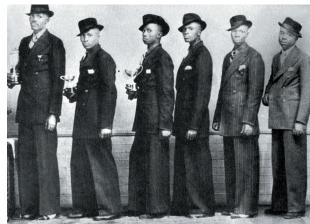
MUSIC AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Every culture in world history has had its own music for ritual, work and entertainment. Music can help illustra and dramatize the meeting of culture:

Case Study: Solomon Linda's Mbub

The story of Solomon Linda's song Mbublis a cautionary tale about how Western culture can borrow and transform to work of an indigenous artist

- •Solomon Linda was born in the Zulu territory of South Africa in 1909.
- •He founded a singing group calle Original Evening Bi.
- •In 1939, a talent scout invited the Evening Bir to a recording studio. In the studio, Linda made up the son Mbub on the spot
- •The 78 r.p.m. recording of Mbubl was the first African record to sell 100,000 copie:
- •The American folk singer Pete Seeger recorded an arrangement of the song with his gro! The Weave. Mispronouncing the lyrics, Seeger changed the title t Wimowe. It became a worldwide hit
- •Eventually, over 150 groups recorded their own version
- •In 1961, the American songwriter George Weiss took the last section of Linda's improvisation and turned it into the melody, setting it to the words "The lion sleeps tonigh"
- •In 1994, Disney's film version of The Lion Kin included Weiss' version on the soundtrack
- •In 2004, Solomon Linda's descendants filed a lawsui against Disney and Weiss' publishers. Linda's full story wa revealed: He signed away the rights t Mbublin 1952 for the modern equivalent of 87 cents. He lived in poverty, workin as a cleaning man. He died in 1962 with \$22 in his banl account. His wife, who was illiterate, again signed away the rights in 1982. While the Lindas lived in poverty, The Lion Sleeps Tonight was earning millions of dollars in royaltie
- Thanks in part to the investigative reporting of Riar Malan of Rolling Sto|magazine, there was a groundswell c support for the Linda family. In February 2006, the family was awarded royalties from 1987 to the present, ending t dispute



Solomon Linda (furthest left) and th Original Evening Bi

(Source: "In the Jungle, the Unjust Jungle, a Small Victory," front page article in The New York Tim, March 22, 2006)

Class Lesson:

•Play Solomon Linda's original recorded version, available on "Mbube Roots (Zulu Choral Music from South Africa," Rounder Select #5025. Compare it with Pete Seeger's version, available on "Pete Seeger's Greatest Hits" (Sony 65711 and Disney's version in The Lion King (Disney B0000CABJ2).

How does the song change—in the way it is performed, in its emotional effect—when it is transferred to Western culture becomes "commercial"

Describe the circumstances of how Linda gave up to the rights to his song, which became a worldwide hit. How wou have been fair to compensate hir

Further Study:

Hungarian composers Bela Bartok and Zoltan Kodaly explored the countryside of their native land, recording at transcribing folk music. Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos journeyed into the heart of the Amazon jungle in search indigenous song. Americans Ruth Crawford Seeger and Alan Lomax visited remote regions of Appalachia and other are to document and help preserve songs passed down through many generations of frontier pe