

Akin Euba, *Chaka*, and Intercultural Opera in Africa

John O. Robison¹

Abstracts

For the past fifty years, Akin Euba has distinguished himself as one of the most significant composers, scholars and performers from the African continent. One of the true pioneers of modern intercultural composition, his music blends West African and European styles in unique ways. Although his style changed significantly in the 1980s, with complex atonal works giving way to simpler tonal compositions, Euba has continually experimented with ways of blending African instruments, melodic ideas and rhythmic patterns with contemporary European practices. This paper will focus on one of his most significant works, his opera *Chaka*.

Chaka has gone through several versions, with the version discussed here being the one prepared for the Birmingham (England) Opera Company in the 1990s. The opera uses three different styles of vocal delivery (speech mode, chant mode using three pitch levels, and song mode), and is unique in its combination of West African with European instruments. It also uses African rhythmic patterns and two twelve-tone rows, although Euba does not use tone rows in the same manner as a European composer. Each scene of the opera will be discussed, demonstrating that *Chaka* may very well be the most significant work written by any African composer.

Study

Over the past half century, Akin Euba (b. 1935) has become one of the most significant composers to emerge from the African continent. Like Bartok before him, Euba has achieved recognition as a concert pianist, as an ethnomusicologist, and as one of our most prominent exponents of the concept of intercultural composition. In this paper, we will examine Euba's approach to intercultural composition through one of his most outstanding works, his opera *Chaka*.

Between 1970 and 1995, Euba produced six versions of *Chaka*, demonstrating that it is a work that continues to evolve to this day. The first two versions premiered in Africa (Ife, 1970 and Dakar, 1972), with subsequently three more in Europe (Bruekelen, Holland, 1980; Brent Town Hall, Middlesex, England, 1986; Elephant and Castle, London, 1986). This paper is based on the most recent version, which was premiered by the

¹ School of Music, University of South Florida (USA); robison@arts.usf.edu

City of Birmingham (England) Touring Opera Company in 1995 and recorded by them in 1998².

Based on a poem by Leopold Senghor (1906-2001), a poet, politician, and the first president of Senegal, the plot for *Chaka* is immediately intriguing because of its dual emphasis on the positive and negative sides of a great Zulu warrior and king. In the early nineteenth century, Chaka was known as a brilliant military strategist and leader who brought his Zulu kingdom to prominence through his forceful personality and clever war tactics. But he was also denounced for his bloodthirsty, tyrannical nature, his crimes against humanity, and the murder of his own future wife Noliwe in order to gain absolute power over his people. Euba gives equal prominence to both viewpoints by dividing his opera into two parts – Chant one and Chant two. Chant one focuses on the white voice (symbolizing the colonial presence in Africa), who condemns Chaka for his brutal actions, and Chaka's justification that every action was done for the love of his own people. The central theme of Chant two is Chaka's tender remembrance of his beloved Noliwe, along with the praises of his people (performed by the chorus and choral leader). Euba also incorporates in Chant two another poem by Senghor ("Man and the Beast"), Yoruba praise poetry (*oriki*), and his own newly-created texts for the scenes centering around Noliwe, who never appears in Senghor's original *Chaka* poem.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of *Chaka* is Euba's ability to combine two languages – Yoruba and English – along with a variety of vocal styles for dramatic purposes using speech, chant, and song modes. The speech mode is simply heightened speech following the natural inflections of the language. Chant mode consists of three basic pitch inflections (high, medium, low), with occasional intermediate pitches in between these three polarities; the exact distances between the three pitches are left to the discretion of the performer. Euba suggests, for example, that five of the possible distances between the chant mode pitches (in ascending order from lowest to highest) could be a fourth followed by a step, a fourth followed by a third, a fourth followed by a fifth, a fifth followed by a third, or a fifth followed by a fourth. And since Yoruba is a tone language, Euba demonstrates through this use of chant mode his intercultural nature – the concept of three pitch inflections

² For a discussion of the earlier versions of *Chaka*, see Akin Euba, "My Approach to Neo-African Music Theatre," in Akin Euba, *Essays on Music in Africa, vol. 2: Intercultural Perspectives* (Lagos, Nigeria: Elekoto Music Center, 1989). Barbara White, "Beyond Crossover: Akin Euba's Intercultural Opera," in *Intercultural Musicology*, vol. 1, nos. 1-2 (October 1999), pp. 15-19, is one excellent review of the CD, which is available through the Music Research Institute in Richmond, California (MRI 0001-CD).

is taken from the Yoruba culture, but in the opera this idea is applied in a new context to texts written in English, which is not a tone language. Euba's song mode uses definite pitches indicated in the score with a G clef. In both the chant and song modes the rhythm may be free or strict, but with the exception of Noliwe's scene and some of the choral sections, the freer rhythmic style of the vocalists tends to predominate³.

Another interesting intercultural aspect of *Chaka* is the use of both African and Western instruments. On the African side, Euba uses five Ghanaian atenteben flutes, agogo (double bell), two slit drums, gourd rattle, three hourglass tension drums, gudugudu (Yoruba kettle drum), and three single headed fixed pitch membrane drums. The Western instruments include flute, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, horn, trombone, double bass, synthesizer, and some percussion (xylophone, four tympani, bass drum, cymbals, and triangle). While the African and Western instruments may be used separately, there are many occasions when they coexist. There is some tendency to identify certain instrumental groups with specific characters, such as the woodwind trio with Chaka in Chant one, the atenteben ensemble with Chake in Chant two, and the tension drum group with the chorus in Chant two. And in a fully staged version of *Chaka*, there would also be traditional African dancing along with the instruments⁴.

The diverse vocal and instrumental styles in the opera illustrate Euba's skills as an intercultural composer. He can be tonal or atonal, and consonant or dissonant. And in his use of twelve-tone rows, Euba never treats the rows as strictly as a Western composer. He tends to divide his rows into segments, treating one segment as a significant melodic entity even if the other notes of the row are not heard. The order of the notes may also be rearranged, and notes may be repeated if he wishes to evoke a sense of the tonal center. And for the African instruments, there are various polyrhythmic passages that are derived from traditional Nigerian and Ghanaian cultures. There is also a certain amount of freedom: The woodwind trio first heard in the opening scene of Chant one may be somewhat variable with its rendition of the twenty-four motives, and there are many occasions where the singers are accompanied by free percussion, or where several percussion parts are prescribed (with possible variants) but one instrument is instructed to improvise. A final

³ In addition to the professional singers in the chorus, the 1998 recording also uses children from St. Alban's Secondary School in Birmingham, England.

⁴ While the African percussionists and Western instrumentalists are professional performers, it is interesting that Euba and conductor Simon Halsey make use of students from St. Paul's Girls School in Birmingham for the atenteben ensemble, which is quite impressive on the CD (St. Paul's music head Margaret Wilson, atenteben tutor Ekow Mends).

shown below along with some of the melodic patterns in the winds that are added to them beginning in measure 17:

Double bass: F7

Agogo

SHD 1

Main SHD III pattern

Alternative SHD III pattern no. 3

Alternative SHD III pattern no. 2

Wind parts beginning in m. 17...

flute

trumpet

horn

clarinet

trombone

Eventually Euba expands upon the second segment of the tone row, and also begins to introduce melodic ideas based on transpositions of the third segment of the row:

Variant of row no. 1, notes 6-9, first heard in mm. 37-42.

8 Variant of row no. 1, notes 6-9, used in mm. 195-205.

15 Variant of row no. 1, notes 10-12, used in mm. 87-91.

A final prominent element is the *Dies irae* chant melody, which is heard in its Africanized version beginning in measure 129:

trumpet

[5 measures rest] flute, clarinet, horn in E-flat

The second section of the prelude (mm. 207-392) is introduced by a variant of the conscience theme, and shifts to polyrhythmic structures derived from the Akan of Ghana. This section begins with four rhythmic layers (agogo, single-headed drums 1-3), with the agogo and single-headed drum 3 having several variants of the basic patterns. The double bass adds a fifth polyrhythmic layer when it returns in m. 265 with notes 6-9 of the first tone row (either in original form, or transposed up a fifth):

agogo

single-headed drum 1

single-headed drum 2

single-headed drum 3

The unusually short third section of the prelude (mm. 393-420), which is preceded and followed by new variants of the conscience theme, switches to a three-part polyrhythmic structure for the agogo, single-headed drum 3 and tension drum 2 that is taken from the Ewe of Ghana:

agogo

single-headed drum 3

tension drum 2

The fourth and final section of the prelude (mm. 421-480) begins by leading us from a final variant of the conscience theme into the theme from Chant 2, scene 4 that is identified with Noliwe. Over a new three-part polyrhythmic structure Euba adds a novel sonority, the sound of the atenteben flute:

atenteben

guduqadu

slit drum 1

slit drum 2

single-headed drum 3

Note: Entrances may be staggered, and not sounding at the same time.

Chant one, scene 1:

The vocal portion of the opera begins with the white voice, who describes Chaka's predicament as he lies dying from wounds inflicted by his own people:

Chá - ka, there like the pun - ther or the e - vil mouthed by - e - na. Three assegais nail you to the ground. The void howls for you. This is your passion then.

May the stream of blood that bathes you be as a pen - nance for you.

This is followed immediately by the conscience theme in the brass trio (the first five notes of tone row no. 1) before Chaka begins his opening section in song mode, where the high-pitched exclamations “two traitors,” “two thieves,” and “two fools” are punctuated by the tympani:

4
Yes I am here be-tween two bro-thers two tri-tors two thieves two fools. Ah! not as the hy-e-na but as the E-thi-o-pic
tympani tympani tympani

5
Li-on with head e-rect. Here returned to the earth. How bright it is the King-dom of Childhood. And it is the end of my passion.

The brass trio returns with the first three notes of the conscience theme before the white voice, accompanied by free percussion, continues his attack on Chaka. Beginning with Chaka’s first entrance, one of the most intriguing parts of the opera that is identified with the great but controversial warrior is the woodwind trio, which plays a combination of short melodic ideas that result in highly independent polyphony. Since these ideas may be either one or two measures in length, they will often overlap with one another, and each time the woodwind trio enters along with Chaka, the performers are instructed to perform the motives in a different sequence. These twenty-four melodic ideas, along with the first two performing sequences, are as follows:

1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24

Sequence n.º 1 (“Yes I am here between two brothers...”):

Flute:	1	4	7	10	13	16	19	22
Clarinet:	2	5	8	11	14	17	20	23
Bassoon:	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24

Sequence n.º 2 (“Voice, white voice from beyond the sea...”):

Flute:	2	3	4	11	12	13	20	21
Clarinet:	5	6	7	14	15	16	22	23
Bassoon:	8	9	10	17	18	19	24	1

As Chaka imagines that he is hearing Noliwe (“I hear the noonday cooing of Noliwe, I exult in the marrow of my bones”), the winds also make a brief appearance, where they restate notes 6-8 of the first tone row. The first two notes of the conscience theme also return in the brasses after the white voice denounces Chaka for killing Noliwe (“You have killed her to escape from your conscience”). A final important element presented in the opening scene that returns many times later in the opera is the single-headed drum trio, which consists of conflicting duple and triple patterns for the first two single-headed drums, improvisation for the third single-headed drum, and the double bass statement of notes 6-9 of the first tone row:

Chant one, scene 2:

Scene two begins with a pentatonic melody played by the xylophone (G-A-C-D-F) that takes on great significance during Noliwe’s scenes in Chant two of the opera. This melody reminds us of her as the white voice condemns Chaka for killing her:

When in speech mode the white voice states that “The greatest evil is to steal the sweetness of breath,” Chaka responds by stating that “The greatest evil is the weakness of fear.” As the woodwind trio from the first scene returns, Chaka goes into a detailed description of her, with the brass and tympani punctuating his high-pitched exclamations of Noliwe:

And as Chaka’s conscience begins to haunt him (on “Gnawed by a nameless suffering...”), we hear a brass fanfare that is based on the second through fifth notes of the conscience theme from the Prelude:

Chant one, scene 3:

Scene three begins with the accusatory white voice describing Chaka satirically as a poet and a politician. After he and his people briefly describe the coming of the white visitors, Chaka explains primarily in song mode what he felt he needed to do. Using free tympani and suspended cymbal percussion, his rhythmically free singing includes octave leaps for emphasis (“politician,” “A man alone dead already”), phrase endings with descending half-steps (“the poet I killed,” “before the others”), and descending tritones on “those you pity”:

I became a man, an untrembling arm. Nei - ther a war - rior nor a bu - cher. As you said, a po - li - ti - cian; the poet I killed, a man of ac - tion a - lone.
A man a - lone dead al - rea - dy be - fore the o - thers, those you pi - ty. Who will in - der - stand my pas - sion?

The woodwinds and brasses return with Noliwe’s melodic material from the concluding section of the Prelude as the scene shifts back in time to his consultation with the wizard Isanussi and his decision to kill his beloved Noliwe:

White voice: An intelligent man whose memory has remarkable lapses. But listen Chaka and you will remember .

Isanussi: Think hard Chaka. I am not compelling you. I am only a wizard, a technician. There is no power gained without sacrifice. Absolute power demands the blood of the dearest of all.

Chaka: She must die then – there is no other way...

The scene concludes with a reflection upon Chaka’s crucial decision, which includes chromatically ascending instrumental parts and reminiscences of the opening two notes of the conscience theme:

White voice
Chaka
Flute
Clarinet
Bassoon
Trumpet
Trombone doubles bassoon (8ve lower)
Horn

I know that your goal was power Your plea - sure.
If war means My cal - va - ry.

Chant one, scene 4:

Over ostinatos provided by the single-headed drum trio, Chaka begins scene 4 in a rhythmically free song mode by talking about the oppression of his people (“I saw in a dream... Forests mowed down, hills leveled... I

saw the people of the south like an anthill of silence at their work...”). Short, metrical choral responses echo his statements:



The brass trio returns with the *Dies irae* melody as Chaka, moving from speech to song mode, talks about the misery of his people. The high pitch emphasis on “segregated” and “mountains of black gold,” along with the descending steps or leaps on “kraals of misery” and “die of hunger,” is particularly noteworthy here. After he sings about their death from hunger; this statement is given added intensity by a crescendo from the single-headed drum trio:



The white voice enters with more accusations (“Your voice is red with hate...”), and Chaka’s defense, which places special importance on “one’s people” and “equality,” is accompanied by the woodwind trio from scene 1 (using tone row no. 2):



A wonderfully dramatic moment comes when the woodwind trio pauses, and Chaka talks about how his people tried to accommodate the white invaders. Here crucial portions of the text are set in song mode and accentuated by the tympani:



In the style of Anglican chant, the white voice exclaims that “To accept suffering with a dutiful heart is redemption,” while Chaka speaks that his suffering was accepted for “the love of my black-skinned people.” To the accompaniment of the woodwind trio and free percussion (agogo, gourd rattle and slit drums), Chaka concludes by once again defending his actions:



After the white voice, in a subdued manner, speaks that “Much will be forgiven to those who have suffered much,” Chant One of the opera concludes with a return to the instrumental music from the end of the Prelude (atenteben, brasses, gudugudu, slit drums, and single-headed drum no. 3).

Chant two, Prelude:

Chant two opens with a two-part prelude, with the first section including voices and the second section being purely instrumental. Section one incorporates another poem by Senghor, “Man and the Beast,” which is initially performed in chant mode by the choir unaccompanied, and then again with polyrhythmic percussion parts (agogo, slit drum 2, single-headed drum 3). In between these two renditions of “Man and the Beast” there is a section for Yoruba solo chanter singing in a traditional style. The latter section of the prelude, which focuses on the wind instruments, is based on the melodic material discussed below that introduces Noliwe’s scene 3.

Chant two, scene 1:

The preludes to Chant 2 lead directly into scene 1, which begins with the atenteben/percussion ensemble (atenteben, agogo, two slit drums, and three single-headed drums). The four to six layers of rhythmic activity reflect a combination of duple and triple patterns, with the atenteben joining in at the conclusion of the four-measure rhythmic pattern to provide overlapping phrases with the percussion:

agogo
slit drums 1
slit drums 2
single-headed drums 1 (nos. 2 and 3 have similar patterns)

atenteben

Soon the atenteben/percussion group is joined by Chaka, who announces his impending death in a combination of speech and chant mode:

The night is com-ing. My love-ly night the moon a gol-den coin. I hear the cooing of Noliwe in the morning, the cin-na-mon ap-ple that rolls in the scen-ted grass.

As the chorus answers that “he is leaving us,” they shout praises (“Bayete Baba”) that are interspersed throughout Chant two. A new instrumental ensemble takes over, one that the composer identifies as the “tension drum group” (winds, double bass, gudugudu, and three tension drums). These tension drums are adjusted to play at different pitches, with the strings on the third drum left loose so that the performer can execute pitch changes. Over these polyrhythmic percussion parts the winds and double bass play new melodic material that outlines the third tone row of the opera (C#-G#-D#-F#-B-A-C-D-E-F-G-Bb):⁵

He is leaving us. How black he is. It is the time of loneliness. Let us sing the Za - lu, let our voi - ces com - fort him.

flute ...
 horn ...
 clarinet ...
 bassoon ...
 double bass
 gudugudu
 tension drum 1
 tension drum 2
 tension drum 3

Chant two, scene 2:

The lengthy second scene of Chant 2 takes us through a variety of emotions, from Chaka’s remembrance of Noliwe through his demise to his people’s praise for his accomplishments. Both Chaka, the chorus and the leader of the chorus move fluidly between speech and chant modes, with the previously mentioned atenteben/percussion ensemble accompanying Chaka while the tension drum group (playing material similar to scene 1) is assigned to the chorus/chorus leader. The scene opens in chant mode with Chaka speaking to Noliwe (“O my beloved, I have waited so long for this, I have pined so long for this night of love without end...”), with the chorus

⁵ In recent e-mail communications with Akin Euba, the composer stated that this was the third tone row that he employed in *Chaka*. An examination of the row, however, indicates that it is the same as the first tone row, transposed from Bb to C#.

commenting on “this hour of love.” When Chaka resumes, he makes it clear that he is no longer the leader of his people, which is confirmed by the leader of the chorus:

But I am not the poem, but I am not the drum I am not the rhy - thm.

It holds me still, it carves all my body like a sta - tue of Ba - u - le

No I am not the poem that springs from the so-nomus mo - tris.

No I do not make the poem, I am the one who ac-compan-ies it. I am not the mother but the father who holds it in his arms and car - es - ses it and speaks ten - der - ly to it.

O Chu - ka Zu - la, you are no longer the fiery lion whose eyes burn villages from afar.

Euba now switches to duple meter, introducing a praise song that is accompanied by multiple rhythmic layers in the tension drum group. Organized into four-measure units, the chorus repeats the same four-measure part, while the Yoruba chanter enters every fourth measure with multiple variants of an idea that outlines the interval of a fifth (G-C):

Ki lo se to - o jo
Why do you not dance?

gudugudu O - mo Ba - lo - run O - mo Ba - lo - run O - mo Ba - lo - run O - mo Ba - lo - run

Son of Basem, Chaka son of Basem

7 Ba-ba-lo-gun Sa - ka, Chaka, the warrior chief E ba mi ki Sa - ka, Join me in praising Chaka

run Sa - ka O - mo Ba - lo - run O - mo Ba - lo - run Sa - ka O - mo Ba - lo - run

One of the most unique moments in the opera begins in the middle of the scene, when the leader of the chorus (singing in chant and speech modes) with the tension drum group is pitted against the solo chanter who sings praise poetry (*oriki*) in honor of Chaka. The solo chanter singing in Yoruba, combined with the choir leader’s chanted and spoken English text, provides us with a unique combination of disparate elements:

[Accompanied by tension drum group]

[Leader of the chorus.]

You are the Zu - la, by you we sprang up thick as corn. You are the nostrils through which we draw strong life. You are the broad-backed. You car - ry all the black-skinned peo - ple.

Oriki for solo Yoruba chanter, opening section:

Erin wo o, Ajamaku rerun alakaji
The elephant has fallen, Ajamaku has gone to the heaven of alakaji.

Akanji Erin, Sake

Idubule re pelemomo

Ode-ki-je-o-kun

Nle o Saka

Iwo ni mo ni ke si.

The elephant has fallen, Chaka immensely huge even when lying down. He fills the house like a crowd. I greet you Chaka. It is to you that I am calling.

Chant two, scene 4:

Scene 4 continues to focus on Noliwe, but with text and music that differs considerably from scene 3. As opposed to the nonsensical text of scene 3, Noliwe's final appearance in the opera focuses upon the dangers of placing too much emphasis on earthly things, cautioning to pay more attention to the heavenly life beyond earth. Using the thematic idea introduced during the latter portion of the Prelude to Chant 1, Noliwe's part is presented in four verses, with four phrases to each verse. The first phrase in each verse is the same, emphasizing intervals of the major and minor third, while the second through fourth phrases differ considerably. The flute and clarinet form heterophonic parts with Noliwe, whose second verse reaches a high point as she points out that we cannot be certain what will happen tomorrow:

Ye So - ra o ma sogbin la-ye Ge-ge bi o-ro O-lu-mo I-gbu lo - ju, i-gbu la - ye A-ja i to e-kun ni-ja.
Please, be cautioned against sowing seeds in this world According to the words of Olumo. The market is temporary. The world is temporary. The dog never provokes the leopard in a fight.

Ye So - ra o ma-se gbu la-ye Se - ra o ma-se ra ka-bo E-ro o - ja o-ro o - run O-ni la mo, a ko mo - la.
Please, take caution and do not sow seeds in this world Be cautioned against buying things on credit The crowd at the market, the crowd on heaven. Today we know, we do not know tomorrow.

Noliwe's song is interrupted between the second and third verses by the song leader, chorus and percussion. The song leader, who is not the same as the leader of the chorus or the Yoruba chanter, sings music that progresses from free to fixed rhythm as he praises the god Ogun:

i - sa l'O-gun o - i - sa l'o-gun, O - i - sa l'O-gun o - i - sa l'O gun
Ogun is a god...

E - ni to ba m'O-gun o - ko - ma da Le
[He that knows Ogun must not be treacherous.]

The chorus answers the song leader in responsorial fashion several times before the entry of the percussion (gudugudu and three tension drums); this includes four polyrhythmic layers of activity, with the third tension drum improvising rhythmic patterns derived from traditional dance:

tension drum 1

gudugudu

tension drum 2
(tension drum 3 improvises)

After Noliwe's third and fourth verses, the chorus enters to pronounce "the good news" while the woodwinds continue to play Noliwe's melodic material. The scene concludes with more material from the song leader, chorus and percussion quartet.

And at the dawn the grand seas, the good news will be born.

flute, clarinet

Chant two, scene 5:

In scene 5, Chaka remembers his beloved Noliwe, gradually progressing into a description of his leadership role amongst his people. The music moves frequently between speech mode and chant mode, and is accompanied by the atenteben ensemble music shown in scene 1 of Chant two, with the percussion (agogo, two slit drums, three single-headed membrane drums) playing continuously while the atenteben rest after only a single statement of their melody. Although the atenteben group and Chaka maintain independent time lines, the listener is certainly aware of the key points in the text (such as “Now the warmth of your palms on my breast...”) where the atenteben have completed their music. As Chaka alternates between speech and chant mode, one notices the use of the higher pitch inflections in the chant mode phrases to emphasize key words and important word accents (“Noliwe,” “feed my muscles,” etc.):

0 my night, my Black one, my No - li - we. That great weak - ness is dead un - der your hands of oil, that weak - ness that fol - lows pain.

1 Now the warmth of your palms on my breast, a - ro - ma - tics to feed my mus - cles.

Towards the middle of the scene, Chaka begins to focus on his goals for his people:

4 I am the carved drum stick, canoe that divides the wave, hand that sows the heavens,

5 foot in the bel - ly of the earth, pe - stle that mar - ries the me - lo - dious curve. I am the drumstick that beats, that tills the drumskin. Who talks of mo - no - to - ny?

7 Joy is mo - no - to - nous, beauty mo - no - to - nous, Eternity a cloudless heaven, a blue forest without a cry, a voice ut - ter - ly a - lone but true.

10 Let the great so - no - rous but - tle go on, the har - mo - nious strug - gle, sweat is pearls of dew! No, I shall die of waiting.

13 from that fair night, O my Night, O my Black One, my No - li - we. And from the drum, may there a - rise o - ver a new world a new sun.

After Chaka concludes his statement, five percussion instruments (agogo, slit drum, two single-headed drums, gourd rattle) enter with a new rhythmic pattern, which independently accompanies a responsorial section between the chorus and its leader:

18

Down there the sun at the ze - nith o - ver all the peo - ples of the earth.

Ba - ye - te Ba - ba! Ba-ye-te O Ba - ye - te!

Chant two, scene 6:

The finale, celebrating the achievements of Chaka, incorporates many layers of both melodic and rhythmic activity that are organized into four-measure units. Although the composer states that he was not consciously thinking of one of the tone rows in this section, it is evident that there is a strong connection with the “conscience theme” part of the first tone row, and in particular the opening two notes, Bb and F. The first layer of melodic activity is the chorus, which reiterates the same part every four measures. And during every fourth measure, the Yoruba chanter (doubled by the trumpet) enters with multiple variants of the first two notes of the tone row in reverse order (F to Bb), reflecting the spirit of improvisation over a concise melodic idea. A third layer of melodic activity is heard in the flute, clarinet and horn, which consists of two alternating ideas derived from the first four notes of the tone row. The fourth and final layer of melodic activity is found in the bassoon, trombone and double bass. They present the conscience theme (the first five notes of the tone row) in mm. 14-20, with further variants of the conscience theme found in mm. 26-32 and 38-43. To this material Euba also adds four layers of rhythmic activity. The *gudugudu* kettle drum takes the lead percussion part with its constant eighth notes, while the first two tension drums have the same pattern spaced a half-measure apart, which when combined forms interlocking eighth-notes. The third tension drum is instructed to improvise dance-inspired motives combined with occasional *oriki* (praise poetry exclamations):

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system includes:

- Chorus:** Vocal line with lyrics: "O - mo Ba - lo - run Sa - ka o - mo Ba - lo - run O - mo Ba - lo - run Sa - ka". Above the first measure, there is a note: "Solo singer".
- Flute, clarinet, horn (in E-flat):** Melodic line.
- Bassoon, trombone (in E-flat):** Bass line.
- Gabazulu:** Percussion line.
- Tension drum 1:** Percussion line.
- Tension drum 2:** Percussion line.
- [Tension drum 3 improvises]:** Percussion line.

The second system includes:

- Solo chanter:** Vocal line with lyrics: "Ba - bu - lo - gun Sa - ka" and "O - mo Ba - lo - run Sa - ka o - mo Ba - lo - run".
- Flute, clarinet, horn (in E-flat):** Melodic line.
- Bassoon, trombone (in E-flat):** Bass line.
- Gabazulu:** Percussion line.
- Tension drum 1:** Percussion line.
- Tension drum 2:** Percussion line.
- Tension drum 3 improvises:** Percussion line.

The intensity builds as Euba switches from duple to 12/8 meter. After stating one melodic idea in mm. 45-52 that is not directly related to the tone row (G-Bb-C-D-F), the winds and percussion bring the celebration of Chaka's achievements to a satisfying conclusion with a final statement of the conscience theme:

The musical score shows a melodic line in 12/8 meter, consisting of several measures with notes and rests, ending with a final cadence.

In his 1995 version of *Chaka*, Euba has combined Yoruba and English texts, using styles of vocal delivery ranging from speech to song, with both African and Western instruments. His music spans a wide range of diverse styles from Western to African, tonal to atonal, consonant to dissonant, rhythmically fixed to free, and entirely prescribed to partially or completely improvised. And in his juxtaposition of these diverse elements, he has produced an opera that is dramatically effective. For these reasons, *Chaka* deserves recognition as one of the most significant late twentieth-century works by any composer, and as a model for the intercultural composers of the twenty-first century.