



**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE,
ART AND HUMANITIES
YARED SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

**THE FINO INSTRUMENT: A PILLAR OF YEM SPECIAL
WORDA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE**

BY ATNATIYOS NEWAY

ADVISOR: MELAKU YIGEZU (PHD)

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES OF
UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN MUSIC**

**JUNE 2026
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE,
ART & HUMANITIES**

**THE FINO INSTRUMENT: A PILLAR OF YEM SPECIAL WOREDA'S
CULTURAL HERITAGE**

BY: ATNATIOS NEWAY

APPROVED BY BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Advisor _____ Signature _____ Date _____

External Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Internal Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Director of YMS _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Acknowledgments

To begin with I give my thanks to God for giving me the patience and wisdom to bring this research to completion. To Melaku Yigezu (PhD) my supervisor I pass my appreciation and beneficial comments given in various points in time of my work. To my family members I would like to share my profound gratitude because they are source of love and comfort for me during good and bad times. Lastly, to the musicians, elders and community members in the Yem Zone who participate in this research I have a word of gratitude. To sum up I pass my heartfelt thanks to all of you for rendering help in various forms either as individual or as organization.

Table of Contents

Contents	Page
Acknowledgments.....	i
Table of Contents.....	ii
Dedication.....	vii
List of Figures.....	viii
Acronyms.....	ix
Abstract.....	x
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1.INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Background of the Study.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	2
1.3. Objectives of the study.....	3
1.3.1. General objective.....	3
1.3.2. Specific Objectives.....	3
1.4. Basic Research Questions.....	3
1.5. Significance of Study.....	4
1.6. Scope and Limitation of the Study.....	4
1.7. Definition of Terms.....	5
1.8. Structure of the Study.....	6
CHAPTER TWO.....	7
2.LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
2.1. Introduction.....	7
2.2. Theoretical Framework.....	7

2.2.1.	Concept of Traditional Music and Instruments in African Societies.....	8
2.2.2.	Overview of Traditional Musical Instruments in Ethiopia	9
2.2.3.	The Cultural Significance of Traditional Music in Yem Society	10
2.3.	Literature on the Fino Instrument	11
2.4.	The Derashe Fila in Gardula	11
2.5.	Historical Mentions and Descriptive Accounts	12
2.5.1.	Symbolic and Social Functions	12
2.5.2.	Challenges of Documentation	12
2.5.3.	Recent Efforts and Calls for Preservation	13
2.6.	The Role of Indigenous Instruments in Music Education	13
2.6.1.	Cultural Relevance in Learning	13
2.6.2.	Underrepresentation in Formal Education	14
2.6.3.	Practical and Cognitive Benefits	14
2.6.4.	Calls for Integration	14
2.6.5.	Challenges in Preserving Oral Musical Traditions	15
2.6.6.	Erosion of Intergenerational Transmission	15
2.6.7.	Lack of Documentation	15
2.6.8.	Cultural Stigma and Marginalization	15
2.6.9.	Limited Institutional Support.....	16
2.6.10.	Technological and Global Influences	16
2.6.11.	Language Loss and Musical Meaning	16
2.7.	The Fino in the Context of Southern Ethiopian Music Traditions	16
2.7.1.	Review of Previous Studies on Indigenous Ethiopian Instruments	17
2.7.2.	Scholarly Focus on Ethiopian Traditional Music	17

2.7.3. Cultural and Regional Musical Diversity	17
2.7.4. Intersections with Other Indigenous Instruments	17
2.7.5. Performance Settings and Symbolism	18
2.7.6. Influence and Isolation	18
2.7.7. Educational and Cultural Integration.....	18
2.7.8. Indigenous Instruments as Oral Heritage	18
2.8. Gaps in Literature	19
2.8.1. Recent Developments and Local Efforts	19
2.9. Conceptual Framework of the Study.....	20
2.9.1.Core Concepts Guiding the Study	20
2.10. Visual Representation of the Conceptual Framework.....	21
2.11. Conclusion.....	21
CHAPTER THREE	23
3.RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	23
3.1. Research Design	23
3.2. Research Approach.....	24
3.3. Data Sources	25
3.4. Study Area	26
3.5. Population, Sample, and Sampling Techniques.....	27
3.6. Data Collection Methods	28
3.7. Data Analysis Methods.....	29
3.8. Ethical Considerations	30
3.9. Summary of the Methodology Chapter	31

CHAPTER FOUR.....	32
4.DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS	32
4.1. Historical Background and Origin of the Fino.....	32
4.2. Construction and Musical Characteristics of the Fino	33
4.2.1.Musical Transcription and Analysis of Selected Fino Melodies	34
4.2.1.1. Arma.....	35
4.2.1.2. Amnebo	35
4.2.1.3. Wogor.....	36
4.2.1.4. Yeye.....	36
4.2.1.5. Waketa.....	37
4.3. Classification of the Fino	38
4.3.1. Arki Fina (Heboni Fina).....	39
4.3.2. Ferfeku	40
4.4. Makers of the Fino	40
4.5. Cultural Significance of the Fino in Yem Society.....	41
4.6. Role of the Fino in Music Education.....	42
4.7. Comparative Analysis: The Derashe Fila and the Yem Fino.....	43
4.8. Challenges in Preserving the Fino Tradition	44
CHAPTER FIVE.....	46
5.SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	46
5.1. Summary of the Study.....	46
5.2. Conclusion.....	47
5.3. Recommendations	48

References	49
APPENDIX – A	51
APPENDIX – B	55
APPENDIX – C	56
APPENDIX – D	57
APPENDIX – E	58
APPENDIX – F	59
Declaration	60

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to Almighty God, under whose special providence I was led during all my life and under the special protection of his Blessed Mother; to my devoted mom Enanu Tegegn who so sacrificed for my education, providing with boundless love and unwavering encouragement; and to the Yem community and all keepers of the Fino tradition, from whom I drew artistic inspiration.

List of Figures

Figure 1: Excerpt from the transcription of Arma melody (Author's fieldwork, 2025)	35
Figure 2: Excerpt from the transcription of Amnebo melody (Author's fieldwork, 2025).....	36
Figure 3: Excerpt from the transcription of Wogor melody (Author's fieldwork, 2025)	36
Figure 4: Excerpt from the transcription of Yeye melody (Author's fieldwork, 2025).....	37
Figure 5: Excerpt from the transcription of Waketa melody (Author's fieldwork, 2025)	38
Figure 6: Arki Fina (Heboni Fina), a type of traditional Fino instrument used by the Yem people.	39
Figure 7: Ferfeku.....	40

Acronyms

CERS:	Central Ethiopia Regional State
CSA:	Central Statistical Agency
IES:	Institute of Ethiopian Studies
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
SNNPRS:	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region
YSM:	Yared School of Music

Abstract

This research will try to explore the cultural and musical significance of Fino, a wind instrument of Yem people dwelling in Yem Zone of Central Ethiopia Regional State as well as educational values in a sense to preserve the instrument and musical elements. The research will focus on the historical backgrounds, construction and structure of the instrument, ways of playing and socio-cultural role of the Fino in the Yem community. The researcher used Ethnography type of qualitative research design. The study reveals that life of the Yem community is closely interrelated with Fino; in one way as a musical instrument, another way as an identity and cultural symbol which enables cohesion and persistence of Yem identity and continuity. Fino has important roles in festivals, weddings, social gatherings and cultural heritages of the community. The materials used for making Fino are of local sources and handed down to next generations by traditional craftsmanship and informally through master-apprentice relationship. Musical analyses of selected selected pieces (Amnebo, Arma, Wogor, Yeye and Waketa) shows characteristic patterns which may relate to communal nature of performance (repetitive structures, modal-tonality and rhythmic free approach) and ritual meanings and symbolism attached to them (rich with cultural information) of the Fino music. The Fino culture is at risk of being replaced by modern music and lack of inter-generational transmission. However the essence of Fino's existence could be guaranteed by documentation, inclusion in the school curriculum and through community involvement preservation.

Keywords: *Fino; Yem Zone; Traditional Music; Indigenous Instruments; Ethnomusicology; Cultural Heritage; Musical Transcription; Oral Tradition; Music Education; Ritual Symbolism*

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Cultural heritage is something that is given its identity by the community, community ties are promoted, and a sense of continuity of past times is supported. Various cultural heritages exist, but traditional musical instruments are recognized as a very strong aspect of cultural identity. A sound is produced by the musical instrument itself, and it is acknowledged as a part of the social, religious, and historical background (UNESCO, 2003).

A diversity of indigenous musical instruments, which are unique to every different ethnic group of the society, is held by Ethiopia. The Fino is recognized as one of the important cultural heritage instruments of Yem Special Woreda, which is not just served as a musical instrument, but the culture of the people is embodied by the Fino instrument, their stories, values, and life customs are carried by it. Rituals, community gatherings, and ceremonies are traditionally facilitated by it, and it has been passed down as a tool for storytelling, expressing religious beliefs, and as a cultural education instrument (Assefa, 2018).

Problems are faced by the Fino instrument, which include modern factors such as urbanization, new modern music trends, the influence of western culture, and the diminishing number of players and experts. In Yem Special Woreda, a low interest in traditional culture is exhibited by the youth in the study area, and modern music and entertainment are preferred as a way of entertainment (Teshome, 2020).

Hence, an urgent need for the documentation and restoration of the Fino instrument exists to prevent its erosion.

¹ **Administrative Note:** The Yem Special Woreda is currently being referred to as Yem Zone due to some recent changes in the administration structure in the study area; however, the original name (Yem Special Woreda) was used throughout the study to refer to the location because at the time of data collection, the study area was identified as the Yem Special Woreda, and hence it is appropriate for terms that were present during field visits and community meetings to be used.

More importantly, larger issues in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage around the world are spoken to by the Fino's predicament. The threat is contributed to by the erosion of traditional knowledge, change in social structures, and lack of institutional support, but a new recognition of the value of traditions for identity and resilience is being developed (Smith, 2006). Both the cultural identity of the Yem people and Ethiopia's cultural diversity are helped to be safeguarded by maintaining traditional instruments like the Fino. The historical path, cultural importance, and challenges associated with safeguarding the Fino are investigated by this research. By analyzing the instrument's role and vulnerability, it is hoped that this research will become part of the larger effort to document and preserve the intangible cultural heritage of Ethiopia. The main objectives of the study are; to determine the cultural role of Fino in Yem Special Woreda; to document its historical developments; and to identify challenges and opportunities involved in safeguarding. Main goals have been set by this study which can help to maintain Fino as a vital part of Yem's culture.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The protection and conservation of intangible cultural heritage in a world characterized by globalization, urbanization and changes in cultural norms and values is identified as one of the major challenges of our age. This research identifies the Fino instrument as an example to these intangible cultural heritages of the Yem people of Yem Special Woreda. Fino, an instrument historically considered one of the most vital part of the social life of Yem people, performed in community gatherings, ceremonies and rituals as a means to pass on oral traditions and as a symbol of the communities value (Assefa, 2018). However, it is now faced with potential threats to cultural sustainability of Yem Special Woreda as its roles and significance are not properly addressed and understood. There is also a dwindling number of skilled people with the knowhow of making and playing the Fino instrument. The art of making and playing the Fino instrument along with its meaning have not yet been well documented and transferred to the next generation, so it is increasingly becoming obscure (Smith, 2006). Moreover, through the widespread prevalence of modern instruments, musical practices and urban modes of life, Fino and other traditional instruments have been recognized by youth as archaic music, so they have been seen to be of marginal cultural significance (Teshome, 2020). Beside all the existing internal forces of threats of the Fino instrument, a variety of external forces have been attributed to the instrument's predicaments. These include lack of institutional support for the Fino, a very low

awareness among the general public of its significance and the absence of formal cultural preservation policies directed towards the instrument's future. Regardless of its cultural and artistic importance, it is considered that not enough has been channeled to its formalization or institutionalization either in educational settings or in cultural circles, which have resulted in neglect (UNESCO, 2003). If the existing threats of the Fino instrument are not timely averted, this precious instrument might not remain among the cultural resources of the Yem people and thus might constitute a loss to the intangible heritage of Ethiopia. In this sense, this research is an attempt to shed light on the past importance of the Fino, to identify and diagnose the contemporary threats facing it, and to develop possible interventions and recommendations towards its preservation and revitalization.

1.3. Objectives of the study

This study has both general and specific objectives to identify the problem and answer the required research question on the study.

1.3.1. General objective

The Major objective of this study is to explore the cultural, historical, and social significance of the Fino instrument as a pillar of Yem Special Woreda's cultural heritage.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- To investigate the origins and historical evolution of the Fino instrument with in Yem special woreda.
- To examine the role of Fino in traditional ceremonies, Festivals, and communal practices
- To document the unique craftsmanship and techniques involved in the construction of the Fino.

1.4. Basic Research Questions

1. What are the historical origins and cultural evolution of the Fino instrument in Yem Special?
2. How is the practice of Fino used in traditional ceremonies, rituals, and communal gatherings?
3. What materials, techniques, and skills are required for crafting the Fino?

1.5. Significance of Study

This study is useful for a variety of reasons. For example, an analysis of the Fino instrument is provided, and thus the knowledge and documentation of Ethiopian traditional music is contributed to. From a cultural viewpoint, the awareness of the Fino is aimed to be promoted and its cultural importance is aimed to be preserved. Awareness about the fact that traditional music practice is declining is also promoted, and the introduction of the instrument to younger generations is aimed for.

As for a policy point of view, further awareness about the Fino can be helped by the results of this study for cultural preservation programs and training, and the promotion of traditional music could also be contributed to, for example, in tourism and the cultural industries (as it is important for artisan producers and musicians as well). Overall, the Fino is served to be preserved and its recognition is given.

1.6. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The cultural and social significance of the traditional wind instrument Fino and its role in the community's cultural identity, cultural persistence, and musical education development in Yem society is centered on by the study. Geographically, the study was conducted in the Saja City Administration, found in Yem Zone (former Yem Special Woreda) within the CERS. Saja was deliberately chosen as the place of study due to the richness of its culture and the presence of community members actively using traditional music, particularly woodwind instruments such as Fino. Conceptually, the issue of the Fino's use, perception, and preservation is set to be found and analyzed, together with the socio-cultural background of the Yem people and their traditional music impact on music education. A qualitative approach was taken by the study to clearly understand local beliefs, values, lives, and perceptions about traditional music practice. However, the limitation of the difficulty to collect oral history information from the elders that had extensive knowledge of it was faced (maybe due to a lack of time or reluctance to share important cultural elements), and the paucity of information on Fino and related traditional music literature and writing material was encountered. Yet, through all these limitations, an interpretation and analysis of the Fino through its oral data and sound-transcription was tried to be offered by the study.

From a policy perspective, the findings provide insights that could support cultural preservation initiatives and educational programs. The study looks at the economic benefits that comes from the traditional music within the creative and tourism sector, which in turn may provide work opportunities for musicians and artists. The study therefore works at saving the Fino instrument and its value for the Yem zone and the rest of the world.

1.7. Definition of Terms

Wind instruments: Musical instruments in which sound is produced by vibrating air column are classified as wind instruments. The player's breath and physical characteristics such as keys, valves, or reeds shape the tone color, loudness, articulation, and expression (Adam Carse, 2002).

Fino: The name of a traditional musical instrument that is made by varying lengths of bamboo stalk. It is produced and played in the Yem special woreda. Fino is mainly used to entertain people during gatherings, ceremonies, and social occasions such as funerals and religious events.

Ferfeku: An old musical instrument known as Ferfeku, made from bamboo stalk, is associated with the Yem special woreda. Two types of Ferfeku exist: Umzu (the larger) and a smaller Ferfeku. It is used in occasions such as funerals, rituals, religious ceremonies, and the New Year celebration.

Tuturu: Instrument fashioned out of animal deer's horn, employed in times of emergency and ceremonies like the ferfeku and fino.

Traditional Music: Traditionally, music that had been passed down through generations of a specific culture and is the tradition of the community in the sense that they have continued in this tradition by word of mouth from a generation to another one; they share particular beliefs, practices, or history. According to Tullia Magrini (Music and gender, Perspectives from the Mediterranean), it is "more than merely an object of entertainment"; it also "reflects a social reality of preservation and transmitting of culture in its entirety through stories or lessons that are part of the life of a community."

Cultural heritage: The tangible and intangible aspects, including practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills that communities perceive as part of their cultural heritage,

are recognized as cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2003).

Yem Special Woreda: An administrative area within Ethiopia that is primarily associated with the Yem people and characterized by unique cultural practices is identified as the Yem special woreda (CSA, 2021).

Intangible Cultural Heritage: Practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills are recognized by communities as part of their cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2003).

Intergenerational transmission: The passing on of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values from one generation to the next is referred to as intergenerational transmission (Hoffman, 2010).

1.8. Structure of the Study

This paper will endeavor to analyze the *finjo*, which is considered the pillar of the Yem special woreda's cultural heritage. To fulfill this purpose, the study has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the topic, the statement of the problem, basic research questions, objectives, scope and limitations of the study, definitions of terms, and the organization of the chapters. In the second chapter, various literatures are examined, specifically regarding the issue of cultural heritage preservation, traditional Ethiopian music, and the contribution of musical instruments to the formation of culture is analyzed. Chapter three details the research design, study area, method of data collection, and the analytical approach of the study. Chapter four is based on the data collected and it is analyzed based on interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis. Finally, a summary and conclusion based on the findings from the data analysis are provided in the last chapter, which offers some recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The scholastic body of the research comprises the already existing work, which is put together so as to provide a strong case for the research problem. Through an examination of previous work; concepts, theories and empirical research on the use of the Fino, a wind instrument from the Yem zone, it has been put into strong consideration. Grounded work related to the Fino instrument, as a social, cultural and educational concept is sought through this chapter. Consultation of literatures about traditional music, ethnomusicology, heritage conservation, role of instruments in music, the instrument in society and music in education has been made in order to find a context for the research problem, locate gap in existing literature, especially on the Fino and instruments similar to it that has not been sufficiently researched, guide formulation of research questions, formulate appropriate methodology, establish a solid research position and bring a holistic dimension to the topic (musicology, anthropology, sociology, education).

2.2. Theoretical Framework

Analysis of research is facilitated by theory framework. In this study, concepts have been derived from ethnomusicology, cultural relativism and oral tradition theory. **Ethnomusicology** is seen by Nettl (2005:2) as 'the study of music in the context of its culture'. Music is therefore not merely seen as sound but as socially products, ideas, identities and worldview, and in that connection, the Fino is considered not only a musical instrument, but a cultural item encapsulating the belief systems, the rituals and the life stories of the Yem people. **Cultural relativism** which is viewed as, 'The concept that a culture must be understood and appreciated according to its own cultural context', (Boas 1940) is fundamental in making out the different views about the instrument by members of a society ranging from adoration to utter neglect, as the manifestations of world-view, tradition, religion and social changes that each group perceives. Oral tradition has been discussed following thinkers such as Finnegan (1992) who argue that non-existence of written document does not equate absence of tradition or information, and that in many societies, information is transmitted orally to serve as the primary channel for cultural information, particularly with music and stories. This is why oral tradition theory has become important for

this research study on Fino.

2.2.1. Concept of Traditional Music and Instruments in African Societies

Traditional music in African societies is not only regarded as music played for entertainment but it is interwoven into the spiritual, social, political, education framework and belief systems of a society. As a result, traditional instruments like wind instruments (the Fino) are not regarded as static objects separate from those who play it, but as intrinsically integrated into the society and the way people interact within it.

Within African societies traditional music is understood as inherently intertwined with the social, oral and spiritual tradition of a community. Unlike other tradition around the globe, traditional African music is predominantly participative and communal. It is intimately associated with ritual practices, life events, human interaction and social cohesion (Nketia, 1974). Within this context the Fino and other traditional instruments within the society serve various social and cultural functions in their communities; from being integral parts in religious ceremonies, initiations, celebrations and recitals associated with farming activities to communicating messages and achieving reconciliation. According to Agawu (2003), "Instruments are not inert things; they are performed and communicative entities" within these contexts of social life and culture.

Within the African context wind instruments, including the Fino have often gained profound spiritual and ceremonial functions, certain signals that transmit specific meaning and rituals performed on particular social functions, or that are used during traditional ceremonies and festivities, and dances in a majority of Ethiopian and African societies are interpreted as having this communicative significance of wind instruments. Usually traditional musical instruments are locally crafted and the skills of playing them are handed down from generation to generation by oral transmission of music and on apprentice basis (Kubik, 1994). Traditional music in Africa particularly differs from others in the world as they usually lack a notated or written composition. Hence their composition styles follow the oral system of transmission, is characterized by cyclic nature and rhythmic pattern, and emphasis of improvisation (Nketia, 1974) thus traditional music and their instruments are the custodians of the past and contemporary heritage of any specific society.

2.2.2. Overview of Traditional Musical Instruments in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is comprised of a vast number of ethnic groups; each group is characterized by its own culture, traditions, and of course, musical instruments. Ethiopian instruments are also deeply embedded in the social life as the society is; in music, ceremony, and in general practice (Shelemay, 1986).

Traditional Ethiopian music encompasses an incredible array of traditions associated with its over 80 distinct ethnic groups, each with their own characteristic and unique instruments that reflect and perpetuate specific socio-cultural practices and aesthetic traditions (Ashenafi, 2001). Ethiopian traditional instruments are generally divided into 4 categories namely aerophones (wind instruments), idiophones (self-sounding instruments), membranophones (drums), and chordophones (stringed instruments), with each type serving an array of specific functions within the traditions and cultures of the Ethiopian people.

Wind instruments are frequently encountered in many Ethiopian cultures, where they are used to announce events or during religious or secular performances. Some common types of wind instruments include the *ʿEm(ə)bil(ə)ta* (a wind instrument without finger holes played like a flute), the *mäläkät(ə)* (a trumpet-like signaling instrument), and a myriad of local trumpets and flutes, which are often handcrafted using readily available natural materials like bamboo, animal horns, and wood, and the method for their construction and playing is largely traditional and passed down orally (Shelemay, 1986).

Traditional instruments within these societies are therefore viewed as a crucial component not only of a particular society's sound-world but also as an integral tool in various practices like rituals, storytelling, communication, and the perpetuation of a culture's heritage. For example, the *k(ə)rar(ə)*, a five or six stringed lyre, is recognized as a quintessential component of Amhara and Tigray oral tradition and spiritual music, whilst the *käbäro*, a type of drum, has been considered central to religious ceremonies within Orthodox Christianity and communal Oromo traditions (Merriam, 1964). Sadly, these instruments are fast disappearing due to modernizing forces and globalization, leading young Ethiopians to perceive the instrument and its performance as part of a past rural and old-fashioned way of life.

The Fino is recognized as an instrument that fits this landscape of traditional Ethiopian culture as an instrument associated with the Yem people. It is of course not as popular as some of the other more nationally recognized instruments, but its significance within Yem culture clearly establishes it as a relevant part of this musical landscape and part of the Ethiopian nation's heritage.

2.2.3. The Cultural Significance of Traditional Music in Yem Society

The Yem people are held in high esteem for a living culture in which music is considered of utmost importance to identity, the transmission of oral tradition, and community spirit. Traditional music is inextricably tied to rites of passage, seasons, agricultural practices, and spiritual life; and in every way, reflects the pulse of their everyday lives (Merriam, 1964).

An entity called music has been created by the Yem, which not only serves as entertainment but is also used as a medium to express collective joy, faith, and memory. The past is memorialized, the present is united, and communion with the spiritual is established through it. Instruments such as the Fino, with their ethereal tones and ceremonial roles, are played in these performances, often taking center stage in weddings, initiation ceremonies, or community get-togethers. The melodies of the Fino serve as vehicles that allow communion with the ancestral past and local lore to occur. A wealth of symbolism is often contained in Yem musical expression. A particular rhythmic pattern or melody can be represented as mourning, celebration, or the harvest. As in much Yem culture, it is dictated by custom which instruments or performance styles are appropriate for each function; cultural guardians and teachers of musical practice to the youth are considered to be elders and master musicians. In recent years, due to increased cultural contact, urbanization, and the spread of Western music, many Yem traditional arts, particularly music and the use of the Fino, are slowly becoming marginalized as the younger generations of Yem seem unable to cope and, in many cases, are not equipped for their use in comparison to Western forms. Fortunately, the need for the re-animation of cultural practices is now being raised; vital roles have been played by cultural organizations and festivals, including many community-led programs within Yem Zone, in reintroducing traditional music to schools, performances, and regional media. Renewed interest in the Fino and its associated traditions has been sparked by such initiatives, as both a unique musical form and a marker of cultural identity. The relevance and importance of maintaining instruments like the Fino not just as artifacts, but

as integral cultural expressions, is illuminated by the cultural significance attributed to music in Yem life.

2.3. Literature on the Fino Instrument

Despite the Fino being regarded as the soul of Yem cultural life, literature focused solely on this traditional wind instrument is sparse. Many studies on Ethiopian music tend to over-emphasize its more widely known instruments like the *k(ə)rar(ə)*, *mäsän(ə)q'o*, *käbäro*, and *was(ə)n(ə)t(ə)* with the Fino merely mentioned in ethnographies or footnotes. This makes this study unique and timely; the study of the Fino would highlight an indispensable, original piece of Ethiopia's intangible cultural heritage.

2.4. The Derashe Fila in Gardula

Interestingly, a prominent parallel to Yem Fino is the Fila-the chief instrument of the Gardula peoples of Southern Ethiopia. The Fila has been traditionally played by people in Derashe, Kusume, Mosiye and Mashole, and is considered by Gardula peoples to be the lifeline of Gardula cultural identity. Fila has been played by almost every Gardula person throughout his/her entire lifetime from childhood to old age. Made mostly out of reeds and bamboo, of varying sizes of up to one meter down to just a few centimeters long, Fila is used in orchestras that have from up to 24 up to 48 players. The parts played by people in an orchestra depend on the size of the instruments; the larger instruments being played by the older master players, the smaller instruments by those that have a higher pitch range, ordered according to their pitch from low to high. The scale instruments are the *casanta/tontolia* (bass Fila), instruments of intermediate size and smaller instruments that are named *fentia*. The sound components of Fila is categorized into three main pitch registers that are identified as *Santa* (low), *Atantia* (medium) and *Fitfta* (high) by Gardula communities. These together constitute the fundamental musical components of all Fila performances. Fila, being equally a game as it is an instrument used to create music and a dance, requires a lot of energy and for Fila festivals sometimes many hours of sustained play. Fila represents joy, togetherness, and maximum respect to each other, unlike many games and rituals, where the spirit is that of competition and exclusion, the Fila is for everyone. Males and females equally participate in Fila and the latter take just as many initiative if not more, in their male partners dance and play. While the orchestra and orchestra leader(s) are

responsible for its operation it can also be used by the other musicians for their songs and dances with them vocalizing all throughout. Complements of other instruments to be played along with Fila include the small wind *lelata* and shields and swords. The Fila is given importance in Gardula culture and celebrated at the Fila festival in Gidole which serves to commemorate their collective identity and heritage, bringing together communities and passing traditions down generations. The game of Fila itself, with the motto of "Fila is for the many and not the few" encompasses the Gardula culture. It is now declared by the Derashe Woreda Culture and Tourism Office as indispensable component of the countries' intangible cultural heritage and steps are being taken to preserve this game.

2.5. Historical Mentions and Descriptive Accounts

The Fino also appears in fragmented mentions of the regions' cultures, often characterized as vernacular end-blown instruments made from bamboo or organic materials and taught primarily orally, with focus placed on structure, range and performance techniques. Yonas and Bekele (2015) note the distinctly nasal timbre of the Fino and a melancholy quality in its sound which is often used in communal and religious settings as well as quiet periods of reflection or mourning.

2.5.1. Symbolic and Social Functions

According to ethnomusicology, Kebede (2010) observes that "indigenous musical instruments in Ethiopian societies function symbolically within a particular cosmology of meanings," (though the Fino is not directly addressed in this study) and this information can be utilized to analyze the symbolic and social functions of the Fino within the Yem society.

2.5.2. Challenges of Documentation

The lack of a substantial volume of text or recorded data on many African indigenous musical instruments like the Fino, where the majority of information is found among some of the elders of the community and the craftsmen, have made scientific investigation of this instruments a major challenge. Oral transmission of such knowledge has been declining because of several factors including the spread of modernity, westernization and the formal western institutional education system.

2.5.3. Recent Efforts and Calls for Preservation

Some of the preservation projects on certain undocumented instruments of traditional culture have begun in different regions of SNNPRS in recent years. The South Nations Cultural Bureau (2021) stated that there are on-going projects aimed at identifying and preserving endangered intangible heritage of South Nations and Nationalities Regional State, among which indigenous musical instruments are considered "not adequately documented." Although Fino is not listed individually, such an endeavor opens a path of research on this instrument. This research work thus sets forth to narrow down the lacunas in documented studies by carrying out an in-depth study and analysis of the Fino in terms of its construction, performance, transmission and its socio-cultural roles and implications in Yem society as a cultural artifact of identity, but also as living cultural heritage of the Yem people.

2.6. The Role of Indigenous Instruments in Music Education

The function of indigenous instruments in music education go beyond merely being a component of cultural identity or heritage and are rather the medium through which music is effectively transmitted and learning takes place. Throughout Africa, as in other developing nations, indigenous musical instruments such as the *k(ə)rar(ə)* and *bägäna* among others are used not only to make music but as tools that communicate music related values that are intertwined with their way of life.

2.6.1. Cultural Relevance in Learning

It has been observed by Akuno (2005) that for any pedagogical endeavor in Africa to be truly effective and responsive, it must be based on the background and context of the learner. Thus, an instrument such as the Fino will serve as a cultural tool that could help learners value their own tradition, culture and worldview, hence enhancing active engagement of the learners and reaffirmed identities especially for the people of communities such as the Yem zone. In the oral performance of non-musical learning such as moral lessons, customs and way of life are often communicated as can be noticed through the musical performance using indigenous instruments as Nketia (1974) notes that music in traditional Africa was part of life, rather than an object.

2.6.2. Underrepresentation in Formal Education

It has, however, been stated by Abebe (2019) that owing to the prevalent western style music education approach, it is western instruments and their repertoires that is increasingly popular in urban Ethiopia, leading to further erosion of the nation's culture, marginalization of indigenous knowledge. Like other indigenous instruments, Fino is still not extensively used in formal school curricula. Also, there is a need to exploit indigenous instruments like the Fino to close the gap between formal and informal learning and particularly in regions such as Yem zone where indigenous traditions remain predominant.

2.6.3. Practical and Cognitive Benefits

It has been proved that the use of indigenous instruments in music education provides cognitive, practical, social, and performance benefits. It is enhanced by learning such instruments that listening skills, rhythm, melody, memorization, and improvisational competence are developed through the use of various aural mimicry techniques that the students have to employ. As advocated by Gardner (1983) in his theory of multiple intelligences, musical intelligence is recognized as one form of human intelligence; hence this involves the perception of rhythm, tone, melody, and forms of music. It is further strengthened by performance on these instruments.

Playing Fino does not impose much hardship on students since it is simple to build and maintain and therefore is easily incorporated into informal education. Such attributes will help students learn techniques of production, tone quality control, breath control, and listening skills and also develop good performance etiquettes.

2.6.4. Calls for Integration

The proponents of Ethiopian ethnomusicology, including some academics and various cultural organizations in the country, increasingly call for their inclusion into school and university syllabi. Such an initiative would promote cultural sustainability, as well as national consciousness and an environment of inclusiveness in educational practices. Furthermore, it would prevent the marginalization of instruments such as *Fino*, confining them to merely ceremonial purposes.

2.6.5. Challenges in Preserving Oral Musical Traditions

Oral traditions of Ethiopia, especially the Yem music culture, are based on the human memory, individual teaching, and public performances, which are transmitted through oral means and lack a systematic notational approach to music. Although these traditions are represented as dynamic and organic systems deeply rooted in the culture and life of the people, critical pressures are currently being faced by oral traditions, and the possibility of their disappearance in modern times is being threatened.

2.6.6. Erosion of Intergenerational Transmission

The main threat to oral musical traditions is posed by the erosion of intergenerational transmission. The problem of losing important traditions due to the loss of instrument knowledge from elders who master complex instruments such as Fino cannot be overemphasized. The failures to transmit instrument knowledge are attributed to the lack of motivation for youngsters and the continuous decline in youth's enthusiasm in traditional music instruments, as modern and Westernized musics gain popularity. These problems are also aggravated by migrations, urbanization, and the absence of any institution for teaching instruments. (Shelemay, 2006)

2.6.7. Lack of Documentation

A vital issue on the continuation of oral traditions is represented by the lack of ample written records. Hardly is there any published text that provides research on the Fino and its instrument; little research exists about the songs played on the Fino, and most importantly, little about the performance practice on Fino and other related instruments. Hence, if some master of the tradition passes away without transmitting it to anyone or without recording it, the possibility of losing some entire repertoire of Fino exists. Again, due to this fact, no educational institution seems to offer Fino lessons as no text has been written by professional Ethio-musicologists. (Negash, 2021)

2.6.8. Cultural Stigma and Marginalization

It is known that traditional musical instruments and their performance are sometimes associated with outmoded and backward aspects of the culture, especially in rural areas and in some communities; some traditional instruments such as Fino are believed to be for "primitive"

religious activities, "pagans," or the lowest in the hierarchy of instruments. These beliefs sometimes lead to avoidance of the music and instruments considered low status by the youngsters. This tendency is strongly correlated with religious transformation, the influence of colonial legacies, internalized traditional hierarchies of instruments, and the devaluation of indigenous musics in comparison with their western counterparts. (Alemu, 2015).

2.6.9. Limited Institutional Support

A lack of institutional framework for the promotion and safeguarding of Ethiopian indigenous musical instruments is present. Traditional instruments and music in general are mostly viewed with indifference by government and higher education institutions. This has resulted in little funding for research related to traditional instruments; insufficient mechanisms for collecting, recording, and archiving the musical traditions; and no highly trained ethnomusicologists available to perform research activities and safeguard them.

2.6.10. Technological and Global Influences

The fast spread of global pop culture and digital media influences younger generations with new value systems, attitudes, and styles that overshadow local traditional instruments. Though modern media may be seen as a tool to save oral musical traditions, a positive outlook for traditional instruments does not currently appear. Without conscious effort, the music of the *Fino* could be lost or used as stage props only for special occasions.

2.6.11. Language Loss and Musical Meaning

Because oral musical tradition is embedded in the language of a particular group, if that language is endangered, then its meaning of the music is also endangered. The meanings of *Fino* songs are deeply tied to Yemsa, its own language; hence, the dwindling language can contribute to the depletion of music's full range of meaning.

2.7. The Fino in the Context of Southern Ethiopian Music Traditions

The Fino, a traditionally wind instrument of the Yem people, is not only regarded as an instrument but also as a vessel in which the entire culture is encoded, situated within the larger context of the South Ethiopian musical traditions. A broad repertoire of indigenous music instruments, vocal performances, and ceremonies is exhibited in the region, diverse in ethnicity

and performance practices, and a niche within this framework is occupied by the Fino.

2.7.1. Review of Previous Studies on Indigenous Ethiopian Instruments

To discuss the Fino tradition, it is important that the existing scholarly writings concerning the indigenous Ethiopian instruments in general be investigated, although research dealing solely with the Fino is scarce. An enormous amount of literature dealing with the traditional Ethiopian music instruments exists and is growing, which serves as a reference for understanding the Fino.

2.7.2. Scholarly Focus on Ethiopian Traditional Music

The literature on Ethiopian traditional music instruments is mostly concentrated on the study of instruments such as *k(ə)rar(ə)*, *mäsän(ə)q'o*, *bägāna*, *käbäro*, and *was(ə)n(ə)t(ə)*, etc., which are widespread in northern and central Ethiopia, with detailed analysis on their instrument construction, function, performance context, and their relation to social life. However, limited research exists on instruments and music of the southern parts of Ethiopia, specifically those of ethnic groups such as the Yem people.

Studies by Ashenafi Kebede, which set up the base for the research of music and cultural identity of Ethiopia, have focused largely on the music traditions of the north and central Ethiopia and not necessarily on the south.

2.7.3. Cultural and Regional Musical Diversity

The southern part of Ethiopia is inhabited by people like Wolayta, Hadiya, Sidama, Gurage, Yem, etc. and is characterized by particular forms of music. The instruments commonly used in these regions include the *k(ə)rar(ə)*, *mäsän(ə)q'o*, *käbäro* and several types of horns or flutes. However, among the Yem, a specific wind instrument called the Fino is found. It is a traditional wooden pipe that is played primarily at festivals, ceremonies, and social gatherings, unlike the more generic wind instruments found among neighboring people (Tadesse, 2019).

2.7.4. Intersections with Other Indigenous Instruments

Despite being similar in their general construction and wind element, wind instruments can differ greatly in their uses. For example, other types of Ethiopian wind instruments such as the *'Em(ə)bil(ə)ta* in the Amhara culture, or the *tangera* in the Konso culture exist; yet the Fino is

distinguished due to the Yem's unique cultural perception and the tonality produced by the instrument itself. While some wind instruments such as the tangera and m'bil'ta are used for courtship and/or entertainment, the Fino is used more often in storytelling, initiation rituals, and in the preservation of their culture (Getahun, 2022).

2.7.5. Performance Settings and Symbolism

In the context of Yem, instruments are closely tied to culture and identity. The Fino is often symbolized as Yem identity and plays a role at certain gatherings of celebration of Yem traditions and culture. Generally, it is played alone, though it is at times performed with vocalizations and in some cases is considered a spiritual tool invoking ancestors, memories, traditions, and even protection, which differs from the function of similar wind instruments among neighboring peoples, who may use it solely for entertainment or courtship rituals.

2.7.6. Influence and Isolation

In general, and regardless of proximity between ethnic groups within Ethiopia, wind instruments such as the Fino have generally remained "protected" from external influences, due to the cultural seclusion of traditional instrument types from broader regions. These specific traditions maintain their traditional form and playing style but suffer from minimal documentation. However, recently, more ethnomusicological research is being conducted to map instruments of smaller traditions although the literature is minimal (Kebede, 1971).

2.7.7. Educational and Cultural Integration

The integration of traditional Ethiopian instruments into the formal education system has, to some extent, neglected many unique and specialized wind instruments. Even though instruments such as *k(ə)rar(ə)* or *mäsän(ə)q'o*, have made their way into some urban schools, the Fino remains primarily passed down through traditional methods. In order to incorporate a more inclusive music education system, methods must be adjusted for regional differences and for specific instruments that belong to particular traditions.

2.7.8. Indigenous Instruments as Oral Heritage

Researchers like Alemu (2016) and Worku (2018) have suggested that many Ethiopian traditional instruments such as wind instruments represent part of the oral/performative culture of

the people and are transmitted down through word-of-mouth as an observational technique learned by practicing among respected members of the community. The transmission of the Fino is also such and involves elders or relatives. It is often not represented in formal music education due to it not being an established standard. The transmission of the Fino is one that often entails learning through demonstration from another person (usually an elder or relative of similar sex and generation). It is therefore important for researchers who study this tradition to conduct interviews, observation, participant observation, and transcription in order to gather adequate information since it lacks written form. These factors make this research adopt ethnographic interviewing and transcription methods.

2.8. Gaps in Literature

Although studies are now becoming more interested in instruments of Africa, there are still certain specific region-based instruments like the Fino for which literature has limited documentation. In various publications of Ethiopian musicology, it can be noticed that the Fino is hardly mentioned which may suggest the need to further study it and other instruments of its kind, as an exclusion from the bigger picture can be damaging. Many institutions such as the IES and the music departments of many of the Ethiopian Universities such as Addis Ababa University are beginning to make more use of ethnography to describe musicological knowledge in smaller traditions but these efforts are at the very preliminary stage.

2.8.1. Recent Developments and Local Efforts

Over the last couple of years, an effort has been made to document and promote endangered traditional Ethiopian instruments and musical traditions. These efforts are mainly characterized by local researchers, cultural associations, and performers putting forth their efforts in bringing traditional music back to life through performances, workshops, and displays. Though not yet on a larger scale, these efforts open doors for researchers in similar smaller traditions, like in the study on the Fino. This field has attracted the attention of scholars of both music and the humanities such as musicologists, historians, and anthropologists. These new trends call for a more integrated, cross-disciplinary analysis which this study addresses by 1. Presenting both a cultural and pedagogic profile of the Fino and the social role it plays in the Yem community.

2.9. Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework used for this research study analyzes the role of a traditional instrument, a wind instrument called the Fino, within the context of Yem society; serving as a musical tool and simultaneously functioning as an artifact representing culture, transmitting intergenerational information, and shaping societal perception. It provides a guideline on which to explore how the Fino exists within an Ethiopian cultural tradition under continuous evolution.

2.9.1. Core Concepts Guiding the Study

1. Indigenous knowledge systems:

The study is primarily rooted in the notion of an indigenous knowledge system where traditional instruments, like the Fino, are not merely musical devices, but instruments embedded within a whole structure of local practices, beliefs, and information. They transmit cultural information and embody learning processes which are orally inherited through practical demonstration and living it (Warren, 1991). Therefore, the Fino is both an instrument and cultural practice that "is lived."

2. Cultural Identity and Heritage:

It is represented as the heritage of the Yem and in this study, it is seen as a symbolic as well as functional element of the expression of Yem culture. It can be understood through Hall's (1990) explanation of cultural identity, which implies that it is not static but is created through ongoing cultural practices.

3. Attitudinal change and music perception:

Attitudinal aspects that affect the importance of the Fino today are discussed. Just like in most developing countries, traditional instruments like the Fino are seen by the majority of Ethiopians either as cherished property or symbols of primitive status based on religions, social situations, or generations (Worku, 2018).

4. Transmission and Pedagogy:

Unlike western instruments, traditional instruments are passed down through different channels. They have different ways of teaching; most of them are passed down through generations by informal means where members learn through watching and doing. This research examines

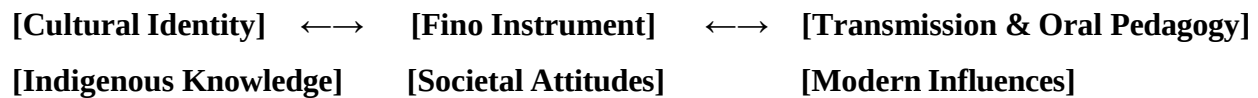
different means through which the Fino can be passed down.

5. Ethnomusicology and Contextual analysis:

In this paradigm, ethnomusicology is a methodology used to analyze the musical properties of the Fino and its use within different socio-cultural settings like ceremonies and performances, social contexts of usage (Merriam, 1964).

2.10. Visual Representation of the Conceptual Framework

A simple version of the conceptual framework might look like this:



This framework explains the relationship between tradition, education, cultural meaning, and perception. The *Fino* acts as both the subject and medium of inquiry.

2.11. Conclusion

In this chapter, the survey of relevant literatures to the research on traditional Fino instrument in Yem Zone is provided. The chapter started by exploring indigenous music and the socio-cultural role it plays in Ethiopian and African context. Ethnomusicology approach to study the socio-cultural aspect and interpretation of music culture-the oral and collective way of performing-was then focused.

The survey of literature reviewed about traditional wind instruments including their manufacture, function and their symbolic roles in community life. Consistent concern was identified in most literatures that indigenous instruments were perceived and marginalized in official music curriculum as a consequence of modernization, religious dogma, age factors etc.

The interaction between traditional instruments and the system of education was also explored where knowledge on traditional instruments had been struggled to incorporate into the curriculum system. Theoretical concepts of ethnomusicology, identity studies and indigenous knowledge systems have served to explain the meaning of Fino in terms of musical system and

transmission of identity.

At the end of chapter, the framework is structured to illustrate various components, ranging from the notion of Fino embodying the cultural identity of its users to the role of its oral transmission process, the changing attitude of society toward its utilization and finally its importance to preserve intangible heritage. These themes of concepts and their relation to one another form a foundation to a more methodology-oriented next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the research design, method, and procedure that were used in the study to explore the cultural, social, and educational significance of the Fino, a traditional wind instrument in the Yem Zone of Ethiopia. The method that was used will serve as a basis for an organized, reliable study capable of providing the valid and reliable conclusions that are aimed to be drawn by the researcher, addressing both the philosophical basis of the research, approach to it, data collection, analysis, and ethical considerations throughout. Given the uniqueness of the indigenous Fino musical tradition and the limited number of existing scholarly references regarding it, the research method must prioritize interpretive, participative, and qualitative methods in order to achieve a thorough understanding of its meaning, symbolism, and lived experiences among Yem culture. Furthermore, ethnographic methods will be utilized to adequately record the performances, construction, and social role of the instrument within the community. By delineating the individual stages of the research process in clear terms, this chapter not only guarantees transparency in the study but also forms the foundation of the argument for the trustworthiness and reliability of the research. In addition, it clearly demonstrates how the particular research methods that were utilized suit the research objectives while seeking to fill the gaps found in previous literature on the subject.

3.1. Research Design

The research design outlines the parameters within which the study will take place. A broad overview is provided which will be used to guide all research methods and to achieve the research objectives. A qualitative research design will be used in the research as it will best enable an examination of the cultural, social, historical, and educational aspects of the Fino instrument among the Yem people, as there is no way to quantify the meaning and symbolism of the Fino without the detailed descriptions, interpretive analyses, and lived experiences that are achievable through qualitative methods. Ethnographic methods are regarded as an essential component of this qualitative design and will allow the researcher to become immersed in the culture of the Yem Zone. Ethnographic research is considered particularly appropriate as it typically involves extended involvement, participant observation, and personal interaction with

the members of the society whose culture is under investigation. Such data will be served to record both the creation, performance, and transfer of the Fino tradition through generations as well as narrative explanations and cultural interpretations that are given by experienced musicians and culture bearers in the Yem Zone. As part of this broader ethnographic design, a case study method will also be applied. The Yem Zone, within which the Fino traditions were studied, was treated as a finite, bounded case. This allowed a depth and specificity in the study of the Fino musical tradition as it occurred in this specific context, which also enabled examination of overarching trends in the broader context of ethnomusicology and intangible heritage. Data that were collected throughout this design include participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and video/audio recordings of Fino performances and instruments, which place the indigenous people at the heart of the study. The qualitative design allowed for a more flexible and adaptable method where the research method could be adapted to suit new information, a particularly important requirement given the differences in practice across various villages of the Yem Zone.

A snowball sample technique was utilized by the researcher for identifying appropriate participants within the Yem Zone, which according to Creswell & Poth (2018) is a non-probability method where participants recommend other individuals who are most suitable for the research due to their expertise and experience with the research area. As identifying, for instance, master Fino performers, luthiers, and elderly custodians of the musical tradition is highly unlikely by traditional sampling techniques like a random or stratified sample survey since readily available lists are non-existent, snowball sampling made it possible for the study to access a pool of individuals who are recognized by their communities as possessing sufficient expertise in the area.

In summation, the combination of these research design methods gives the researcher a holistic and ethnographically based means of evaluating the multifaceted role of the Fino, not simply on the level of the instrument itself but on a cultural, social, and historical level.

3.2. Research Approach

This study utilizes an interpretivist research approach. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2005), the interpretivist paradigm asserts the "preeminence of participant point-of-view." The

interpretive paradigm states that reality is socially constructed and meanings are formed through social interaction, social experience, and social action. Interpretivism has proven to be an especially fitting paradigm for research that examines the meaning, use, and importance of traditions such as the Fino instrument, which cannot be sufficiently explained by objective data or external interpretation. As such, it is vital in an interpretive paradigm for the researcher's viewpoint to reflect participant perspective and that "realities as lived by the participants [will not] be subjected to the preconceptions or anticipations of the researcher". Specifically, this involves an "ethnographer closely involved with members of the community," "listens to musicians, elders, keepers of cultural heritage, community leaders, and others in the Yem Zone," asking questions that elicit their experiences, stories and interpretations, thus utilizing an emic perspective (or 'inside' view) of research that is then supplemented by an etic (or 'outside') perspective in order to enhance the researcher's comprehension of the findings through comparisons to wider ethnomusicological theory and literature. Through the use of a interpretive research paradigm this study will offer a deep and true understanding of the Fino.

3.3. Data Sources

Both primary and secondary data sources will be used in this study. These data will be collected so that the researcher will have a thorough understanding of the Fino instrument and its place in the Yem Zone community.

Primary data sources will be derived from the perspectives of those individuals who have experience and direct knowledge of the Fino instrument. Specifically, the researcher will interview directly traditional Fino players, elders and community leaders within the Yem Zone, as well as, the local historians, representatives from cultural conservation offices and observed cultural performances and community festivals. Visual and audio recordings of these performances will be supplemented by observation and interaction.

Secondary data sources will be used to gain a background perspective of Fino instrument and its place within Ethiopian traditional music culture. This source will encompass previously collected materials including books, theses, articles, and reports about Ethiopian traditional music, and ethnomusicology in general. Additionally, local governmental documents, traditional artifacts, and local records, will be utilized along with the works on the Yem people as ethnography.

Materials relevant to similar wind instruments in other traditions, including books, journals, and papers, will be used for a comparative and theoretical analysis of cultural context.

An interpretive balanced research approach is utilized when primary and secondary sources are combined. Primary sources provide authentic lived experiences of members within the culture. Secondary sources, or "works on the Yem people and culture," and academic articles from the broader ethnomusicological field (e.g., on similar wind instruments), provide historical, context and theoretical perspectives to support the research data from the Yem Zone.

3.4. Study Area

A culturally distinct area currently part of Central Ethiopia Region State (formerly Southern Nations, Nationalities and People Region State) is referred to as the Yem zone. The area is locally referred to as Yem Special Woreda for the field research work period, but it is now officially referred to as Yem Zone following recent administrative reform. Thus, the distinction in the name of the area is referred to based on the context of the particular source used in its reference to the population and culture of the Yem people.

The fieldwork was conducted in Yem Zone, which is located to the west and north of the Oromia Region. The Yem Zone is separated to the west and north from the other regions by the Omo river, namely: the Gurage to the northeast and the Hadiya to the east. The capital of the Yem Zone is served by Saja town. The elevation of the region varies from 1,000 m to more than 2,000 m above sea level, characterized by both highlands and mid-land ecological areas with a mild climate favorable for agricultural production. Farming based on grain crops and enset cultivation is the major livelihood system of the region. The primary crops grown include teff, wheat, barley, maize, beans, and enset, and livestock is raised by the local people who also trade in dairy products.

The total number of inhabitants as reported by the Central Statistical Agency (CSA) in 2007 reveals that the population and housing census of Yem Zone consists of 80,687 individuals, including 40,566 males and 40,121 females, occupying an area of 647.90 sq. km, resulting in a population density of 124.54 persons per sq km. It has been found that 9.86% of the total population lived in towns, while only a minor section of the population accounted for

pastoralism. The majority population consists of the Yem people (90.57%), followed by Oromo (5.41%) and Hadiya (1.27%). The language primarily spoken is Yemsa (72.67%). The bulk of the religious population accounted for Ethiopian Orthodox Christians (63.05%), followed by Islam (27.09%) and Protestants (9.61%) respectively (CSA, 2007). As for basic amenities available, it was found that road infrastructure was poor and accessibility to social amenities was wanting in certain areas due to the predominantly rural nature of the region (CSA, 2007).

It is indicated by the preceding 1994 population and housing census that at that time the total population was 64,852 (CSA, 1994), predominantly of Yem origin (91.87%), with the others being minorities of Oromo and Hadiya people. Yemsa was spoken as the first language, and Orthodox Christianity was the major religion. It was noted that both literacy rates were relatively low and access to educational, hygiene, and sanitary facilities was not satisfactory at that time (CSA, 1994).

Culturally, traditional people who inherit oral traditions, religious and ritual beliefs, practices, and different forms of folk art through an indigenous knowledge system are the Yem. Music is an integral part of the life of the Yem people, where traditional instruments like the Fino are vital instruments used in community ceremonies and festivals. Lives are enriched not only by music but also plays an important role in transmitting historical knowledge and preserving their cultural identity. Despite modernity and foreign influences, many traditional customs prevail, particularly in the rural setting. That is why Yem Zone is considered a good case study due to the continuous use of the instrument as a cultural resource.

3.5. Population, Sample, and Sampling Techniques

Population The population for this study will encompass all individuals and groups connected directly or indirectly to the Fino in Yem Zone, namely those individuals who play the Fino traditionally; those elders who retain historical memories; the users/audience of Fino as an instrument; community leaders involved with culture as an instrument; relevant local professionals and experts involved in cultural conservation. As part of the cultural fabric and society of the Yem people, the population under this study will also include relevant community members and their informal/formal groups and institutions.

Sampling Method and Sample Purposive sampling will be adopted for this study, with the sample chosen based on the ability and readiness to provide relevant information about the Fino as a traditional instrument. The sample is expected to consist of 10-15 people and will include young players of the Fino as well as older, more experienced players, as well as elders and culture enthusiasts. Additionally, the snowball sampling method will be used. This method will depend on the initial informants pointing out further individuals who can best suit the research objectives. This kind of method is helpful in ethnographic studies where trust has to be gained from people and existing social networks are used to access useful information.

In order to maintain privacy for the participants, pseudo-names (codes) were assigned to each of the participants for the entire purpose of collecting information and analyzing it. As you will find through the course of the whole work all participants have been coded and are called as P1, P2, P3 and so on till P7 respectively as *Fino* performers, Elders, Instrument makers and other cultural Experts.

Participant Code	Category	Gender	Role
P1	Fino performer	Male	Senior performer
P2	Elder	Female	Cultural knowledge holder
P3	Instrument maker	Male	Fino maker
P4	Cultural expert	Male	CERS Culture and Tourism Office expert
P5	Fino performer	Female	Performer

Table 1 Participant Codes and Categories

3.6. Data Collection Methods

For this study the researcher aims to produce a holistic understanding of the cultural significance, performance practice, and knowledge transmission associated with the Fino instrument in Yem Zone through a qualitative approach. Semi-structured interviews with traditional Fino players,

cultural elders, community members, and local heritage practitioners are the primary data collection tool. This method allows for directed questioning but gives freedom to participants to share their own oral histories, personal experiences and interpretations of the instrument. Interviews are conducted in the vernacular. Translator assistance is provided if required.

The researcher will also adopt participant observation as a key method for data collection. Cultural events, ceremonies and informal gatherings at which the Fino is played will be attended to understand the contexts of performance and the interactions among musicians and the community as well as the cultural meaning attributed to the instrument. It is through the researcher's participation that the true understanding of the social and cultural context of the Fino can be gathered. The use of audio and visual recording will be employed to document the Fino music, playing styles and performance techniques with the consent of the interviewees, field notes will also be taken.

Complementary data sources will include literature review, existing records and previous ethnographic reports on traditional musical instruments and cultural heritage not only within Ethiopia but also in other relevant African regions and the wider global arena. The diverse approaches adopted for data collection ensure that the research generates rich and triangulated data.

3.7. Data Analysis Methods

The data collected will be analyzed using a qualitative content analysis approach as well as a thematic analysis. The interviews will first be transcribed verbatim and cultural specific terminologies, vernacular expressions and the like shall be preserved in the original dialect before they are translated. Field notes will supplement the transcripts, then a code book will be developed and used for manually coding of all data, initially data will be broken down into analytical units each containing a concept, phrase, sentence or narrative related to construction of the Fino, performance practice, cultural role, transmission of knowledge and so forth. Then thematic analysis will be carried out where similar codes will be aggregated into broader categories like; Cultural identity, ceremonial functions, generational transmission of knowledge and performance styles to mention a few of the themes that will be explored. Analysis will proceed through constant comparison of data so as to extract the major underlying meanings,

connections between the different categories, symbolic meanings of cultural aspects and how each aspect relates to the Fino tradition in Yem Zone.

Audio and visual recordings will be subjected to both aural analysis through which different elements like melodic patterns, rhythmic structures and tones shall be identified and visual analysis through which the researcher's field notes and observations shall be related to different elements of performance like playing style and hand movements. Member checking will also be used for data validation where findings from analysis would be shared with selected interviewees for their feedback and clarification. Triangulation will be employed through analysis of data collected from multiple sources i.e., the interviews, observations and relevant document review in order to establish the veracity of findings.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

Ethical practice is crucial for this study, particularly when dealing with sensitive indigenous cultural traditions. The study will strictly adhere to ethical principles outlined for qualitative field research and ethnomusicology. Prior to commencing the data collection, written or oral informed consent shall be obtained from all participants. Their consent would be based on the researchers explanation of the study' objectives, scope, potential usage and the risks, if any.

Confidentiality and anonymity shall be ensured by removing personal identification information from recordings, transcripts and final write-up, while Pseudonyms will be used for participants unless they grant permission to be named. All audio, visual and photographic materials will be stored securely and accessed by the researcher alone and will only be used for the purpose of academic research.

The researcher will observe local customs, traditions and protocol throughout the study, seek permission and guidance from local elders and community leaders; ensure that research does not undermine local values and does not interrupt local life or cultural practices; not document ceremonies and rituals without explicit permission, nor publicly report any sacred or private knowledge that may not be meant for public consumption.

Finally, the researcher aims at practicing reciprocity by disseminating the findings back to the community in appropriate formats, such as community presentations or written summary reports. The intention is that the research should be a mutually beneficial process both for the researcher and the community of Yem.

3.9. Summary of the Methodology Chapter

This chapter has presented the research methodology that will guide the investigation into the Fino traditional wind instrument and its cultural meaning in Yem Zone. An interpretivist paradigm and a qualitative ethnographic approach has been adopted for the research, encompassing both data collection and data analysis techniques. The use of a mix of interviewing, participant observation, audio-visual documentation, literature review, qualitative content and thematic analyses and other research procedures have been adopted for the systematic collection of comprehensive data relevant to the Fino instrument. The research would sample informants purposefully and by snow ball techniques so as to ensure reliable and significant data. A significant amount of attention has been paid to the ethics of the study with regards to obtaining consent, confidentiality, cultural respect and reciprocity to the Yem community so that a comprehensive and credible account of the research is put forth.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the information that was gathered from the field is presented and analyzed, with a view to responding to the research questions stipulated in the previous chapter. The Fino, an indigenous traditional wind instrument found in Yem, is looked at in terms of cultural, social, and educational aspects, and its place in the Yem culture is also highlighted. The primary data collected were obtained through semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and audio-visual recordings, and notes from casual chats and available archive documents were also included.

The presentation is thematic and the following are the topics which were studied in the field work: 1. History & Genesis of Fino 2. Musicality & Construction of Fino 3. Social Status and Ritual Application 4. Social Perception towards Fino and Music 5. Fino and Music Education/Conservation. Quotes have been incorporated to get the perspectives of local members and thus enhancing the validity of the findings. Where it seemed appropriate, explanations of terms, context, or cultural references that are used locally or have special symbolic meaning are provided. The presentation is organized in this fashion to clearly convey not only the wealth of traditional culture embedded in the Fino but also to facilitate a logical transition to the interpretation that is undertaken in the subsequent chapter.

4.1. Historical Background and Origin of the Fino

The Fino is a traditional, end-blown, wooden musical instrument that is widely used in Yem. Its origins are said to lie far back in time. The story goes that it is remembered by elders when the Fino was first made by craftsmen. Local woods from the Yem highland forest, mostly juniper trees, were used in the making of the instrument, and indeed skill and knowledge were put into it by the maker, as it was a direct product of the Yem peoples' communion with their environment. The woods and the decoration and other parts used in the making of this instrument all came from the Yem land, each with its own cultural significance and symbolic meaning.

Field interviews indicated that initially, the Fino served two primary functions: signaling and as a musical instrument. Historically, the Fino would be used for signaling and calling people for community functions and was used during important social occasions or difficult times (emergencies). With time, the Fino evolved more into a ceremonial, dance and musical entertainment instrument that is still used during rites of passage, harvesting ceremonies and other life-cycle rituals.

During field interviews with elderly musicians, melodies that represent specific emotions and meanings through the Fino were highlighted. Some of the Fino melodies were played and sung to represent laughter, joy and camaraderie, while other melodies conveyed grief and spiritual harmony. The importance of the Fino as part of the intangible cultural heritage was reinforced by the relation of the sound, meaning and the culture itself.

Though there is little written about the Fino, similar ethnomusicological findings on African traditional wind instruments were corroborated with my field experience on the Fino, in the sense that the Fino not only represents a musical artifact but is also a part of Yem culture. Because of the little existing literature on the Fino, the conservation of elder knowledge became of even more importance as this is mostly conveyed orally.

4.2. Construction and Musical Characteristics of the Fino

The Fino is a handcrafted instrument, traditionally made using native hardwoods from Yem, which may include *Juniperus procera* (African pencil cedar) and other tough but resonant timbers. It is traditionally made using sharpened blades, knives, and heated metal rods that are pushed through wooden blocks to hollow it out to a specified diameter that will yield a certain tone in the traditional system. The Fino is generally cylindrical in shape, but variations of this may occur depending on the individual craftsman and the key of the Fino. They are also usually decorated, mostly through carving or inscription, and patterns often take on nature or abstract symbols from Yem culture.

A major characteristic of the Fino is its timbre, which can be described as warm and breathy, and its pitch range is about one octave (though the range can be expanded with advanced technique and control over breathing). Tuned aurally, no two Finos sound exactly the same. Common patterns of play include ARMA, WOGOR, and WAKETA, which have specific

meanings to the Yem people as they involve both rhythm and melody. The melodies used are folk melodies belonging to various folk scales prevalent in Yem music, and play takes on various speeds and expressions depending on the context of play.

Fino performance is heavily reliant on breath control, articulation, fingering, and manipulation of finger holes. Most Fino music belongs to a particular kind of indigenous modal scales that resemble Ethiopian scales known as Qignit. Different kinds of Finos (e.g., the 10-hole Papoo Fino) yield different scales depending on how finger holes are covered or left open, and the breath is modulated to alter pitch. While particular themes and moods were expressed through individual tunes, some had specific cultural significance tied to ceremonies. It is generally played in conjunction with the drums, rattles and often with chanting or singing to create the textures and rhythms which dominate Yem music. Every element of this instrument, from the selection of the woods used, to its shaping, the cutting of finger holes and finally the creation of sound, is demonstrative of the combination of innate talent and passed on knowledge prevalent throughout the culture.

4.2.1. Musical Transcription and Analysis of Selected Fino Melodies

The tonal construction of the Fino does not precisely follow that of the Western modes but is indeed indigenous to an Ethiopian scale called Qignit, or Ethiopian modal scale. Different types of Fino instruments (e.g., the ten-hole Papoo Fino) may be produced with varying pitches depending on the structure and design of the instrument itself and indeed how they are played. However, they are largely pentatonic in nature, or perhaps a scale closer to pentatonic, and can be manipulated to perform the various functions mentioned previously depending on the player's skills of blowing and fingering. To better analyze the musical characteristics of the Fino, the melodic renditions called ARMA, AMNEBO, WOGOR, YEYE, and WAKETA were transcribed from field recordings. This study aims at the analysis of the features that characterize Fino music in terms of tonal organization, phraseology, rhythmic construction, and melodic contour. While the full transcription of melodies can be found in the Appendix, excerpts from selected melodies are included here to inform the discussion (Field work Data, 2025).

4.2.1.1. Arma

The Arma melody is relatively limited in range with characteristic motifs, hinting at a simple form but rhythmically rich configuration. While not as distinct as the Amnebo, the Arma has a pentatonic character in its tonal framework. Based on the interval structure and shape, the Arma is likely closely related to the Anchihoeye Qignit. Melodically it relies on two or three principal pitches and demonstrates more function than scalar construction, lending itself to a communal and work function where rhythm is prioritized over melodic interest.

Audio link at: <https://tinyurl.com/myta8dzw>



Figure 1: Excerpt from the transcription of Arma melody (Author’s fieldwork, 2025)

In the excerpt there appears to be a preponderance of scalar motion restricted to a limited ambitus. The phrase ends on a drone which is used to consolidate the modality. The return of the initial phrase is an element of cyclic return common in group Fino performance. Breathing is indicated in the natural separation of melodic elements.

4.2.1.2. Amnebo

The Amnebo tune is predominantly pentatonic and "all the tones are whole tones" (omitting semitones). It contains five main pitch classes, and its intervals and overall melodic shape imply a distinct relation to the Anchihoje Qignit, notably in the descending motives and the centered tone quality of the melodic phrases. This song has a definite tonal center and each melodic phrase finally returns to a sort of "home tone," in a clearly resolutorial motive. As a New Year (Hebo) tune, it has the symbolically appropriate connection to cycles, new life and completion. The excerpt below is of the core thematic material of the tune.

Audio link at: <https://tinyurl.com/ycyy59xk>



Figure 2: Excerpt from the transcription of Amnebo melody (Author's fieldwork, 2025)

This transcription shows an alternation of melodic rise and fall, indicating a relatively balanced melodic curve. The melodic phrase endings are characterized by long, blown tones that taper with breath control and naturally suggest cadential places. The rhythm is moderately even, which aids ensemble playing in a controlled fashion. The harmonic structure is modal, which, similar to other traditional Fino pieces, supports structure and unity in a ceremonial context.

4.2.1.3. Wogor

Wogor, presents a somewhat more mobile melodic contour, with each direction of melodic movement and subtle internal alteration. It will be convenient to look at the main formal features in this fragment:

Wogor is tonal to a somewhat more open degree, with an obvious variation of pitch depending on performer manipulation. Although it remains pentatonic, some melodic inflections give it a "flattened" feel somewhat like that of **Anchihoye Qignit**. Melodically and phraseologically quite varied, this melodic style could be useful in a transitional or emotionally sensitive ritual situation.

Audio link at: <https://tinyurl.com/52esfp84>



Figure 3: Excerpt from the transcription of Wogor melody (Author's fieldwork, 2025)

4.2.1.4. Yeye

The Yeye melody uses repetitive cyclical phrases and repeated melodic units so that rhythm is prioritized over harmonic progression. Its pitch organization appears to be centered around a

pentatonic scale and emphasizes a central note and neighboring intervals. Intervallic relationships and the general melodic contours indicate a strong affinity with the **Anchihoye Qignit**. The repetitiveness and simple nature of this piece is an ideal feature to support dance and participation, as this enables the players and the audience to become attuned to both the rhythms and movements.

The melody of Yeye uses smaller phrase units and tends to be lightly articulated. Below is the melodic core of this piece.

Audio link at: <https://tinyurl.com/msa3mx3h>



Figure 4: Excerpt from the transcription of Yeye melody (Author's fieldwork, 2025)

From the transcription it is apparent the melody is composed of very short segments, shaped by breath control. The melody line largely moves step-wise and uses few leaps in interval. Repetition of the central idea is found, providing unity and coherence, and rhythm is subtly varied to offer nuance and expressivity. The end of the melodic phrase returns to the tonic note, demonstrating tonal centering in performance practice.

4.2.1.5. **Waketa**

Waketa possesses a melodic line with a much greater amount of variation in pitch and emotional expressivity. The melodic style can be seen as a pentatonic mode. There are few clues that might suggest a **Tizita** 5th mode, although its emotive and rather plaintive tone could point to some semblance of its qualities. Shifting back and forth between higher and lower tonal areas can build tension and release, thus this melody can be employed in contexts both festive and quasi-religious.

The melody appears to possess either a call and response structure, or at least a statement-answer structure, something we would anticipate from traditional indigenous Ethiopian ensemble music. The terminal notes solidify the tone and thus provide stability in an area. The short yet flexible phrase allows the music to adapt to almost any length of religious ceremony.

Audio link at: <https://tinyurl.com/4z3hpa2e>



Figure 5: Excerpt from the transcription of *Waketa* melody (Author's fieldwork, 2025)

Melodically, a moderately limited pitch range with repetition of motive is revealed by the Fino transcription. The scalar tendencies identified in other Fino repertoires seem to correlate with the limited tonal palette. Relatively balanced steps and intervals are alternated by the melody, which create the contours of the tune.

In the Fino, modal identification does not present a fixed absolute but is based on an interpretation derived from structural and comparative analysis of other Ethiopian Qignit systems. The nature of Fino tonality relies on oral tradition rather than on any standardized tuning or specific fixed pitch measurement, which varies between musicians and instruments.

4.3. Classification of the Fino

The *Fino* is defined by P1, a senior Fino performer, in two distinct categories: one by structure and one by the number of finger holes. Within the classification by structure, there are two categories: the Arki Fino and the Ferfeku. The Ferfeku has two further subdivisions: the larger Umuzu, which is used during more important celebrations, such as Yem New Year (Amnebo) and is usually bigger, and the Smaller Ferfeku, which is used more in casual settings. The classification by number of finger holes categorizes the Fino into four types: Papoo, which has 10 holes and generally carries the main melody; Techoo, with 4 finger holes; Wolgu, with 3 finger holes; and Fatu, with 2 finger holes. The function of each type differs: the Papoo is performed as the main melodic instrument, while the other four are used as harmonic support or rhythmic instruments.

The overall style of performance seems to highlight the freedom of the players to manipulate the tempo and phrases to suit the occasion; in ensemble playing, performances are often conducted alongside drums such as the Gudo/Shorodo and with other percussive items like shakers or vocal elements, such as chants, which produce a diverse soundscape reflective of

Yem communal musical practice.

Together with the Fino, other traditional Yem wind instruments are also performed, namely the Tuturu (a horn usually made from the horn of a deer) and the Gudo/Shorodo drums. Although not classified as a Fino, the Tuturu performs along with other wind instruments like Fino and Ferfeku for funerals, emergencies, or any public religious events as an auxiliary sound.

4.3.1. Arki Fina (Heboni Fina)

This wind instrument is only used during the festival of Hebo. These wind instruments are called the Arki Fina (large Fina) and are made from bamboo. They come in many sizes ranging from 10cm up to 1 meter and make sixteen various tones which have various melodies to them. The melodies that are made from the Fina are called Amnebo, Yeye, Wogor and Arma and the first three mentioned (Amnebo, Yeye and Wogor) are used in the beginning of the Hebo festival at the start of each season. A Fina is made up of 40 or so players all of whom blow the Fina at once and it is played as a band.



Figure 6: Arki Fina (Heboni Fina), a type of traditional Fino instrument used by the Yem people.

Source: Central Ethiopia Regional State Yem Zone Culture and Tourism Directive (2025).

4.3.2. Ferfeku

The material is reeds and the smallest one is of size 8cm. The size ranges from 8cm to 20cm or 25cm. The Ferfeku are well carved, measured out and bundled in eights, sorted by tone and bound together in three divisions called Aba (father), Ento(mother) and Bu'usa(children). The Ferfeku have characteristic melodies and tunes like: Waketa, Arma, Amnebo, Wogur, Nakalananer and other tunes. The Ferfeku can also be classified into Umuzu which are larger ones played at New Year (Hebo) festivals but now used on a lot of occasions while smaller ones called Ferfeku are often played during feasts and as well as public occasions.



Figure 7: Ferfeku

Source: Central Ethiopia Regional State Yem Zone Culture and Tourism Directive (2025).

4.4. Makers of the Fino

According to P3, instrument maker, the traditional way of making Fino instrument is largely regarded as being introduced by the Fugger family that is already known for their craftsmanship in making pottery, household tools and blacksmith, and considered as the inventor and caretaker of Yem music and music instruments. But now, it is not only their family that is engaged in the making of Fino instruments. The function of fathers, elders, and even many others have included

the role of maker, along with teaching of the instrument to their junior.

4.5. Cultural Significance of the Fino in Yem Society

As explained by P2, an elder with more than 40 years of experience in traditional ceremonies, explained that The Fino plays a very significant role in Yem society, where it is more than just a musical instrument but an important sign of identity to the people. The Fino produces a melody that is able to recall a sense of belonging and heritage among the Yem people. This instrument is conventionally played in every event and occasion, be it marriage, harvesting festival or coming of age ceremonies, so as not only to produce amusement but as an effective way of transmitting information, where lessons are learned through stories. The sound is not just there to entertained, but a medium of passing down knowledge from the elders to the young ones.

In rituals, the Fino represents blessings, peace and unity, and is often played by elders, whom the society views as cultural custodians. It marks different phases of life in Yem society, such as at initiating stages into adulthood, and at welcoming of the members to the society. Such involvement clearly defines music, in this context, the Fino, as something that is fundamental to the spiritual and psychological well-being of the Yem people. Playing of Fino instrument has always been linked to praying, dancing and gesture, thus leading to the evolution of Fino music as a composite cultural practice. The importance of Fino in oral tradition cannot be overemphasized as, songs played are usually characterized by melodies that are derived from a rich tradition, and each melody carries a meaning of its own that relates to a particular event or character, and also at times to ethical considerations that has become part of the Yem philosophy of life. Thus, the Fino instrument is considered a vehicle for carrying and passing down oral history and cultural practices of the Yem people. This also proves very vital in facilitating group activities such as cultivation and herding as it creates morale among members. This instrument will continue to serve as a symbol of Yem people's heritage despite drastic cultural changes. Although the modern era and foreign cultures attempt to denigrate the Yem culture, yet there are efforts by organizing festival programs, in schools to promote this Yem instrument and heritage.

In summary, the significance of the Fino to the Yem people is deep and profound, making it to be regarded as a vital tool in storing Yem culture, knowledge, and even the very definition of identity among the Yem people. Its sound still echoes among the valleys of the Yem Zone and within the memory of its people.

4.6. Role of the Fino in Music Education

The Fino has also played and still play a great role in music education, both informal and formal to the Yem people. Traditionally, masters taught the Fino to their apprentices through the method of demonstration and learning from others; an apprentice followed a master closely observing his playing techniques and actions. In Yem, learning by demonstration method is a very crucial aspect of learning many things; hence, the learning of Fino is also through this process which often includes the transfer of stories, fables and moral values related to the Fino itself to the apprentice through demonstration (Fieldwork Data, 2025).

Due to the lack of conventional music notation, it is understood that a Yem musician acquire skills like adequate breath control, fingering technique, along with the elementary and simple melody through learning and repetition. After that, he is guided on complex melody construction, and later on, through improvising. Competence for a Yem musician is evaluated not only in terms of technical proficiency but more importantly, by how the player can convey emotions and carry his stories through his music which represents the very essence of Yem musical aesthetics. Masters have often stressed the fact that a good player of Fino should be 'telling stories through the Fino' where these stories are basically collective stories of Yem people; stories about their common history, culture and belief.

More importantly, Fino is a great tool for developing further musical abilities; be it rhythmic construction, melodic creation, aural perception, coordination, and other music skills through participatory activities like playing and singing with a group of musicians during dancing or any ceremony. In modern era, Fino instrument is also considered very important in formal music education. There have been attempts by school and various community centers within Yem Zone to conduct courses, workshops and competitions for young people to learn how to play Fino as part of culture promotion efforts in schools. Through these, students are trained technically and

their awareness of the instrument as a cultural emblem is fostered by also making them participate in the stories and beliefs that are related to the playing of the instrument, and be more keen in knowing more about its history and evolution. More formalization efforts have been made in educating children in schools on Fino where masters are used as the main educator, and other forms like competitions, shows are included to improve their motivation and passion for playing Fino.

To conclude, Fino music instrument is undoubtedly playing a remarkable role in music education, both formally and informally for the Yem people as it also contributes to the dissemination of knowledge on their culture and heritage.

4.7. Comparative Analysis: The Derashe Fila and the Yem Fino

Before discussing the cultural role of Fino it is important to place it in the context of wind instrument traditions of southern Ethiopia. A stark contrast and parallel case is the Fila of the Derashe, Kusume, Mosiye and Mashole people who live in the Gardula (Gidole) region. Fila is also a bamboo based aerophone and serves the same function as Fino in both identity and community cohesiveness, as well as being symbols of survival of local culture, but differs in the classification systems, contexts of performance and symbolism which illustrates the interplay between culture and musical expression:

The Yem Fino is structurally defined into two kinds: Arki Fina and Ferfeku. Fino is further subdivided into Umuzu and the small Ferfeku, all having ritual and symbolic significance as each kind is related to specific occasions-funerals, wedding, coronation or the New Year celebration (Hebo). As opposed to Yem Fino, the Derashe Fila is not symbolically defined, but rather practically defined by the sizes and pitches of its 24 (or even 48) ensemble of instruments which are ranked from the lowest casanta/tontolia to the highest fentia. These instruments form three tonal layers: Santa (deep tones), Atantia (medium tones) and Fitfta (high tones), that complement each other to create rich and thick layered polyphonies.

Performance differences and how they reveal culture can be also contrasted. While Yem people use Fino mainly in formal, solemn or ritually important occasions such as death ceremonies, and

life cycle rituals, the melodies of Fino bear a deep ritual meaning. The Fila is rather intimately associated with jubilations, energetic movements, and inclusive community spirit where musicians and spectators wear colorful traditional costumes and dance to the beating rhythm of stampings and shouting and clapping and Fila songs were often sung by women in equal participation as much as men and sometimes women even led the performance (an obvious illustration of equality). Sword (luda), shield and the other wind instrument, Lelata are typical musical instruments that signal transitions in Fila music performances.

The prominent cultural position of the Fila of Derashe is climaxed with the annual festival named "Fila festival". During this annual festival musicians and dancers of multiple ethnicities gather in Gidole and celebration unity through music. They strengthen the sense of identity and solidarity through music. In other words, it is equivalent to Hebo of Yem people where Fino play central part. It has to be taken into consideration that both serve as an archive of community identity and memory.

The two instruments are contrasted also with regard to how local traditions can come into conflict with globalized realities and their impact upon preservation and identity politics. Although the Fino is not a nation-wide recognized instrument, it has remained on the fringe and is at risk of being excluded, but Fila has become more recognizable nationally, supported also by the Derashe Woreda Culture and tourism Bureau.

4.8. Challenges in Preserving the Fino Tradition

The preservation of the Fino tradition is not free of social, economic, cultural, and other factors beyond Yem zone. Firstly there is an enormous generational gap: while there is a decreasing number of people playing Fino, younger generations are, largely due to mass media and availability of Western musical instruments, more interested in new music styles and consequently less in traditional music. Traditional instruments like Fino have thus begun to be considered irrelevant and old fashioned. Consequently, there is a diminishing pool of musicians capable of transmitting the practice of Fino playing.

Secondly, there are economic reasons why making and playing Fino is no longer economically viable. An instrument is not easy to craft; it takes a long time, skill and the right kind of materials-wood and/or bamboo which nowadays has to be imported from afar. Since craftsmanship is not appreciated or rather financed with a decent amount of money there are hardly enough people undertaking this activity; it is also to be remembered that most Yem people do not play music for financial remuneration and can no longer continue to do so since the opportunity to do it with pay is becoming rare.

Thirdly, there are urbanization and the problem of migrants that have disrupted the social network of Fino transmission. The movement of young generations to the cities has distanced them from the community settings in which this music has traditionally been learned. As a consequence of displacement from cultural and community centers the teaching process through master-apprentice interaction cannot take place properly as oral transmission needs proximity.

Fourthly, there is the problem of lack of formal documentation of music. The Fino, its construction methods and how they are played along with their symbolisms only exist in the minds of the elder masters. Without sufficient transcription, written materials or sound and video recordings, this cultural heritage is prone to decay. Reluctance by traditional musicians to teach their art due to fears of cultural appropriation and misinterpretation further complicates the issue.

Finally, globalization, although promoting hybridization, also poses threats if they threaten the identity and traditional knowledge of local cultures. It makes the Yem people increasingly inclined to abandon their local practices, which, as said above, might further be pushed to serve as mere ornamental expression in occasional festivals rather than as living expressions. Despite the aforementioned challenges, there are a number of opportunities as well: community culture associations, the regional government and NGOs now pay a lot of attention to preserve this intangible heritage. However, for success of preservation of Fino it is imperative that community members are adequately included, that intergenerational exchanges between elders and youth be facilitated and that these endeavors be supported with material resources.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary of the Study

This research explored the Fino, a traditional wind instrument, in the socio-cultural context of Yem Special Woreda (now Yem Zone) in general, and specifically Saja City Administration. Three research questions guided the study: (1) the origins of the Fino and its evolution in the Yem culture; (2) the functions of the Fino in traditional ceremonies, rituals, and communal events; (3) the construction and transmission of the Fino from generation to generation.

This study used qualitative ethnographic research design methodology with participant observation, in-depth interviews, and music transcription. The aim of this research design was to obtain an in-depth understanding of the Fino not only as a musical instrument but also as an institution of cultural importance to the Yem people.

It was revealed that Fino, a traditional communicative and ritual instrument in Yem culture has strong historical significance to the community and the oral narratives of the Yem people identify it as the instrument that plays significant role in unifying people with its powerful cultural meanings. The categorizations of Fino into Arki Fina and Ferfeku (with subtypes Umuzu, and small Ferfeku), indicate an indigenous taxonomy system of classifying this musical instrument according to its aesthetic value and functional differences.

It was discovered that Fino has various ritual and social functions which are integral parts of seasonal festivals, social get-togethers and rituals in Yem culture. Some characteristic melodies were transcribed such as Arma, Amnebo, Wogor, Yeye and Waketa which reveal commonalities among themselves with regard to the modal orientation, cyclical repetitive phrasing, breath controlled phrasing, and tone stability. These features express unity and continuity in the ritual dimension of Fino.

It was found that the constructional know-how of the Fino (regarding selection of the material, its treatment, shaping methods, tuning practice and performance techniques), are traditionally handed down from one generation to the next through the observation and apprenticeship practice. Nevertheless, this tradition is under the threat of the modern development and environmental changing patterns of life and interests.

The findings contribute to the scholarship on ethnomusicology by means of recording, transcription, and interpretation of an under-researched traditional musical instrument and it reinforce the call for conservation of cultural heritage.

5.2. Conclusion

From this research study, the following conclusions can be made: Fino is a dynamic cultural institution not just a mere musical instrument and that it is inextricably intertwined with the historical continuity, social values, and ritual cosmology of the Yem people. The structural characteristic of the Fino in terms of its cyclical repetitive patterns, modal stability, breath controlled phrasing is intrinsically related to its ceremonial and communal importance in the Yem culture.

Fino functions on multiple planes; that of organized sound, the social practice of music, and its symbolic significance. Through its performance, it helps in unifying people, reaffirming collective identity, and transmitting cultural tradition. The ritual meaning symbolized by musical idioms like Arma, Amnebo, Wogor, Yeye, and Waketa, indicates that musical structure and meaning can't be separated.

Furthermore, the Fino craftsman uses indigenous knowledge to produce the instrument that takes into account aesthetic, cultural, and social concerns as well as environmental concerns, and this knowledge can best be passed down to other generations through observation and apprenticeship.

Put simply, this would indicate that the tradition of Fino not only saved a piece of music from dying out but would also have prevented an indispensable part of the intangible heritage of Yem from disappearing for good.

5.3. Recommendations

In light of the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are suggested:

❖ Documentation:

The Yem Zone culture and tourism office ought to develop systematically documented records through audio/visual recording, music transcription and archiving oral tradition on the Fino tradition.

❖ Intergenerational knowledge transmission:

Community-based apprenticeship and mentoring systems should be introduced to ensure the transmission of Fino craftsmanship and musical knowledge between elders and younger generations.

❖ To the curriculum:

The schools and other education centers must introduce traditional musical practices of the indigenous peoples including Fino in their teaching system for the survival and continuity of the cultures.

❖ To encourage local cultural festivals:

Periodic public performances with the Fino playing should be encouraged.

❖ Continued use of resources:

Effective and sustainable use and conservation of materials to make Fino should be considered for coming generations.

❖ Institutional response:

Regional and national authorities ought to recognize Fino as an important intangible cultural property of Ethiopia. Hence they should offer adequate financial and technical support.

❖ Supplementary studies:

Comparative study of Fino and comparable wind instruments among the neighboring communities as well as detailed acoustic and cosmological study of Fino music system can be suggested for further research.

References

- Akuno, E. A. (2005). *Issues in music education in Africa*. Emak Music Services.
- Alemu, D. (2015). Cultural transformation and indigenous music practices in Ethiopia. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 27(2), 145–160.
- Alemu, T. (2016). Indigenous knowledge and oral traditions in Ethiopian music. *Ethiopian Journal of the Social Sciences and Humanities*, 12(1), 55–72.
- Ashenafi, K. (1971). *The music of Ethiopia: Its development and cultural setting*. Michigan State University Press.
- Ashenafi, K. (2010). Indigenous musical instruments and their cultural significance in Ethiopia. *African Music Review*, 9(1), 78–95.
- Boas, F. (1940). *Race, language and culture*. University of Chicago Press.
- Central Statistical Agency. (1994). *Population and housing census of Ethiopia 1994*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Author.
- Central Statistical Agency. (2007). *Population and housing census of Ethiopia 2007*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Author.
- Finnegan, R. (1992). *Oral traditions and the verbal arts: A guide to research practices*. Routledge.
- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. Basic Books.
- Getahun, M. (2022). Traditional musical practices in Southern Ethiopia. *Journal of Ethiopian Cultural Studies*, 8(1), 33–52.
- Hall, S. (1990). Cultural identity and diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 222–237). Lawrence & Wishart.
- Kubik, G. (1994). *Theory of African music* (Vol. 1). University of Chicago Press. Merriam, A. P. (1964). *The anthropology of music*. Northwestern University Press. Nketia, J. H. K. (1974). *The music of Africa*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- Shelemay, K. K. (1986). Music, ritual, and falasha history. *Asian Music*, 17(2), 1–34. Shelemay,

- K. K. (1989). *Music, ritual, and Falasha history*. Michigan State University Press.
- Shelemay, K. K. (2006). Soundscapes: Exploring music in a changing world. *Journal of Ethnomusicology*, 50(2), 288–300.
- Tadesse, B. (2019). Cultural diversity and musical traditions in Southern Ethiopia. *Ethiopian Journal of Cultural Studies*, 6(2), 101–120.
- Teshome A. (2019). *Music education in Ethiopia: Challenges and prospects*. Addis Ababa University Press.
- Agawu, K. (2003). *Representing African music: Postcolonial notes, queries, positions*. Routledge.
- The South Nation Cultural Bureau (2021).
- Warren, D. M. (1991). Using indigenous knowledge in agricultural development. *World Bank Discussion Papers*.
- Worku, H. (2018). Music perception and cultural identity in Ethiopia. *Journal of African Arts and Society*, 5(1), 23–41.
- Yonas, B., & Bekele, G. (2015). Traditional wind instruments in Ethiopia: A descriptive study. *Ethiopian Journal of Musicology*, 3(1), 12–29.

APPENDIX – A

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Date and Place: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____ Sex: _____

Address: _____ Tele: _____

I. Introduction and Purpose of the Interview

This work is a thesis by a graduate student in partial fulfilment of a Master of Arts in Music by Addis Ababa University at Yared School of Music. Generally, the purpose of this research is to identify and to analyze the social, cultural and historical aspects of the Fino instrument on the cultural heritage of Yem Special Woreda. Your support with your extensive knowledge and experience will be highly valuable for the successful completion of this study. In an attempt to gather qualitative data on the Fino instrument from elders, musicians, instrument makers and from residents in Yem zone, the researcher asked questions to elicit more qualitative responses which can lead to subsequent follow-up questions to the respondents to acquire information based on responses.

A. Background Information of Participant

- I. Could you introduce yourself by your age, occupation and community role?
- II. How long have you been part of the Fino community (as a player, maker or audience)?
- III. Who told you about the Fino?

B. History of Fino and the Cultural context of Fino

- I. What do you know about the origins of the Fino instrument?
- II. What are the uses of the Fino instrument now and what were they in the past?
- III. Is there any myth or legends about the Fino instrument?
- IV. What is the meaning of the Fino in the Yem community?

C. Material, construction and craftsmanship

- I. What are the materials used to make a Fino?
- II. Step-by-step, what is the process to make the instrument?
- III. Who are traditionally the Fino makers and how did you learn to make Fino?
- IV. Are there different kinds and dimensions of the Fino instrument? If so, briefly clarify.

D. Playing technique, musical characteristics and context

- I. How is the Fino played (techniques including finger techniques and breathing techniques)?
- II. What are the common melodies or the musical styles/modes of Fino playing?
- III. Could you please elaborate on melodies such as Amnebo, Arma, Wogor, Yeye and Waketa?
- IV. Is the Fino played alone or in a group? If played in a group, how did/do people coordinate in group playing?

E. Cultural functions of Fino

- I. What are the main purposes for which the Fino is played?
- II. In what context (ceremonies, festivals, weddings, funerals, parties etc) is the Fino usually performed?
- III. Are the different melodies used for different functions?
- IV. How does the playing of the Fino instrument relate to the sense of community or identity of the Yem people?

F. Transmission and Learning of Fino skills

- I. How do younger people learn the Fino playing and making skills nowadays?
- II. Is the transmission of the Fino skills oral or are there writings available?
- III. Are there masters or designated teachers of Fino in the community?

G. Current issues and Challenges

- I. How do young people regard the Fino today?
- II. What kind of problem(s) would you identify in the Fino tradition today?
- III. What is the impact of modernization in the playing of Fino instrument among the Yem community?

H. Future of Fino tradition

- I. What can be done to ensure the preservation of the Fino tradition?
- II. Should the Fino instrument be introduced in the school curriculum? Why or why not?
- III. Are there any current activities/initiatives you undertake to propagate the Fino tradition?

I. Additional Insights

- I. Anything else we can know more about the Fino instrument that you may like to share with us?

APPENDIX – B

ARMA MELODY

 = 120
Allegretto



APPENDIX – C

AMNEBO MELODY

 = 130
Allegretto

Piccolo



APPENDIX – D

WOGOR MELODY

 = 120
Allegretto



APPENDIX – E

YEYE MELODY

 = 130
Allegretto



APPENDIX – F

WAKETA MELODY

 = 110
Moderato

Maestro



Declaration

This is to declare that the present thesis has not been submitted for degree in any other University and this is the result of my own hard work and research. I have done all the work including citation, acknowledgement of sources by taking all the necessary sources from. The research design, fieldwork, data collection, musical transcription, analysis and interpretation of data discussed and presented in the thesis are all my own effort and original work.

Name of the candidate: Atnatiyos Neway

Signature _____

Date of Submission _____