. I was ready to take the bag, but then I saw someone giving the sign of touching his ear, which meant I needed to be vigilant and leave from there. So I did. I left but then came back later on. I had some difficulties taking the bag. But I finally did, went out of there, covered the bag with the extra clothes I had on my back. That first day I was not stopped. The bag had 800 000 Congolese francs. I was 13 years old. They gave me 20000 FC. I went to the area of the big stadion and ate my belly full. But that same evening I had to be back home where we were living all together. They did not like us to be out in the streets. We were told when questioned about our whereabouts and activities to answer that we are working for a shop and are salesmen. They had cars and many children living with them and working for them. All children were stolen inside the country. I stayed there during a period of 4 months. One day I was stealing in the municipality of Ngaba. I stole but I was seen stealing, and I was very hardly hit. It was at the Rond Point Ngaba. My clothes were taken of and I was very hardly hit. They put hot peppers in my eyes and everywhere else. Here you can still see a scar of this on my head. I was even injured with a knife. Then certain people intervened to defend me and to ask them to let me go. "It is just a child", they were saying. Then police-agents arrived who took care of me, had my injuries being treated, and gave me some clothes. When I left the police-station, I came across a friend 'fasseur' who asked me whether it was me who had been hit. I decided not to go back to Limete where the organisation of thieves were expecting me to come back to. I was told never to tell anybody about the organisation behind. They were also always there somewhere around me. They would even sometimes fake a situation in which you would be hit, just to check whether you could be trusted. But that one time I was hit in Ngaba it was so hard, so rough and painful. The friend 'fasseur' I met in the streets after coming out of the police station proposed me to stay with him and to quit the

thieves and start doing what he was doing: helping carrying and selling embers of wood ('braises') to ladies who cook in the streets of the city. I immediately started to work with him. He was really professional in this and was able to carry a very big bag of coals. I bought these coals/embers for 300 CF per little bag and could sell it for the double of this. My friend told me that he ate really well thanks to this activity. They were staying near the river, where they made their food, but also took chanvre. I joined him there, took of my clothes, washed them in the river. My clothes were full of blood, because even though they had put bandages on my wounds, the blood had continued to flow on me. I stayed there with these friends. One of them proposed me to go get money at Matete. That is in fact how I decided to go live in a shelter for street children in Matete, where they took my name and started to enquire on my story and past. I gave them the addresses they asked for. They contacted my family. I have left that one shelter in Matete, and came to the shelter nearby here, called Jeunes au Soleil, where I stayed ever since. But first in Matete I stayed for 2 weeks in a closed shelter. Of the 4 kids with whom I arrived in Kinshasa from Tshikapa, 2 of us came to this shelter, where we found this Italian man. As I had given the address of Tshikapa, we were brought to Monusco and were allowed to travel by plane. That is how I arrived at my uncle's house at Kananga. We were asked what we needed to avoid that I would get back to live in the streets. I asked a number of things which they gave to me, such as a telephone, an MP3-player, a bit of money, sardines, bread. We left Kinshasa with this. My friend went to Tshikapa, while I went to Kananga. I stayed there during a period of 2 months. My uncle worked at the national parliament ('assemblée nationale'). He had money problems though, so I took all the money I had in my bag and gave it to him. Each morning I brought in bread and contributed in this way to the family costs. I had 30 USD, which I gave to my uncle. While I was playing, my aunt took my clothes and my MP3-player, and I found her snoop in my suitcase. I told her I did not like her to snoop like this. When I told her this, she was angry on me. When my uncle came home, she told him about it and my uncle growled upon me. The first time I let it be, but the second time she had taken a t-shirt and put it on herself. I liked that t-shirt and did not want her to confiscate it. She hit me herself, but I had defended myself. I could not accept that she would touch or hit me. When my uncle came home in the evening, she told him about a big fight we had had, which many people had come to look at. He was very angry on me and started to hit me. The next morning I went to find a Belgian NGO which protects children. There I filed a complaint against my uncle. They contacted my uncle and spoke with him the same day. This made my uncle even more angry. He hit me very badly then. Because of that sufferance, I decided to again flee from there. I lived 2 days in the streets. I thought about what to do then, and considered going to Tshikapa? I started to hang around parkings where cars left for longer journeys up to Tshikapa, but I had no money. I imagined that at that time of the day the wife of my uncle must be outside of the house, and so had to be my uncle. I went to the compound where they live and where the other inhabitants sympathised with me, because they did not like that way my uncle and his wife had treated me. I found their door closed. I broke the lock ('cadenat') and took inside everything which had belonged to me. At the market I sold all my clothes, except the clothes I was wearing. I had 15000 FC. An older man took me in his car direction Tshikapa. But we did not get very far. Only a bit outside of the city of Kananga, his car broke down. Everyone left the car and was reimbursed. So was I partly. I continued on foot. In this way I did about 50 km each day. I did this during 3 days. My legs were swollen. While I was walking like this, I would stop at houses and ask for some food and a place to wash and sleep. I each time found this, and then continued my journey. The third day I went on until very late in the evening. I wanted to arrive that day at Tshikapa. I arrived at the Kasai-river and started to see the centre of Tshikapa, because it is illuminated. I was so happy to see this and to know that I had arrived. I

hurried to get there. Then someone recognised me and said: "but that looks like the little 'kadogo' over there". People came out of their houses. One mother also had lost her son. They had told her how children were being stolen. I started to stay with her. I was already grown-up, could take care of myself and did little jobs. I heard that mechanic and driver aids were being sought. I went to this one Indian and started to work for him as a 'boy-chauffeur'. He drove long distances, between Tshikapa and Kikwit and so. One day we arrived at Kikwit and I stayed there and made some friends there. Together with them I decided to go back to Kinshasa. We started on foot. We started in Kikwit and walked until the 316 after Masina Mimba. That is about 200km already, which we did in 2 days on foot. We did this on foot. At the crossroads 316, we found a car, worked a bit for them and then got their lift right up to the market of Liberté in Kinshasa. We all have to fight to get things done. Nobody will give you a free ticket to make such a trip. Immediately after arriving, I went from the Marché de la Liberté and went back to the shelter Jeune Soleil, where I still am now. It was an open shelter. I started to work in the neighbourhood to collect garbage. People were used to me, they were like my clients. For some of them I would sometimes work on credit. I would take their garbage and would be payed only later. They would sometimes give me something to eat which they had cooked that day. There was a teacher who taught at Don Bosco. His wife, her name was Maman Mima, asked me how it came that someone intelligent like me was doing what I was doing in the streets. I told her about my life. She then talked with her husband, who was teacher at the school of Don Bosco. He made me pass a test of calculation and of French. My writing was not perfect. There were some mistakes. He then took me to a Belgian priest, Father Paul, who told me he was not in charge of the school anymore, but he strongly advised me to go to school. At the shelter where I live, they also tested me on reading and French grammar. I was told that I needed to study seriously at home, and they proposed that I would pay part of the costs for schooling, and that part of it would be payed by myself, from my own earnings. I worked for the 'paroisse', helping them finish the construction of a building. I was payed each Saturday 16 USD per week of work. I received 6 USD and 10 USD were used to pay for my school education. But then things did not work out between the shelter and the school and Father Paul told me to take off from school for a while. So I took up my job of collecting garbage. Another day I went to Don Bosco to meet with friends. I liked to visit the school. Father Paul saw me and took me by my arm. I was surprised and a little afraid. He asked me to do a little job for him, helping him to make oil from palm nuts. That evening he gave me 2000 FC for having helped him. He told me to come back the next day, and so I started to come back to him, work for him and started to go to school again as well. It was not easy at school, because I had not been to school a while and so missed a lot of lessons.

field note 11.04.14 (on spending evening and night with Beta Mbonda musicians in Barumbu, Kinshasa)

As part of my participative research methodology, I have spent an evening and night in Barumbu, in the neighbourhood of the young musicians of Beta Mbonda, meeting with family members, fans and friends, other former gang-members, their former 'general', a local police officer in charge of the municipality, and inhabitants of the neighbourhood, who all, in their own personal way, were happy to testify about the change of 'lives' and the new position of these former gangsters, now musicians, in their neighbourhood. I recorded a total of about 40' interviews. A lot of interesting data is coming out of this participatory fieldwork, which will have to be developed and looked at during our future focus group sessions with the youngsters. The young musicians of Beta Mbonda were always with me during the

interviews. I always asked them their permission to interview people, and they seemed to enjoy it, and introduced me to more and more people from the neighbourhood. So much so, that I have decided to go back there for more interviews during the day later this month. I was assisted by Patrice and Jeudi, something which was immensely important, as the language would in their absence have been an important barrier.

Then... what I did last night was also very helpful for my research, although not all of it was easy for myself. Staying in and being confronted with the - to me extreme - conditions in which people are living in the poor 'cité' of Kinshasa, was important to help me put into perspective what I am studying here. The young musicians of Beta Mbonda were also clearly very happy and thankful with my initiative.

The neighbourhood is incredibly dirty. An immense amount of people is living in, on and around an open sewer and dump. It is very dirty, and it is difficult to understand how they survive in such bad hygienic conditions. We know many are not. Many get sick and die.

I stayed overnight. One of the young musicians, gave me his room for the night. I had not eaten, only drank some beers with the youth and their teacher, Alhim, at a bar owned by a police-agent. I fell asleep quickly, because I had walked many kilometers in the afternoon (from Victoire to their rehearsal space 'le garage' and then to their neighbourhood). There was no possibility to take a shower or so. I went to sleep in my clothes. Only three hours later I woke up from muskitos biting me (no muskito-net available). I was worried about getting malaria, and also started to be worried about possible 'visits' of other animals, such as rats or cockroaches (which are really big over here). It kept me awake for some time, but then I fortunately succeeded to fall asleep anyway, with the help of some reading material.

In the morning I made an early trip back to my host-family, where I was so glad to take a shower and change clothes.

I am uncomfortable about being uncomfortable in this situation, but it is so far away from the world and luxury I am used to. The family with whom I am staying is living very simply, and I also miss a lot of luxury there, but I feel save there in relation to illnesses, bugs and other animals, and I can wash myself decently and go to the bathroom. All things my friends - and participants in my research - in Barumbu are missing.

So, staying overnight surely helped me to understand in which unbelievably poor circumstances people live in such neighborhoods.

field note 21.07.14 (rehearsal Beta Mbonda)

Kinshasa, observation rehearsal Beta Mbonda

The rehearsal was supposed to start at 9 am. Fortunately, I did not take this too seriously and only arrived around 10:30 am. By then only 3 musicians had arrived (BM-DO, BM-IS and BM-KU). The others came in one by one: BM-MW, BM-GI, BM-CI, and also BM-KA (someone I had not seen before but is apparently also member since a while although he was very irregular), BM-IB, BM-VA, and as last one, but sick, BM-CL. Alhim told me he was there since about 9 am, together with BM-DO and a member of the other group that is rehearsing there, Nsumuene (=legende). Nsumuene plays African jazz. It's guitar-player (electric) rehearses there every day for many hours, even though they also do not have many concerts.

They wash themselves and also eat where they rehearse. They buy the food in the streets nearby. It is ready-made food, such as spaghetti with a saus. According to Alhim they all earn something at the side, mostly by buying and selling stuff on the market or in the streets. BM-KA, the musician I did not meet before even makes good money by selling jewelry and even gold on the street.

Alhim left the place around noon, so everything following was done without the trainers/mentors present. They apparently do not need them for their rehearsals.

Around 12 o'clock preparations started to get the instruments of Beta Mbonda into place. First they were tuned by warming the skins, laying them close to a little fire. The percussion skins are from cows and need to be changed every three or so months, depending how much and how intensive the instrument is being played.

They apply a circle of a kind of black paste onto the middle of the skin of the tam-tam which will be performed by the soloist. This apparently has an impact on the volume or some impact on the sound of the instrument. The paste is prepared by the musicians and is made out of a combination of materials, amongst which palm oil, as well as something elastic (rubber?). After stopping the rehearsal or after a concert, this paste is being taken off again and kept for later reuse.

Bit by bit they started touching the instruments, and then when everything was in place, the real rehearsal started. I stayed another hour and a half, during which I experienced something I will not quickly forget!

They start the rehearsal with body warm-up and stretching exercises for arms, legs and hands. The direction of the rehearsal is moving continuously from one to the other. The warm-up exercises are directed by BM-IB.

Then follow warm-up exercises on the tam-tams, also directed by BM-IB.

Being so close to them during the rehearsal, I realise how very powerful and masculine this activity of performing on the tam-tams is. For these guys who come out of a masculine world of showing of strength, this hitting tam-tams is a real alternative.

The young apprentice BM-IS gets a special place in the programme, something which is really nice and motivating for him, as he is studying with Beta Mbonda since only a few months.

The rehearsal goes through the whole of the programme which the band is now performing in upcoming concerts. The programme is being rehearsed as a whole, non-stop.

I am again confronted with the sheer complexity of the programme. It constantly changes, in terms of physical set-up as well as musical compositions.

There is an enormous amount of energy coming out of these men. Energy and enjoyment. Also a strong feeling of togetherness. They are strongly and finely tuned in accordance and together.

A girl also joined them a while.

They seem to be more and more as if 'drunken' by the music, which goes on non-stop for a bit more than 1 hour.

According to BM-GI, they go through this programme every day, and when I left, the rehearsal was not yet finished. It was the same programme which I saw on stage last April, but reduced. After my departure, they went on to rehearse with the guitar-player of Nsumuene.

field note 24.12.14 (performance Beta Mbonda)

Kinshasa/Limete - 'concert' Beta Mbonda @ Hasson Frère

-people (clients of the supermarket in front of which they perform) are not interested; they just pass by without showing much interest; but this does not seem to bother them a lot

-my presence and enthusiasm as only spectator seems enough for them (later my assistant, the sociologist Jeudi Bofala Mboyo, also arrives, and she stays longer than I do)

-they are like amazingly good

-the contrast is immense between the beautiful and strong 'flow' of BM and the boredom which most customers of this supermarket emit

-contact via eye-contact is something which they are looking out

-they laugh a lot
-a man dressed up as Santa Claus (it being Christmas) gets more attention from the customers than the extraordinary musicians of BM
-I heard several times that many Congolese consider traditional music as retarded and stupid
-I continue to be the only spectator
-the concert programme is very divers (styles of music, with or without dance, different instruments, nice costumes, with and without singing...)
-they will with these 'concerts' again earn very little
-2 old men come to my table during the break of BM and sing Malaika and La Bamba in a beautiful polyphony; they are so good, and I wonder whether maybe they have been famous before?
-after their break there are a bit more people who get interested; or maybe there are just more people passing by?
-I recorded a piece with tam-tama and djembe added; long and mesmerizing; with solo of djembe
-a nice piece in the second part of the programme: Chachacha (Brazilian and Caribbean)
-it is for me a strong experience to be confronted with their incredible enjoyment of playing
-at one point, Alhim cannot keep from staying at the side and joins them to play as well

field note 12.04.15 (performance Espace Masolo)

an example of when the 'flow' is not happening

Kinshasa, observation of rehearsal and concert Espace Masolo:

at the American Cultural Centre, with amongst many other musicians also 4 musicians of EM (NA, AM, CV and MA)
-the event was almost cancelled by the secret services of DRC Government because supposedly in context of a pro-democracy event (in 2014 something similar was also cancelled by the Gouvernement). It was last-minute not allowed to happen at Apocalypse in Masina; then American Embassy decided to move everything to the American Cultural Centre in Gombe; also audiences would be picked up from Masina and brought by bus to the Gombe and back (not sure whether this really happened, as I only saw whites and middle class and rich Congolese in the audience)
-the 4 EM members play the role of backing vocals: sometimes they play only a few notes in support; they do not seem to be able to play much; MA seems to play the liaison person, talking with the other musicians on stage; AM is the hard headed small lady who wants to move differently from the others.
-women like NA who want to be able to stay musicians should marry to a musician, she says
-first they seemed to play false notes, but then the arrangement changed and they suddenly sounded much better
-the instruments they perform on are from EM
-how these 4 were selected: EM was asked to propose only female musicians, but they could only propose 2 (AM and NA); that is how NA was called upon; ES had disappeared
-what they were paid for this: each will get 30 USD, but MA hopes that AM will get less, because she is still a student in EM (he hopes she will only get 10 to 15 USD)
-MA about the payments: last Summer they each earned for all the concerts with the Germans a total sum of 100 USD, and they were very happy with this
-MA: they sometimes perform on funerals, and then they perform long days and nights; for this EM will get for example 120 USD for all musicians

together; EM takes on this sum 30 to 40% (says MA) and the musicians will keep about 9 USD after taking of the transportation costs.
-during the concert I see the 4 EM musicians not at all at ease on stage; they are supposed to only play a few notes; not much fun for them; far away from the enjoyment I saw them have last Summer with the Germans
-the Adam Larson Quartet from NY, around which this concert programme is built, are very good
-organisation of the event: by Espace Polyv'art from Masina; they work with artists from different disciplines (like EM does)
-I asked the EM musicians what the difference could be between US and DRC citizens. The Americans are rich? AM: "no, not at all, we also have our rich!" ;-)

17.2. Participant biographic information (available as a separate document)

17.3. Transcriptions of individual interviews, focus groups & other meetings
(available as a separate document)

17.4. Short overview planning of the PhD (2012-2018)

- stage 1 (2012-2013):

- defining research question
- literature studies
- learning about and choosing research methodology
- visits and final choices of the case studies in Kinshasa + contacts in Europe (Paris/Lisbon) and Palestine (Gaza and Westbank)
- preliminary explorative interviews in August 2012 and September 2013 + planning case studies and interviews during the second phase of the study (total: 1 month)

- stage 2 (2014 and 2015):

- fieldwork on case studies in Kinshasa (3 x 1 month per year = total of 6 months)
- literature studies
- 2014: coding
- 2014 and 2015: development of lines of research and hypotheses

- stage 3 (2016-2017):

- analysing and writing conclusions on case studies (was a much longer period than originally planned, because due to a traffic accident I had to take a 14 months break between April 2016 and July 2017, having difficulties concentrating on my PhD because of post-traumatic stress disorders)

- stage 4 (2018):

- defending doctoral dissertation for University of Ghent (Spring 2018)
- writing and publication book on findings in Kinshasa for a larger audience of practitioners interested in instrumentalising music in social work and researchers interested in studying such practice (in English, Dutch, French and Lingala)
- accompanying the production of the film 'Kinshasa Beta Mbonda' by Marie-Françoise Plissart (release 2019)

17.5. Codebook 2012-2015

16.4.1. Indexes

indexing = a *priori* categories drawn from the initial theoretical framework, to be applied to the texts, in order to aid in the retrieval of material for further analysis.

16.4.1.1. Related to being/becoming a musician:

1. Possible **extrinsic outcome of becoming a musician on living conditions:**
 - a. financial income: making money from performing
 - b. finding work related to music (workshops for children,...)
 - c. further (music) education opportunities
 - d. positive reactions from surroundings: reputation and respect: not being seen anymore as 'witch' or as 'kuluna', but as a person making music
 - e. negative reactions from surroundings (from former 'partners in crime')
 - f. becoming famous (hope for celebrity)
 - g. becoming a music teacher (teach others, children...)
 - h. musician as a profession ('métier', skill)
 - i. change of mentality/attitude towards moral values / seeing things differently
 - j. finding stability in life: being able to take care of a family, children, have a house, income
 - k. reclaiming / building up self-esteem

2. Possible **intrinsic effects directly related to the act of making music:**
 - a. higher concentration
 - b. pleasure of discipline / hard work leading to results
 - c. pleasure of performing in group
 - d. deep focus (or even trance)
 - e. joy of playing music
 - f. wish/pleasure/pride to master & satisfaction of complex mastering music instrument and music
 - g. escape from a violent and ugly world: "*Music takes me somewhere else, to a precious place*"
 - h. relationship master-disciple
 - i. belonging and being in contact with a long tradition
 - j. symbolisation and abstraction (principally about creating sound, not about conveying a message)
 - k. the importance of negotiation (with the composition, the other musicians, the conductor, the difficulty and even virtuosity needed to master the instrument...)
 - l. what is specific about the desire for music

3. Music training and practice:
 - a. How they began
 - b. Choice of the instrument: Why this instrument? Other instruments?
 - c. Specifics concerning the technique(s) of learning to play an instrument

- d. Dropping out versus staying in the music practice
- e. Place of music in comparison with other activities: first, second,...
- f. In what sense does it change their lives?
- g. Knowledge about music, mastery of music styles and instrument.

4. Music and gender: differences of appreciation from outside world towards girls or boys

5. Self-appreciation: Am I a good musician? What are my strong and weak points as a musician?

16.4.1.2. Not related to music-making itself

1. The importance of **the role of the group dynamics**:

- a. friendship amongst the musicians
- b. feeling of security and respect experienced in the group

2. Context and reasons for coming in touch with music project:

- a. food
- b. security

3. The **role of the mentors**: During the first exploratory interviews and focus group session it became clear that the young musicians themselves think the role of the mentors is of great importance in helping them to make a break with their past lives. The musicians of Beta Mbonda talk about the important impact of what they call the 'moral guidance/framing' ('encadrement moral') by their mentors.

4. The influence coming from family or friends:

- a. dowry

5. The influence of religion (most youngsters go to churches, as most people do in Kinshasa).

6. The importance of other activities in the youth's life:

- a. other activities - artistic (sculpture, theatre, puppets,...)
- b. other activities - sports

7. relationship to / experience with violence / other transgressive activities:

- a. violence - as subject to
- b. violence - as actor of (gang life, prison or police cell,...)
- c. violence towards oneself (suicide attempt...)
- d. stealing
- e. poverty

8. looking back on previous life before break:

- a. rejection
- b. solitude
- c. insecurity
- d. poverty

9. looking into the future: dreams, ambitions...

- a. marriage
- b. having children
- c. becoming (famous) musician
- d. getting further training / education
- e. finding a job

f. becoming a music teacher

16.4.2. Structural codes

index entries for the *characteristics* of the people, places, and events

habitat:

habitat - actual living conditions (where s/he lives, on streets, in care centre / shelter, own house rented or owned, with others, who are the cohabitants...)
habitat - precise area in the city

age:

age - actual
age - when starting music training/practice
age - personal history

family:

family - composition (who lives, who died)
family - now living with
family - region of origin of father/mother

school education:

primary school - # years
actual school education
projects for future school education

work / income:

from music
from other activities

language spoken:

Lingala
French
Kikongo
Tshiluba
Swahili

withcraft:

withcraft - personal history of 'witch'-child
withcraft - personal beliefs
withcraft - life in gangs

music:

first encounter with music
first encounter with project / with music group
length of music practice
possession or not of an instrument
rehearsing at home
self-appreciation of musician: strong and weak points

self-reflexion about attitude of the researcher(s):

positives points
negatives points
mistakes
ideas for future interviews/contacts

16.4.3. Codes - categories of research - themes - preliminary hypotheses

codes = categories that emerge from the data as a result of reviewing the data for inherent concepts and patterns. some writers refer to these as *themes*.

coding is more closely tied to the development of new theoretical propositions, understanding of meanings, or patterns and ideas that emerge in the process of data analysis. / it is closer to the notions contained in the grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss & Corbin 1990, 1998)

Hypothesis 1: Intrinsic influence of music

When asked what music does to them internally, the youth all become focused and eager to try to respond to the question. The answers are describing music as a special place, a treasure, a different state of mind, transformative, empowering strong energy,...

indexes:

- a. higher concentration
- b. pleasure of discipline / hard work leading to results
- C. pleasure of performing in group
- d. deep focus (or even trance)
- e. joy of playing music
- f. wish/pleasure/pride to master & satisfaction of complex mastering music instrument and music
- g. escape from a violent and ugly world: "Music takes me somewhere else, to a precious place"

An important question for the research will remain though to determine which from these elements is specifically related to the activity of being/becoming a musician, such as for example:

- h. relationship master-disciple
- i. belonging and being in contact with a long tradition
- j. symbolisation and abstraction (principally about creating sound, not about conveying a message)
- k. the importance of negotiation (with the composition, the other musicians, the conductor, the difficulty and even virtuosity needed to master the instrument,...)
- l. what is specific about the desire for music

2. Hypothesis 2:

3. **Extrinsic values attributed to music and which are given as reasons and motivation for leaving the previous life:**

indexes:

- a. financial income: making money from performing
- b. finding work related to music (workshops for children,...)
- C. further (music) education opportunities
- d. positive reactions from surroundings: reputation and respect: not being seen anymore as 'witch' or as 'kuluna', but as a person making music
- e. negative reactions from surroundings (from former 'partners in crime')
- f. becoming famous (hope for celebrity)

- g. becoming a music teacher (teach others, children,...)
 - h. musician as a profession ('métier', skill)
 - i. change of mentality/attitude towards moral values / seeing things differently
 - j. find stability in life: being able to take care of a family, children, have a house, income
3. **Hypothesis 3: The role of the mentors and their 'moral guidance'**: During the first exploratory interviews and focus group session it became clear that the young musicians themselves think the role of the mentors is of great importance in helping them to make a break with their past lives. The musicians of Beta Mbonda talk about the important impact of what they call the 'moral guidance/framing' ('encadrement moral') by their mentors. They cannot see the impact of their making music separate from this moral framing by their mentors.
4. **Hypothesis 4: From insecurity to quietude** - A reason put forward by the youth for having decided to break with their previous lives of 'kuluna' or 'street children' is the insecurity of that life, and the quietude of the new life as musician, bringing (now or expected for the future) financial security and respect by society.
5. **Hypothesis 5: Learning a highly skilled and specialised profession** - The enthusiasm of youngsters wanting to do big efforts to learn music - even if they have to do important sacrifices for this (financial and in effort to learn) - could be understood by the fact that not only they obtain a new status in society, but also a highly skilled and specialised profession.
6. **Hypothesis 6**: Youngsters become violent, like 'kuluna' do, because they have no other activities. **Music fills a void and a need for an activity** which helps them to construct their lives. Other activities could fill this void as well (football,...).

17.6. Codebook 2016-2017

17.6.1. Coding lists 2016 - August 2017

1. structural

1. --- habitat
2. --- age
 - 2.1. --- age - actual
 - 2.2. --- age - start music
 - 2.3. --- age - personal history
3. --- family
 - 3.1. --- family - composition
 - 3.1.1.-- family - father
 - 3.1.2.-- family - mother
 - 3.1.3.-- family - marâtre
 - 3.2. --- family - now living with
 - 3.3. --- family - origin
4. --- school education
 - 4.1. --- school education - # years
 - 4.2. --- school education - actual
 - 4.3. --- school education - future projects
5. --- work / income
 - 5.1. --- work/income - from music
 - 5.2. --- work/income - from other activities
6. --- language spoken
7. --- witchcraft
 - 7.1. --- witchcraft - personal history
 - 7.2. --- witchcraft - beliefs
 - 7.3. --- witchcraft - life in gangs
8. --- research - self-reflexion
 - 8.1. --- research - positives points
 - 8.2. --- research - negatives points
 - 8.3. --- research - mistakes
 - 8.4. --- research - ideas for future research
 - 8.5. --- research - other
 - 8.6. --- research - payment of participants
9. ----- religion

2. Music-making

1. Related to being/becoming a musician:

1.1. extrinsic outcome

- 1.1.1. financial income
- 1.1.2. finding work
- 1.1.3. further education
- 1.1.4. reputation and respect / new identity
- 1.1.5. reactions (+ or -) from surroundings
- 1.1.6. hope for celebrity
- 1.1.7. teaching others
- 1.1.8. musician as a profession
- 1.1.9. change of moral values
- 1.1.10. stability in life
- 1.1.11. self-esteem
- 1.1.12. extrinsic outcome - other

1.2. intrinsic effects

- 1.2.1. higher concentration
- 1.2.2. pleasure of discipline
- 1.2.3. hard work leading to results
- 1.2.4. pleasure of performing in group
- 1.2.5. deep focus (or even trance)
- 1.2.6. joy of playing music
- 1.2.7. pleasure to master music instrument and music
- 1.2.8. escape from a violent and ugly world
- 1.2.9. relationship master-disciple
- 1.2.10. belonging to a long tradition
- 1.2.11. symbolisation and abstraction
- 1.2.12. importance of negotiation
- 1.2.13. specific about the desire for music
- 1.2.14. intrinsic effects - other

1.3. music training and practice

- 1.3.1. how they began (1st encounter music/project/instrument)
- 1.3.2. instrument: choice / possession
- 1.3.3. technique(s) of learning to play an instrument
- 1.3.4. dropouts
- 1.3.5. place of music in comparison with other activities
- 1.3.6. in what sense does it change their lives?
- 1.3.7. knowledge about music, music styles and instrument
- 1.3.8. further music training & practice

1.4. gender

1.5. self-appreciation

2. not related to music-making itself

2.1. group dynamics

2.1.1. friendship amongst the musicians

2.1.2. feeling of security & respect in the group

3. role of the mentors

4. role of family & friends

5. religion, influence of

6. other activities

6.1. other artistic activities

6.2. sports

6.3. other activities - other

7. violence

7.1. violence - as subject of

7.2. violence - as actor of

7.3. violence - other

7.4. violence & making music - similarities

8. previous life before break

8.1. rejection

8.2. solitude

8.3. insecurity

8.4. poverty

8.5. previous life - other

8.6. health - illnesses

8.7. use of drugs (alcohol, chavre...)

9. future (dreams, ambitions...)

9.1. marriage

9.2. having children

9.3. becoming (famous) musician

9.4. further music training

9.5. finding a job

9.6. becoming a music teacher

9.7. future - other

10. negative aspects of making music

10.1. hardly any money gained from music

10.2. negative reactions surrounding

10.3. too difficult to learn music

10.4. negative relationship with mentors

3. individual interview life story (II-LSI)

- A. Life chapters
- B. Key Scenes in the Life Story
 - B1. High point
 - B2. Low point
 - B3. Turning point
 - B4. Positive childhood memory
 - B5. Negative childhood memory
 - B6. Wisdom event
 - B7. Religious, spiritual or mystical experience
- C. Future Script
 - C1. The next chapter
 - C2. Dreams, hopes and plans for the future
 - C2.1. marriage
 - C2.2. having children
 - C2.3. becoming (famous) musician
 - C2.4. further music training
 - C2.5. finding a job
 - C2.6. becoming a music teacher
 - C2.7. future - other
 - C3. Life project
- E. Personal Ideology
 - E1. Religious/ethical values
 - E2. Political/social values
 - E3. Single value
- F. Life Theme / 'Path'
- G. Reflection on interview

4. music-making (IIMM)

- X1. other styles of music
- X2. musicians less violent?
- A - re: mastering (hyp 2)
 - A1. physical/corporal difficulties
 - A2. importance of regular exercise
 - A3. how do you rehearse
 - A4. how do you remember/memorise
 - A5. who takes leads during rehearsal/concert
- B. intrinsic interest of MM (hyp 3)
 - B1. music itself gives pleasure
 - B2. playing music is addictive
 - B3. pleasure of mastering / performing well
 - B4. pleasure of making music together 'in tune'
 - B5. pleasure of performing for audience
 - B6. pleasure of performing solo vs orchestra
 - B7. music in troublesome periods
- C. what is a 'good' musician

5. co-ownership (ORG)

- 1. financial transparance
- 2. choice of instrument
- 3. choice of repertoire / programme
- 4. democratic organisation
- 5. selection of musicians
- 6. heterarchy vs hierarchy
- 7. mutual love and respect
- 8. selling/representing the group
- 9. payment of members / mentors
- 10. social or artistic
- 11. general conditions for good org
- 12. role and composition of board
- 13. power board vs direction
- 14. feeling of ownership
- 15. importance of speaking out
- 16. co-governance incl participants
- 17. social support of members
- 18. concrete propositions
- 19. importance of group solidarity

20. authoritarian behaviour of direction
21. musicians fights over money/instruments
22. conflicts within direction
23. selling self-made instruments
24. becoming independent musician or technician
25. taking over in the future
26. future of project
27. problems of weak financial management
28. discipline difficult amongst peers
29. need for someone to direct
30. mentors put profit participants first

17.6.2. Coding lists September-December 2017

F - habitat / family / school

1. habitat
 - 1.1. habitat - centre d'accueil
 - 1.2. habitat - in the streets
 - 1.3. habitat - in family
 - 1.4. habitat - housing other youth
2. age
 - 2.1. age - actual
 - 2.2. age - start music
 - 2.3. age - personal history
3. family
 - 3.1. family - composition
 - 3.1.1. family - father
 - 3.1.2. family - mother
 - 3.1.3. family - marâtre
 - 3.1.4. family - wife
 - 3.2. family - now living with
 - 3.3. family - origin
 - 3.4. family - contact / no contact
 - 3.5. family - give financial support (pride)
 - 4.6. family - resentment vs forgiveness
4. school education
 - 4.1. school education - # years
 - 4.2. school education - actual
 - 4.3. school education - future projects
6. language spoken
9. religion
10. impact of a 'guide'
11. impact of getting children
12. impact of coming of age

13. saving / borrowing / sharing money

Re - research

1. research - self-reflexion
2. research - positives points
3. research - negatives points
4. research - mistakes
5. research - ideas for future research
6. research - payment of participants
7. research - other
8. research - helps participants' reflexion
9. research - privacy rules
10. research - refusal to be intermediate
11. participatory research
12. trust relationship with participants
13. discretion assured
14. outcome research expected by participants
15. stay in touch after research
16. research - expression of interest in their lives
17. research strenghtens interest in becoming musician
18. research related opportunities (concerts, workshop...)
19. summary remarks about each project
20. hope to be helped by researcher
21. quantity of participants in research
22. participants feel valorized by interest researchers
23. interventions researcher change reality participants
24. research team - I know music
- 24.1. research team - know social situation of Kinshasa
25. trust everything participants tell?
26. focus research on artistic and technical dev as musicians
27. research - presentation to participants a.o.
28. research - focus group vs individual interviews
29. research as therapeutic
30. research - recording interviews
31. research - moments of being lost / of doubts
32. research - saturation
33. results of research for SIMM-like practice
34. talks outside of research sessions
35. research - team work
36. research - how introduced to participants
37. participants give certain view of their reality
38. transcriptions of recorded interviews
39. mirror interviews with professional musicians
40. development of research questions and hypothesis
41. research based on fieldwork instead of mainly theory
42. research proposes theoretical framework for further study
43. researcher as 'oeuil extérieur'
44. mirror interviews with ensemble EM-NI

Wi - witchcraft

1. --- witchcraft - general
2. --- witchcraft - personal history
3. --- witchcraft - beliefs
4. --- witchcraft - life in gangs
5. witchcraft - traditional music
6. street life - prostitution
7. street life - liberty vs 'belices'
8. witchcraft - belief or not
9. witchcraft and churches
10. witchcraft and poverty
11. witchcraft - resentment vs forgiveness
12. witchcraft - reasons behind accusations
13. witchcraft - trial + punishment accusers
14. being raped

Vi - violence

1. violence - as subject of
2. violence - as actor of
 - 2.1. actor of rape
3. violence - other
4. violence & making music - similarities
5. victims of violence forgive
6. future of gangsterism in Kinshasa
7. unclear distinction actors and victims
8. can music make less violent ?

Pr - previous life before break

1. rejection
2. solitude
3. insecurity
4. poverty
5. health - illnesses
6. use of drugs (alcohol, chavre...)
7. previous life - other
8. entry into kuluna activities
9. 'witch'-children in streets
10. links between previous and actual life
 - 10.1. link with previous life: organisation
 - 10.2. link with previous life: strong agency
 - 10.3. presentation as former 'kuluna' / 'witch-children'
11. reasons to quit kuluna activities
12. difference with former kuluna
13. what is music 'coupée décalée'
14. kuluna activity as a form of income
15. kuluna as an activity

16. question of guilt or not guilt
17. strong links with and within community
18. liberty in streets vs discipline in centre / music project
19. these youth were and are strong personalities
20. how they quit living in the streets

Wo - work / income

1. work/income - general
2. work/income - from music
3. work/income - from other activities
4. sponsoring of musicians by private people
5. recruitment to fight in wars
6. abandon / cannot abandon being musician
7. main activities
8. music at funerals (problems/opportunities)

MM - Music-making

1. Related to being/becoming a musician:
 - 1.1. extrinsic outcome**
 - 1.1.1. financial income
 - 1.1.2. finding work
 - 1.1.3. further education
 - 1.1.4. reputation and respect / new identity
 - 1.1.4.1. identity: defining themselves as artist/musician
 - 1.1.5. reactions (+ or -) from surroundings
 - 1.1.6. hope for celebrity
 - 1.1.7. teaching others
 - 1.1.7.1. teaching others - introduction to instrument
 - 1.1.7.2. teaching others - time needed
 - 1.1.7.3. teaching others - difficulties
 - 1.1.7.4. teacher training by mentors
 - 1.1.7.5. teaching others - how to stimulate plaisir in making music
 - 1.1.8. musician as a profession
 - 1.1.9. change of moral values
 - 1.1.9.1. different attitude compared to others
 - 1.1.10. stability in life
 - 1.1.11. self-esteem
 - 1.1.12. extrinsic outcome - other
 - 1.1.13. possibility to travel outside DR Congo
 - 1.1.14. musicians BM and EM as nodal points in society
 - 1.2. intrinsic effects**
 - 1.2.1. higher concentration
 - 1.2.2. pleasure of discipline
 - 1.2.3. hard work leading to results
 - 1.2.4. pleasure of performing in group
 - 1.2.5. deep focus (or even trance)
 - 1.2.6. joy of playing music

- 1.2.7. pleasure to master music instrument and music
- 1.2.8. in another world
- 1.2.9. relationship master-disciple
- 1.2.10. belonging to a long tradition
- 1.2.11. symbolisation and abstraction
- 1.2.12. importance of negotiation
- 1.2.13. specific about the desire for music
- 1.2.14. intrinsic effects - other
- 1.2.15. music as therapy in relation to trauma
- 1.2.16. pleasure of listening to the sound of music
- 1.2.17. possibility to project oneself into a constructive future
- 1.2.18. embodiment of musical skills/automatism/reflexes

1.3. music training and practice

- 1.3.1. how they began (1st encounter music/project/instrument)
 - 1.3.1.1. how they began - inspired by listening others play
 - 1.3.1.2. music in family
- 1.3.2. instrument: choice / possession
 - 1.3.2.1. instrument: bought with money made with music
- 1.3.3. technique(s) of learning to play an instrument
- 1.3.4. dropouts
 - 1.3.4.1. dropouts - escape to Europe
 - 1.3.4.2. dropouts - death
 - 1.3.4.3. dropouts - gender
 - 1.3.4.4. dropouts - street children
 - 1.3.4.5. dropouts - health problems
 - 1.3.4.6. dropouts - suspended
 - 1.3.4.7. dropouts - when teacher changes or stops
- 1.3.5. place of music in comparison with other activities
- 1.3.6. in what sense does it change their lives?
- 1.3.7. knowledge about music, music styles and instrument
- 1.3.8. further music training & practice
 - 1.3.8.1. music training needs to be adapted
- 1.3.9. certificat at end of music training

1.4. gender

1.5. self-appreciation

2. not related to music-making itself

2.1. group dynamics and polyphony

- 2.1.1. friendship amongst the musicians
- 2.1.2. feeling of security & respect in the group
- 2.1.3. artistic interdependence in group

3. role of the mentors

4. role of family & friends

5. religion, influence of

6. other activities

- 6.1. other artistic activities
- 6.2. sports
- 6.3. other non-artistic activities

7. negative aspects of making music

- 7.1. hardly any money gained from music
- 7.2. negative reactions surrounding
- 7.3. too difficult to learn music
- 7.4. negative relationship with mentors
- 7.5. takes too much time to learn music

- 7.6. performing at funerals
- 7.7. decline/decrease of traditional congolese music
- 8. which music do they play
 - 8.1. traditional music repertoire from different regions
 - 8.2. brass-band music repertoire
 - 8.3. different styles and repertoire of music
- 9. differences of talent/level/tempo between musicians
 - 9.1. how to make all musicians develop in a similar speed
- 10. music as a new occupation / activity / passion
 - 10.1. why choose music instead of another activity or other way around?
 - 10.2. difference of social impact between music-making and other activities
 - 10.3. conditions needed to be capable to learn music
 - 10.4. difference technically between making music and other professions
 - 10.5. love for music
 - 10.6. free choice, not obliged
 - 10.7. self-critical
 - 10.8. what makes someone a musician?
 - 10.9. contact with professional musicians

LSI - life story interview

- A. Life chapters
- B. Key Scenes in the Life Story
 - B1. High point
 - B2. Low point
 - B3. Turning point
 - B4. Positive childhood memory
 - B5. Negative childhood memory
 - B6. Wisdom event
 - B7. Religious, spiritual or mystical experience
- C. Future Script
 - C1. The next chapter
 - C2. Dreams, hopes and plans for the future
 - C2.1. marriage
 - C2.2. having children
 - C2.3. becoming (famous) musician
 - C2.4. further music training
 - C2.5. finding a job
 - C2.6. becoming a music teacher
 - C2.7. future - other
 - C2.8. help street children
 - C3. Life project
- E. Personal Ideology
 - E1. Religious/ethical values
 - E2. Political/social values
 - E3. Single value
- F. Life Theme / 'Path'
- G. Reflection on interview

IIMM - individual interview on music-making

- X1. other styles of music
- X2. musicians less violent?
- A - re: mastering (hyp 2)
- A1. physical/corporal difficulties
- A2. importance of regular exercise
- A3. how do you rehearse
- A4. how do you remember/memorise
- A5. who takes leads during rehearsal/concert
- B. intrinsic interest of MM (hyp 3)
- B1. music itself gives pleasure
- B2. playing music is addictive
- B3. pleasure of mastering / performing well
- B4. pleasure of making music together 'in tune'
- B5. pleasure of performing for audience
- B6. pleasure of performing solo vs orchestra
- B7. music in troublesome periods
- C. what is a 'good' musician

ORG - on co-ownership

- 1. financial transparance
- 2. choice of instrument
- 3. choice of repertoire / programme
- 4. democratic organisation
- 5. selection of musicians
- 6. heterarchy vs hierarchy
- 7. mutual love and respect
- 8. selling/representing the group
- 9. payment of members / mentors
- 10. social or artistic
- 11. general conditions for good org
- 12. role and composition of board
- 13. power board vs direction
- 14. feeling of ownership
- 15. importance of speaking out
- 16. co-governance incl participants
- 17. social support of members
- 18. concrete propositions
- 19. importance of group solidarity
- 20. authoritarian behaviour of direction
- 21. musicians fights over money/instruments
- 22. conflicts within direction
- 23. selling self-made instruments
- 24. becoming independent musician or technician
- 26. future of project
- 27. problems of weak financial management
- 28. discipline difficult amongst peers
- 29. need for someone to direct
- 30. mentors put profit participants first

EN - accompaniment ('encadrement')

1. collaboration social/artistic
 - 1.1. collaboration with shelters
 - 1.1.1. living in shelters
 - 1.1.2. shelter giving financial support to family
2. weaknesses artistic accompaniment
3. weaknesses social accompaniment
4. strength artistic accompaniment
 - 4.1. challenges coming from preparing concert programmes
5. strength social accompaniment
 - 5.1. 'ISAAC': Importance, Sécurité, Amour, Acceptation, Confiance
 - 5.2. reunification street children with their family
 - 5.3. strong commitment and love from social and community workers
 - 5.4. aim is independence of youth
6. pride of mentor
7. music and other reinsertion activities
8. needs training of mentors
9. impact on practitioners of doing this social-artistic work

CA - career

0. general - re: career
1. good management needed
2. it takes time
3. it takes a dosis of luck
4. depending on type of music
5. impact of media
6. sponsoring needed
7. musicians themselves promote/sell?
8. working hard to become better musician
9. concert agenda
10. building/repairing instruments
11. limitations (poverty, misery, corruption...)
12. possession carte d'artiste
13. choice of repertoire and band
14. philosophy of enthusiasm
15. confrontation with professional musicians

17.7. Accompaniment of PhD

17.7.1. Accompanying committee

Six professors have been accompanying this PhD: **Koen Vlassenroot** (supervisor/promotor of this PhD; head of the Department of Conflict and Development Studies, a multidisciplinary research unit at Department of Political and Social Sciences - www.psw.ugent.be/crg), **Rik Coolsaet** (expert international politics, Ghent University, Department of Political Science), **Eric Corijn** (urban researcher, VUB, Flemish University of Brussels), **Wim De Temmerman** (philosopher, dean of the School of Arts, HoGent, Ghent), **Ilse Derluyn** (pedagogue & music therapist, Ghent University / Centre for Children in Vulnerable Situations, C CVS), and **Filip De Boeck** (anthropologist, University of Leuven, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute for Anthropological Research in Africa, IARA).

17.7.2. Congolese research team

In Kinshasa I have been working with 2 young Congolese scholars - Mrs **Jeudi Bofala** (assistant at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Université de Kinshasa / UNIKIN) and Mr **Patrice Mukulu** (assistant at the Faculty of Political Sciences, Université de Kinshasa / UNIKIN). They assisted me in my fieldwork (translation during interviews so that the local language Lingala can be used, some of the transcription and translation work of the recorded interviews). But most important of all: They have helped me to understand some of the socio-cultural context of the research through related research done by Congolese scholars).

The focus group sessions were lead by myself, but all my questions asked by sociologist Jeudi Bofala, who was also intervening and co-leading and directing the sessions. Next to me sat Patrice Mukulu who did the simultaneous translation, so that all the sessions could be held in Lingala. I did a lot of the other interviews on my own, but most of them accompanied by a translator.

Because of his absence, Patrice Mukulu was for the period of July-August 2015 replaced by Mrs **Maguy Djokaba** (communication officer for REEJER, a network of more than 160 socio-cultural organisations in Kinshasa working with youth and street-children).

All three collaborators agreed to respect the discretion we promised the participants of the research.

Having worked with these Congolese colleagues (2 academics and 1 social and community worker) strengthened the internal reliability of this study, because we had regular team meetings during which we exchanged our observations. These exchanges have been enriching for me.

17.7.3. Steering committee

Both the interdisciplinary perspective needed to approach the subject of this research, as well as a good understanding of the local situation in Kinshasa, made me welcome collaborations with and/or follow-up by scholars in different fields of research, and scholars who are based where I will do my research. This was also done thanks to the help of an interdisciplinary steering committee, whom I could sometimes call upon with specific questions.

The following people accepted to follow this research by being available to give critical advice throughout the study:

*Prof **Hans Achterhuis** (philosopher, Utrecht)*

*Dr **Maarten Beirens** (Doctor in musicology, lecturer at University of Amsterdam)*

*Prof **Jan De Groof** (Professor at the College of Europe Bruges, and Government Commissioner for the Universities in the Flemish Community Belgium; also president of European Association for Education Law and Policy)*

*Dr **Irène Deliège** (Doctor in Psychology of Music and founding member of the European Society for the Cognitive Sciences of Music, ESCOM)*

*Prof **Frans De Ruiter** (Academy of Creative and Performing Arts at Leiden University and joint founder and co-director of DocARTES, NL; also president of International Music Council, Paris)*

*Prof **John Paul Lederach** (Professor of International Peacebuilding, Kroc Institute, University of Notre Dame, Indiana, USA)*

*Prof **Elikia M'Bokolo**, historian, until 2016: directeur d'études, l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS), Paris*

*Prof **Nigel Osborne** (composer and music therapist and professor at Music Department at University of Edinburgh, UK)*

***Jean-Luc Plouvier** (pianist & artistic director of the music ensemble Ictus)*

*Prof **John Sloboda** (research professor at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London)*

*Prof **Frank Vandenbroucke** (Public Economics, University of Amsterdam, UvA (NL))*

*Prof **Wouter Vandenhole** (Faculty of Law at University Antwerp, B)*

***Griet Verschelden** (head of Department of Social Work, Faculty of Education, Health and Social Work, HoGent, B)*

*Prof **Marc Vervenne** (honorary rector of the University of Leuven, B)*

*Prof **Mike Wessells** (Clinical Population and Family Health at Columbia University, New York, USA)*

*Prof **Walter Weyns** (Department Sociology at University of Antwerp, B)*

*Prof **Bob W. White** (Université de Montréal, Department of anthropology, CAN)*

17.7.4. Key local advisers

I was also able to consult people who have a good knowledge of the problems and local context of the specific object of the research, and they could therefore give me valuable information. Such key advisers were: **Flamme Kapaya** (Congoles musician, Kinshasa-Paris), **Vincent Kenis** (music producer, Brussels-Kinshasa), **Lema Kusa** (artist, former director of music school of Kinshasa), **Lupwishi Mbuyamba** (former director of music school of Kinshasa, now head of Unesco in Maputo), **Manda Tchebwa** (writer, in 2014 director of Cabinet of Ministre of Culture, DRC Government), Prof **Léon Tsambu** (scholar on sociology of Congoles music, University of Kinshasa UNIKIN, Department of Sociology), **Manuaku Waku** ('Pepe Fely', Congoles musician, Kinshasa-Geneva) and **Felix Wazekwa** (Congoles musician, Kinshasa-Paris).

17.7.5. Experts

Besides the members of my own research team in Kinshasa, my accompanying commission and my steering committee, I was helped in particular by the following experts who gave me their precious personal advise: **Baudouin Bungu** (criminologist, Université de Kinshasa), **Charles-Didier Gondola** (historian, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis) and **Griet Verschelden** (University College Ghent, Faculty Social Work).

17.8. Public pre-presentations

In order to find a broad network of people who could potentially give critical advice and ideas, I have since 2012 connected to people in the academic as well as NGO field through conferences and public presentations on my ongoing research project:

- 03.11.12: Birzeit University, Faculty of Psychology (Birzeit, West Bank)*
- 03.11.12: Al Quds University, Department of Music (Jerusalem)*
- 19.04.12: School of Oriental and African Studies, Department Culture and Development (London)*
- 25.07.12: United Nations, International Peace Institute (public discussion with Radhika Coomaraswamy, New York)*
- 10.07.13: University of Salzburg, Conference on Children and War (Salzburg)*
- 17.07.14: Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles (Kinshasa)*
- 22.07.14: radio-interview for RAI Radio 3 (www.radio.rai.it/podcast/A45670099.mp3)*
- 24.11.14: Islamic University, Faculty of Education (Gaza)*
- 27.01.15: VLIR-UOS (Network of Flemish Universities, Brussels)*
- 26.02.15: Symposium on Sistema-related music education (Salzburg)*
- 25.03.15: Sapir College, BA Culture studies (Sderot, Israel)*
- 12.05.15: festival Juillet Musical (St-Hubert, Belgium)*
- 04.12.15: Faculty of Political and Social Sciences of Université de Kinshasa (Kinshasa)*
- 17.12.15: Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale (Tervuren, Brussels)*
- 18.01.16: Zurich University of the Arts, Faculty of Music (Zürich)*
- 26.02.16: King Baudouin Foundation (Brussels)*
- 06.05.16: Accademia Teatro alla Scala (Milan)*
- 07.02.17: Université Lille, Faculté Sciences Politique (Lille)*
- 09.05.17: Centre for Fine Arts Bozar (Brussels)*
- 11.10.17: Université Paris Diderot, Master Cultural Policy (Paris)*
- 23.02.18: Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Master Adult Education (Brussels)*
- 16.05.18: Accademia Teatro alla Scala (Milan)*
- 27.01.19: Elcker-Ik (Antwerp) - with philosopher Hans Achterhuis*

18. SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Lukas Pairon (°1958) studied philosophy and human sciences at a private university in Lugano, Switzerland, and later obtained a master in educational science (specialization 'politics of education') at the Université Paris VIII-Vincennes (1983).

Following these studies, he worked for several years as a young researcher in the field of adult education and literacy programmes at Unesco in Paris and in Brussels at the Ministry of Culture of the French-speaking Community of Belgium (Ministère de la Culture, Communauté française).

But at the age of 27, he changed his professional occupation by becoming the artistic director of the contemporary music and dance programmes of the **Flanders Festival** (www.festival.be).

He left this festival two years later to create **Walpurgis** (a production house for contemporary chamber opera and music theatre, www.walpurgis.be) together with singer Judith Vindevogel, and he thereby came closer to his first interests as a young boy: opera, theatre and music.

It is in that period that he met many of the musicians together with whom he would later create the now famous contemporary music ensemble **Ictus** (www.ictus.be). When Ictus was founded in January 1994, Lukas Pairon was there and became its first general director, which he has been until the end of 2012.

In 2005 he also founded the organisation **Music Fund** (www.musicfund.eu) which gives support to music schools in the Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean through donations of music instruments and training programmes for technicians able to repair such instruments.

From 2009 until 2012, he founded and was in charge of **3rdParty** (www.facebook.com/3dePartij3rdParty), a 3-year educational and exchange programme creating bridges between youngsters in Belgium and peace- and human rights activists in the Middle East (Israel and Palestinian territories).

From 2012 to 2016, Lukas Pairon was appointed senior research fellow at the School of Arts in Ghent (B) and started his **PhD research** at the University of Ghent (UGent, Doctoral programme Political and Social Sciences, Department of Conflict and Development Studies) on questions related to the possible significance of certain musical practices in social and community projects proposed to young people living in Kinshasa, DR Congo.

Lukas Pairon is the initiator and since 2017 founding director of **SIMM**, the international research platform focusing on research on the possible social impacts of making music (www.simm-platform.eu).

contact:

+32475445181 - www.lukas-pairon.eu - lukaspairon@gmail.com

SIMM: lukas.pairon@simm-platform.eu - Music Fund: lukas.pairon@musicfund.eu

19. INDEXES

- Achterhuis Hans. 9, 32, 33, 34, 47, 61, 116, 296, 337
- Anderson Kristin & Overy Katie. 64, 296
- Arendt Hannah. 32, 34, 49, 240, 296
- Ariès Philippe..... 51, 296
- Attali Jacques..... 25, 109, 296
- Baker Geoffrey.. 9, 28, 29, 30, 87, 90, 91, 192, 207, 238, 246, 267, 296
- Barrett Margaret & Nigel Bond.. 37, 296
- Bateson Gregory..... 92, 296
- Belfiore Eleonora 80, 85, 200, 211, 285, 291, 296
- Berckmans Isabel.... 9, 35, 41, 44, 133, 194, 296
- Bergh Arild 9, 18, 19, 28, 31, 296, 300
- Biaya Tshikala..... 60, 64, 296
- Bofala Jeudi. 9, 110, 113, 312, 336
- Bofane In Koli Jean.... 50, 51, 296
- Bordonaro Lorenzo.. 35, 36, 37, 296
- Bostrom Nick..... 272, 296
- Bourdieu Pierre.. 19, 34, 152, 296, 301
- Boyden Jo & Cooper Elizabeth... 35, 44, 116, 296
- Bruner Jerome..... 133, 297
- Bryant Antony & Charmaz Kathy. 145, 297
- Bryman Alan.. 87, 89, 91, 112, 115, 145, 146, 295, 297
- Buch Esteban..... 9, 49, 239
- Bungu Baudouin.. 9, 45, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 67, 68, 71, 297, 338
- Caillois Roger..... 269, 270, 297
- Cid José & Martí Joel..... 42, 297
- Clarke Eric.... 30, 31, 77, 78, 297
- Conflict and Development Studies, Ghent..... 2, 86
- Conticini Alessandro & Hulme David ... 38, 41, 44, 51, 58, 102, 183, 195, 294, 297
- Crumley Carole..... 239, 297
- Csikszentmihalyi Mihaly 48, 49, 68, 69, 82, 84, 166, 171, 235, 269, 270, 273, 282, 297
- Damon William..... 37, 297
- Dave Nomi..... 33, 297
- De Boeck Filip.. 9, 33, 34, 37, 38, 47, 50, 51, 54, 56, 59, 78, 283, 296, 297, 300, 336
- De Faveri Silvia... 10, 34, 50, 297
- De Haene Lucia, Grietens Hans & Verschueren Karine ..10, 142, 297
- Deliège Irène 10, 19, 28, 296, 297, 337
- DeNora Tia18, 19, 89, 144, 297
- Derluyn Ilse ..9, 51, 297, 301, 336
- Develtere Patrick25, 297
- Devereux Georges 86, 107, 108, 143, 297
- DeWalt Kathleen & Billie ..62, 101, 102, 105, 106, 140, 141, 144, 298
- Drake Pat & Heath Linda 86, 96, 298
- El Sistema14, 29, 30, 207, 296
- Elbogen Eric B.86, 298
- Emerson Robert, Fretz Rachel & Shaw Linda86, 97, 100, 298
- Emirbayer Mustafa & Mische Ann. 35, 298
- Ennew Judith & Swart-Kruger Jill38, 51, 298
- Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer 174, 178, 205, 211, 222, 298
- Escobar Arturo 25, 45, 64, 279, 298
- Ferguson James25, 298
- Flamme Kapaya10, 258, 338
- Forsyth Donelson270, 277, 298
- Frankl Viktor284, 298
- Freire Paulo267, 298
- Freud Sigmund283
- Fromm Erich34, 44, 298
- Galtung Johan34, 298
- Gardner Howard180, 298
- Gaza13, 94, 120, 317, 339
- Geenen Kristien 10, 35, 41, 42, 60, 128, 298
- Goggins David..45, 51, 54, 56, 298
- Gondola Charles-Didier.10, 18, 47, 50, 51, 61, 63, 64, 68, 73, 298, 338
- Grant Morag Josephine & Papaeti Anna33, 298
- Green Lucy10, 15, 16, 298
- Guildhall School337
- Hallam Susan10, 298
- Haworth John82, 273, 299
- Hessel Stéphane52, 298
- Heuser Frank ...160, 161, 230, 291, 299
- HoGent (University College of Ghent)10, 21, 336, 337
- Huizinga Johan ..85, 269, 270, 299, 300
- Ictus 3, 13, 73, 94, 245, 268, 337, 340

Juslin Patrick & Sloboda John.	297, 299, 300	Robson Colin	96, 147, 300
Kinsbergen Sara	25, 299	Rodriguez Hector	80, 269, 270, 273, 292, 300
Kratz Corinne	10, 107, 299	Rogers Carl	113, 300
Kuhn Thomas	25, 105, 299	Sandelowski Margarete	86, 90, 91, 145, 147, 300
Latour Bruno	29, 143, 299	Schmidt Patrick	49, 239, 300
Laub John & Sampson Robert.	64, 299	Sennett Richard	211, 300
LeCompte Margaret & Goetz Judith	107, 108, 133, 299	SIMM	3, 10, 20, 25, 29, 30, 211, 238, 286, 291, 293, 296, 329, 340
Lederach John Paul	10, 64, 94, 299, 337	Singer Isaac Bashevis	287
Lederach John Paul & Angela Jill	294, 299	Sloboda John	9, 18, 28, 31, 89, 143, 211, 291, 297, 299, 300, 337
Lorenz Konrad	34, 299	Small Christopher	18, 259, 300
Love Nancy	49, 239, 299	Stewart Gary	73, 300
Lund Christian	79, 148, 299	Stiglitz Joseph	25, 300
M'Bokolo Elikia	10, 127, 337	Stock Jonathan P.J.	33, 300
Manuaku Waku	10, 99, 111, 138, 159, 185, 203, 260, 338	Storr Anthony	171, 300
Maslow Abraham	283, 299	Sutton-Smith Brian	269, 270, 301
Masten Ann	10, 35, 41, 299	Tacq Jacques	19, 301
Matarasso François	10, 30, 31, 116, 211, 299	Trapido Joe	73, 75, 83, 153, 301
McAdams Dan P.	133, 299	Tsambu Léon	10, 20, 33, 46, 61, 74, 75, 113, 137, 301, 338
McCarthy Kevin a.o.	28, 29, 80, 85, 91, 211, 291, 292, 299	UGent (University of Ghent)	2, 10, 21, 340
McVie Susan	41, 299	Unesco	338, 340
Mizen Phillip & Ofosu-Kusi Yaw.	40, 41, 51, 52, 57, 300	Ungar Michael	35, 52, 164, 301
Mouffe Chantal	49, 239, 300	UNICEF	19, 65
MRAC (Royal Museum for Central Africa, Brussels)	297	Vaassen Richard	10, 147
Mukendi Philémon	32, 34, 50, 53, 70, 73	Van Campenhoudt Luc	10, 107, 113, 301
Mukulu Patrice	9, 110, 336	Van Praag Henri	243, 301
Music Fund.	3, 13, 20, 73, 94, 98, 106, 110, 122, 123, 126, 224, 340	Van Reybrouck David	301
Nassaji Hossein	86, 91, 286, 300	Vanden Auweele Dennis	10, 278, 280
Ndaywel E. Nziem Isidore	50, 300	Vigh Henrik	36, 39, 301
Okri Ben	51, 300	Vlassenroot Koen	2, 9, 33, 336
Osborne Nigel	10, 337	Watkins Mary	276, 301
Pinker Steven	61, 300	Wazekwa Felix	10, 43, 45, 138, 154, 159, 168, 260, 262, 338
Plissart Marie-Françoise	10, 21, 126, 297, 300, 317	Wessells Michael	10, 36, 41, 51, 301, 337
Plouvier Jean-Luc	3, 10, 337	White Bob W.	10, 20, 73, 83, 153, 301, 337
Pype Katrien	43, 300	Winner Ellen & Cooper Monica	92, 301
REEJER	19, 111, 207, 336	Zizek Slavoj	33, 34, 301