Writing Against Exile: A Chronotopic Reading of the Autobiographies of Miriam Makeba, Joe Mogotsi and Hugh Masekela

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To my parents.
In loving memory.

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Except for referenced quotations, this dissertation is my own work.

ABSTRACT

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This dissertation analyses the autobiographies of Miriam Makeba, Joe Mogotsi and Hugh Masekela. The story of these formerly exiled musicians' lives as musicians who embodied the urbanising and eclectic black musical ethos of the 1950s onward has been integral to the music historiography on this era. The exilic trajectory of their story also has political resonance, as it parallels the shifts in structures of power characteristic of apartheid South Africa. Popular discourses that construct and narrate an incrementally conscientizing South African populist culture through this period have therefore also represented the musicians, through written and visual material, with this political resonance in mind.

The musicians' autobiographies, however, articulate discourses of the nation from positions other these. These other positions are interanimated by literary, musical and socio-political discourses that already pervade the South African historical sphere. This informs the dialogic interplay of time, space and character in their texts, which I examine using the literary figure of the chronotope as a perceptual tool for their reading. Through analysis, I unpack how time becomes symbolically charged and space becomes mythologized in the autobiographies, how departure and eventual exile are narrated, and how the subsequent chronotopic rupture created by exile affects narration of home. Reading the struggle for authorship and authority evident in the texts' vacillation between biographical and autobiographical 'truth', the possible significances towards which this struggle points for a (re)interpretation of South Africa's (hi)story of exile permeates the subject and process of this research.

Contents

Introduction

In the African National Congress's weekly electronic newsletter, dated 25 June-1 July, 2004, a letter from South Africa's current President, Thabo Mbeki, identifies what he sees as a grave error in the country's historiography and delivers an injunction: "Our historians must have courage to speak the truth"[1]. This error involves June 26, 1955, the date of the signing of the Freedom Charter[2], whose downplaying in the public memory, Mbeki states, is due to "the evolution of our struggle". Correcting this error, he continues, would "ensure that our youth has access to the rich history of struggle in our country for human brotherhood and sisterhood, liberty and peace". The occasion of the letter is the promotion of a historical volume produced by the South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET), *The Road to Democracy, Vol. 1*, whose mandate is to record the history of 'our' struggle from 1960 onward. The demotion of the Freedom Charter to the margins of history is an unfortunate omission that, for Mbeki, is rectifiable[3]. He proposes several directives that would correct this omission, improve South African historiography in general, and reveal 'the truth' of the country's past. Briefly summarized, this truth would be arrived at by the historians' tracing of "the errors of our [*sic*] movement ... and ... the weaknesses of the Revolution"; by gathering more information about the struggle; by including dissenting historical sources – "the statements of those who were our opponents, their

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[1] http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2004/at25.htm

[2] The Freedom Charter was drawn up by the Congress of the People that met in Kliptown to declare their vision of a multiracial and democratic South Africa. It was made up of the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress, the Congress of Trade Unions, the South African Coloured Peoples Organisation, and the Congress Of Democrats (see for example Luthuli 1982 [1962], 140-141).

[3] It remains unclear how the SADET publications would accomplish this, as their record of South Africa's story of democracy begins in 1960.

press, and their books"; and by recourse to direct oral testimony from surviving

struggle "veterans" (Mbeki 2004). Such is the blueprint for the revitalisation of an

ousted national historical narrative of the past – the apartheid national biography –

and the formation of a postapartheid national biography[4] as a narrative of national

liberation, or, 'the Struggle'.

Seemingly on par with postmodern theorising on, and mistrust of, the

historiographical act, Mbeki's concern over South African history leads him to

conclude that

> History therefore does not consist in the recitation of a chronology of events. It
> is not a neutral catalogue of known incidents to which are attached established
> dates. It is but part of the broader struggle of humanity to understand itself and
> the societies born of human activity and thought. It cannot be insulated from
> the ideologies and prejudices that inform the formation of knowledge about
> the functioning of human society. The telling of the story of the past is
> therefore also the making of value judgements about those who are the
> subjects of the story being told.
>
> (Mbeki 2004)

Hayden White, Mbeki's implied historiographic comrade, also identifies an

"irreducible ideological component in every historical account of reality". This

influences how a historian views the present order insofar as it is continuous or

discontinuous with that past, and the value and methods of maintaining and changing

the present based on the past's evaluation. This ideological component, White

continues, reflects the ethical element inherent in the historiographer's account of the

past (1973, 21-26; see also De Certeau 1988, xv). Narrating history, then, "has as its

latent or manifest purpose the desire to moralise the events of which it treats", and is

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[4] In my use of the term 'national biography', I follow Benedict Anderson. Anderson expands his
argument that print media, such as newspapers and novels, participate in the formation of nations as
imagined communities to include biographies of the nation (here meaning historical narratives of the
nation) (see Anderson 1991: 204-206).

therefore bound up with the assigning of value judgments of which Mbeki speaks (White 1987, 14; 21; 24). Unlike White, however, Mbeki's missive ignores the ideological grounding involved in the writing of *his* ideal historical narrative – hence his unproblematised reference to an all-encompassing 'truth' about South Africa's past that would contain and finalise the plurality and meanings of this past. Mbeki elides the fact that the postapartheid historiographical endeavour on which he comments, is also a reinscription of facts or data onto another narrative, and has its own objectives. It cannot, therefore, spell the end of narrativisation.

This dissertation considers such processes of reinscription. It analyses autobiographical texts written by three formerly exiled South African musicians, namely: Miriam Makeba's *Makeba: My Story* (1988) and *Makeba: The Miriam Makeba Story* (2004), Joe Mogotsi's *Mantindane 'He Who Survives': My Life with The Manhattan Brothers* (2002) and Hugh Masekela's *Still Grazing: The Musical Journey of Hugh Masekela* (2004). I concentrate on these musicians as they have assumed 'iconic' status both in apartheid and postapartheid South African popular music studies and in South African popular culture. Their iconicity derives in part from their embodiment of an urbanising, eclectic, and increasingly politicized black musical ethos of the 1950s onward. Miriam Zenzile Makeba, a singer, was born in Prospect Township, Johannesburg, South Africa on March 4, 1932. She began her performing career as a member of a close-harmony vocal group called the Cuban Brothers. Later, she joined The Manhattan Brothers, the leading close-harmony vocal group of its time. Her success continued with a female vocal group called the Skylarks, who became known as Miriam Makeba and the Skylarks. Her entry to international fame occurred when she was asked to sing two songs in Lionel Rogosin's anti-apartheid film, *Come Back Africa*, which won the Critics Award at the

Venice Film Festival in 1959. She left South Africa in 1959 to promote the film at the same Festival. Joseph Kully (Joe) Mogotsi, a singer, was born in Pimville Township, Johannesburg, South Africa on April 14, 1924. His musical career began at a young age with a group called The Manhattan Stars. This dissolved, thereafter giving birth to The Manhattan Brothers, the most successful group of its kind in South Africa. He and the rest of The Brothers left the country for London with the *King Kong* musical production in 1961. Trumpeter Ramapolo Hugh Masekela was born in Kwa-Guqa Township, Witbank, South Africa, on April 4, 1939. His performing career began with the Huddleston Jazz Band in 1954. His significant professional group in South Africa, the Jazz Epistles, was formed in 1960, with Dollar Brand on piano, Kippie Moeketsi on saxophone, Jonas Gwangwa on trombone, Johnny Gertze on bass, and Makhaya Ntshoko on drums. With the help of John Mehegan, Yehudi Menuhin and Father Trevor Huddleston, he secured an overseas music scholarship and left South Africa in 1960.

The musicians, both in South Africa and from their different places of exile, came to be viewed as cultural ambassadors who conscientized the international community to the plight of marginalized South Africans under apartheid. It is significant then that, apart from Makeba (1988), their autobiographies have appeared in a postapartheid era that has been defined mostly by testimony and bearing witness to the past – an ethos exemplified by the proceedings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In South African popular music and culture, memory and history have often been used as important tools with which to challenge and subvert repressive politics (see for example Coplan 1985, Ballantine 1993 and Allen 2000). A study of these autobiographies, therefore, is a pertinent platform from which the link between history and ideology, which helps *create* politics, can be interrogated.

The National Biography

Standard historical texts that aim to give a definitive account of countries, events, or epochs often subscribe to the demands of narrative. In other words, they tend to be linear, to cover the broadest and 'most important' issues, and to privilege 'objective' empirical evidence in their explaining (see White 1978, 22 and 129; LaCapra 1983, 23-71 and 1985, 18; Lipsitz 1990, 28; Arnold 2000, 113; and Bentley 2002, 491). In South Africa, the standard historical accounts I have termed the national biography have often been politically expedient. They have conveniently highlighted a specific plot of history as a legitimating narrative for a particular political dispensation (see Halisi 1991, 184-185; Walker 1991, 268-276; Norval 1996; Maharaj 1996; Minkley and Rassool 1998, 89-99; and Maylam 2001). If historical knowledge is formed and disseminated through privileged forms of narration, that is, as 'official history' or, as I term them, 'national biographies', then this knowledge privileges certain types of historical interpretations. Such a motive becomes increasingly clear in Mbeki's letter. As he continues, this new series of historical texts will contribute to a reinterpretation, or rather the *correct* interpretation, of the actions and events that dot the activities of 'the Struggle'. Tacitly undermining his previous preference for self-evident truth and objective facts, Mbeki frames the interpretive horizon of these events, as he tells the cyber-community[5]: "Familiarity with our history of struggle cannot but inspire … love. This is because of the heroism displayed by our people for 500 years" (Mbeki 2004). This unimpeachable heroism and our response to it are counterposed by righteous condemnation directed toward "those who colonised our country and subjected our people to white minority domination" (ibid). The characters are in this

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[5] One need not be an ANC party member to subscribe to the newsletter.

way introduced, the moral matrix is drawn, and the moral of the story is explained. By pitching this proffered reading as 'the truth', Mbeki underplays and naturalises the ideological component of the narrative he constructs. As Hayden White has noted,

> The issue of ideology points to the fact that there is no value-neutral mode of emplotment, explanation, or even description of any field of events, whether imaginary or real, and suggests that the very use of language itself implies or entails a specific posture before the world which is ethical, ideological, or more generally political: not only all interpretation, but also all language is contaminated.
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> (1978, 129)

This study proceeds from a position similar to White's. It traces the musicians' processes of imagining and constructing South Africa from their shifting perspectives of exile and return, by exploring the autobiographical narration of their experiences *as a performance of language*. Underlying this study, therefore, is scepticism about narratives whose ideological concerns are hidden or underplayed. As White has argued, if a reader or historian can identify the way in which a sequence of events is made into a story, he or she can recognise that it has been plotted as a story of a particular kind, and this is equivalent to reading one type of meaning from the story (1973, 7; 1978, 43). Similarly, national histories of South Africa have emplotted certain events in particular ways and from various perspectives. Identifying the types of stories told, therefore, is also to identify how our history has been variously narrated and what types of meaning inhere in those narrations.

In Mbeki's text, the present officially sanctioned plot underwriting the national biography is that of South African history as 'the Struggle' – and specifically, although this is unstated, the contribution of the African National Congress to this Struggle. Mbeki's letter, by sleight of hand, conflates South Africa's past

unproblematically and reductively as a history of 'our' 'Revolution' and movement for political liberation. No other struggles or pasts, themselves in need of urgent recording, are included. Thus although "the statements of those who were our opponents" may be incorporated, it does not necessarily follow that their words would disturb Mbeki's teleology.

Significantly, the plot of the musicians' autobiographies traces their birth, their departure and official severance from South Africa, and their return. In this way, the exilic trajectory of their story has political resonance, as it parallels the shifts in structures of power characteristic of apartheid South Africa; in particular, the story of undesirable persons and political parties exiled or banned during apartheid and repatriated or reinstated in 1990. As the history of South Africa has a bearing – political, economic or otherwise – on the musicians' status as former exiles, their texts will be analysed alongside the national biography's interpretations of similar political events in South Africa. This is to compare how the musicians' modes of narration differ from that of the national biographies. This dual perspective investigates how these exile literatures, as types of histories, narrate and articulate discourses of the nation from positions other than those of national histories. I treat both the national biography and the musicians' autobiographies as valid repositories of South Africa's exile and struggle history. For White, the grounds for choosing one historical narrative over another are aesthetic or moral rather than epistemological. I would add that the poetics of selection are also political, as the chosen narrative ideologically supports the meaning made of a particular history in the present. In my use of White then, I define national biographies and the musicians' autobiographies as narratives that combine facts and meaning, which give each narrative the aspect of a specific structure of meaning.

Chapter One introduces this first motif in the study, which informs the shape of the dissertation as a whole. Using Mark Israel's examination of political exiles' escape narratives (1999), I suggest that the musicians utilise these political escape stories to structure their own departure. This inserts the musicians' autobiographies, precariously, into a political narrative of South Africa's history of exile (Bernstein 1994). It becomes increasingly clear, however, that the autobiographies' concordance with the national biography is accomplished through narrative strategies that turn departure and exile – figures of rupture (Seidel 1986)– into figures of connection ineluctably linked to the workings of the national biography. The repetition of privileged contexts and themes as narrative strategies of explanation mythologizes departure (Lipsitz 1990, 216). This mythologisation points to the texts' process as writing or storying, such that the facts contained in the national biography complicitly support the favoured story of departure.

Dispersing the Texts

The first motif frees the autobiographies from the constrictions of genre. Leigh Gilmore has criticized the fixation of autobiography studies with genre theory. It leads, as she has noted, to the criticism of autobiography from both fronts of the constructed fiction/non-fiction boundary it straddles:

> For example, autobiography has often been seen as insufficiently objective because the eyewitness may be simultaneously the most sought after and most suspect interpreter of events. At the same time, autobiography has been spurned as insufficiently subjective (or imaginative) because it relies too much on the constraints of the real to be taken as art. Thus autobiography has fallen outside both fiction and history.
>
> (1994, 6)

Rather than "domesticating [autobiography's] specific weirdness" (Gilmore, ibid), I refrain from classifying these texts according to any autobiographical sub-genre. Because of the identities of their authors, the autobiographies can easily be viewed as music or jazz autobiographies, or as exile autobiographies, or as South African autobiographies. Considered solely as jazz autobiographies, we could proceed in the wake of this sub-genre's examination by, among others, Christopher Harlos' critical overview of jazz autobiography's theory, practice and politics (1995), or William H. Kenney III's analysis of Louis Armstrong's autobiographies (1991), or Kathy Ogren's thought provoking study of jazz autobiographies as textual performances influenced by the broader culture of African-American storytelling (1991), or Ajay Heble's expansion on the notion of dissonance in jazz autobiographies (2000). This, however, would ignore other equally important aspects that constitute the authors' identities – which may indeed be more important in the reading of their texts in particular, than those of other jazz musicians. Moreover, flagging the texts unproblematically as 'jazz autobiographies' would require a thorough deconstruction and repositioning of the sign 'jazz' in South Africa's cultural and discursive sphere, which is beyond the scope of this study[6].

For different reasons, it would be reductive to view these texts as autobiographies from the 'margins'; in other words, along the lines of theorizing and criticism set to work on women's autobiography, or so-called ethnic and/or minority autobiography (for example Bergland 1994; Anderson 2001; Parke 2002), or exile autobiography (Seyhan 2001; Paquet 2002). Insofar as these sub-genres occupy an interrogative stance toward the traditionally white, male, humanist subject of autobiography, they are similar to the autobiographies in this study. As Betty Bergland has noted, in

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[6] For an example of such a project, see Titlestad (2004), esp. p. 17-18 and 240-242.

literary studies, so-called "minority autobiographies" often acquire the burden of "representative status". Therefore, she suggests, "it becomes imperative to develop a theory of autobiography that acknowledges the importance of marginalized voices, but avoids essentializing individuals and groups" (1994, 130). The paucity of musicians' texts in this form[7] opens up the possibility of reading their narrated experiences as representative, an issue that will be explored in this study. However, positioning the autobiographies as marginal is problematic when the musicians' status as returnees in postapartheid South Africa is considered.

I have also not classified the texts as simply South African autobiographies. This is because I am reluctant to construct a simplistic genealogy that would give rise to certain expectations toward their reading. Two strands have characterised the criticism of South African autobiography. The first has typically covered issues concerning complex constructions and narrations of self and life in apartheid by black South Africans, both as writers and as historical subjects, as well as the texts' uses of a received European literary form to articulate their experiences (Gray 1990; Ngwenya 1991; Coullie 1994a; Chapman 2001; Attwell 2005, 111-136). This criticism has mostly focussed on the period of the 1950s – the so-called 'Drum' decade – which saw an upsurge of autobiographical writings from authors mostly associated with the magazine[8]. The second strand, prominent from the 1970s and in line with the emergence of strongly materialist revisionist history of this time, focussed more on recuperating and redeeming the narratives and 'voices' of the oppressed, mostly workers and black working women (Coullie 1994b; Nuttall 1996; Nuttall and Michael 2000; Olaussen 2001). This criticism explored how the narratives reflected the state of

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[7] Godfrey Moloi's *My Life (Volumes 1 and 2)* (1991) is one other well-known autobiography written by a musician. It is not included in this study because Moloi was not exiled.
[8] With the exception of Peter Abrahams' *Tell Freedom* (1954). The most often cited texts from this decade are Mphahlele (1959), Matshikiza (1961) and Modisane (1963).

the community from which the autobiographer emerged, "a notion of writing being not for the self but as a collective space" (Nuttall and Michael 2000, 306).

The argument between the two strands revolves around the notion of representivity. In the former, it is argued that literature, and therefore necessarily also autobiography, is irreducible "because each individual 'remakes' his lived relation in his or her work. As a result, literature may be both ideology and challenge the ideological structures of its time" (Gray 1990, 99). It therefore cannot be reduced to be an effect of its sociological surroundings, however formative and emphatic a context apartheid undoubtedly was. Critical approaches following this line have thus tended to read the autobiographies *as texts*, symptomatically following the curves of the narrative discourse, at times reading against the grain of the story itself. By contrast, the second strand's redemption of marginalized voices has been seen as a defiance of apartheid's silencing effects, where "in asserting their right to say 'this is the reality', the oppressed have not only recorded their struggle to survive, but have lent strength to that struggle" (Coullie 1994b, 126). Because of this validating mandate, representivity became important. This representivity, Coullie's and others' argument implies, leads to an empowering and ideally mobilizing 'recognition' (Nuttall 1996). In postapartheid South Africa, these approaches have tended to be less constrained in their respective camps. They view the writing subject as one steeped in her or his social context, while also recognising that the resultant texts are mediated by the conventions of genre, by memory, and by current dominating ideas on how to read and write lives.

Postapartheid autobiographical studies have influenced this research. However, the texts in this study differ from those usually included under the rubric of South African autobiography because they are written by (former) exiles. To designate them as

simply South African would, in a sense, undermine their projects as writings against exile, for they would push to the margins the lives the musicians lived while in exile.

Rather than classify the texts as about music, exile or South Africa, I take 'music', 'exile' and 'South Africa' as signifying utterances functioning in a discursive sphere with which the autobiographies engage dialogically. This informs the dialogic interplay of time, space and character within and between the texts. V. N. Voloshinov proposes three elements that constitute the context of an utterance: "the common spatio-temporal situation of the interlocutors involved; their shared knowledge and understanding of the situation; and their shared evaluation of it" (1988 cited in Edgar and Sedgwick 2002, 429; see also Morson and Emerson 1990; Pearce 1994; Dentith 1995; Hirschkop 1999). Inflecting the study in this way, I follow the Bakhtinian Circle's theorizing of the utterance. Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) observes that all discourse is innately dialogic, though certain types of writing tend to suppress or conceal this. Like Voloshinov, he illustrates several levels where this dialogic activity can occur. For example, in a sample section of text, dialogic activity can occur between two identified interlocutors, between the utterance and an unidentified other text/interlocutor/addressee, between each of the individual words that exist either inside or outside the text, or lastly, a word itself may be internally dialogised. This means that every utterance participates in the dynamics of a broader domain of a language in tension, such that its movement involves taking sides in the dissonances and negotiations that comprise the politics of language. My research uses the idea of texts as utterances that inhabit and transform the linguistic historical field. The attempts of contesting national biographies to present their versions of the past as faithful accounts of that past cause the national biographies to enter into dialogue

(agreement or dissent) with other types of historical accounts, including the musicians' autobiographies.

The Musicians as Writers

The musicians enter these dialogised historical fields as writers. Drawing on White and Bakhtin, I argue that their autobiographies as aesthetic forms are neither the natural shapes into which their lives fall, nor are they the authors' impositions of form upon that life. Rather, their texts emerge from the dynamics of the relationship between the two, and are informed by the multiple interlocutors the texts directly or indirectly address.

The author of an autobiography encounters his or her life as other, since the 'hero' he or she narrates is at once identifiable and at the same time is not identical to the authoring self. This agrees with Bakhtin's thesis that there is a 'non-coincidence' between the experiencing self and this self as author (Dentith 1995, 91). One defining characteristic that separates autobiography from other self-narratives is the proper name that is shared by the author, narrator and protagonist (Lejeune 1989, 5). The proper name, however, is a description, a "socially instituted form ... [that] ... assures constancy through time, and unity through the social spaces of the different social *agents* who are the manifestation of this individual in the different fields" (Bourdieu 2000, 301). As implied by Pierre Bourdieu's emphasis on agency, the proper name does not designate a function. Michel Foucault has also argued for this distinction, noting that while the proper name has referential value, "the name of the author remains at the contours of texts ... It points to the existence of certain groups of discourse and refers to the status of this discourse within a society and culture" (2001 [1969], 1628). The author, then, is a function of discourse, a textual creation that

becomes part of the text's signification in a wider and chronotopically varied discursive sphere.

Autobiographies written in the first person, as those of the musicians are written, encourage a fusion of these distinctions. This fusion is naturalised by the seeming unity of the 'I' (Lejeune 1989, 34; 44), which Gilmore denotes as the 'mark' of autobiography (1994, 6-7). Drawing mostly on the work of Emile Benveniste (1973), critics of autobiography note that 'I' only has referential value within discourse as a subject of enunciation or as a function of discourse, and differs from the person who says 'I' (Starobinski 1980, 77; Lejeune 1989, 8-9; Gilmore 1994, 6-7, Bergland 1994, 130-136). In autobiography, therefore, 'I' is a role that is authorised to narrate the tale and receives this authority from the discourse in which it participates. Its function follows the curves of this discourse rather than those of its originator. As Foucault has further observed,

> It would be as false to seek the author in relation to the actual writer as to the fictional narrator; the 'author-function' arises out of their scission – in the division and distance of the two ... all discourse that supports this 'author-function' is characterised by a plurality of egos ... We are not dealing with a system of dependencies where a first and essential use of the 'I' is reduplicated, as a kind of fiction, by the other two. On the contrary, the 'author-function' on such discourses operates so as to effect the simultaneous dispersion of the three egos.
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> (2001 [1969], 1631)

The author, then, is not a singular authoritative entity; he or she cannot be conceived in a unitary way. The story told, therefore, no longer stems from one transcendental consciousness with a stable referent that results in one possible meaning of experience. This decentring of authorship and of the obviousness of reference destabilises the simplistic idea that autobiography, including even the statements from

struggle veterans that Mbeki privileges, proffers privileged access to the truth (Gilmore 1994, 54).

Chapter Four explores this second motif. The chapter is strategically placed at the end to show that critiques contained in the previous chapters have been in argument with this (mis)representation of the authors as fully present and in complete control of their utterances. I examine the plurality of authorship that constitutes the texts: the heteroglot discursive field, the co-authors, the paratexts and the collaborative voices. I argue here that the proliferation of authorial voices in the making of the texts, and their downplaying and synthesising in the texts' final versions, presents a crisis of representation that is a crisis of authorisation or permission to narrate. The crisis is made visible through examining Lee Hirsch's *Amandla: A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony* (2002), a documentary film that deals with the musicians, exile and South Africa's past. It becomes clear that this crisis results from the unstated assumptions regarding 'truth'. The integrity and authorial control the musicians (and others on their behalf) wish to be seen to have over their texts attempts to assert wider socio-political currency by simulating representivity. This struggle for authorship and authority is evident in the texts' vacillation between biography and autobiography, which are commonly thought to have different relations to 'truth'. That such a struggle exists suggests that in South Africa certain truths are of more value and importance than others.

The Chronotope

The splitting of the author is an important premise from which to analyse formerly exiled musicians' texts, as it means that the reader has to remain aware of the position of each narrating 'I': their spatio-temporal social particularity and the discursive

domain they inhabit – in other words, their chronotopes. Exile's disjunctive effect on lived time and space illustrates Bakhtin's discussion on forms of time and the chronotope. A chronotope, briefly, is the way time (chronos) and space (topos) together are conceived and represented in texts (Bakhtin 1981, 84). The chronotope operates on three levels: first, as the means by which a text represents history; second, as the relation between images of time and space in the text that are used in the representation of history; and third, as a way of discussing the text's plot, narrator and relationship to other texts. Although discussions of the chronotope first stressed its significance for genre[9], Tzvetan Todorov has noted "that Bakhtin does not use the notion of chronotope in restricted fashion, and does not limit it simply to the organization of time and space, but extends it to the organization of the world" (1984, 83). I use the concept of the chronotope to tease out the heterogeneous times and spaces variously occupied by the musicians vis-à-vis the time and space of South Africa.

The national biography exists in the chronological biographical time of history. In other words, the nation exists in a kind of time that privileges measurable succession structured by sequences of cause and effect whose interpretations constitute the story it tells about itself (cf. Anderson 1991, 204-205). The representation of this kind of time in the musicians' autobiographies is achieved by employing the mode of historical realism. Exile, however, by its very nature signifies departure from the nation's chronotope, and the musicians' narratives perforce operate from different chronotopic positions relative to the national biography. If we acknowledge that "all contexts are shaped fundamentally by the kind of time and space that operate within them" (Morson and Emerson 1990, 367), it follows that any change in context will

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[9] Especially in Morson and Emerson (1990, 367-431).

engender a different chronotope. Of the chronotopes' significance for narrative Bakhtin has observed:

> They are the organizing centers for the fundamental narrative events of the novel. The chronotope is the place where the knots of narrative are tied and untied. It can be said without qualification that to them belongs the meaning that shapes narrative ... the chronotope, functioning as the primary means for materializing time in space, emerges as a center for concretizing representation, as a force giving body to the entire novel [read narrative]. All the novel's abstract elements – philosophical and social generalizations, ideas, analyses of cause and effect – gravitate toward the chronotope and through it take on flesh and blood, permitting the imaging power of art to do its work. Such is the representational significance of the chronotope.
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> (1981, 250)

As it attempts to impose a unified interpretation of the events of the past, so the master chronotope of the national biography attempts to structure experiences of time and space. In their attempt to maintain a link to South Africa, the musicians' autobiographies attempt to assimilate the national biography's chronotope. Because chronotopes cannot be fused and may only make sense relationally, that is, dialogically, a chronotopic reading of these events thwarts the ostensible realism preferred by the autobiographies. Chapter Two suggests that the exiling moment marks the limits of assimilation, which is represented by the breakdown of realism in the texts. The exiling moment, I argue, introduces a chronotopic *dislocation*, for in the act of exiling the musicians are officially severed from the chronological time of the national biography. Here, the construction of exile as a chronological, causal necessity succeeding departure is interrogated, and the authorial/subject positions assumed by the autobiographers in the narration of departure are challenged.

Gary Morson and Caryl Emerson have proposed that in a fully chronotopic imagination, "time must be understood in its interconnection with specific space, and

space must be understood as saturated with historical time" (1990, 416). A chronotopic reading of space unpacks the dynamics of a given topography (Folch-Serra 1990, 262-264). The politics of space in South Africa have been crucial throughout its past, and each historical time evinces particular conceptions of space in relation to its inhabitants: from the taming of the land in the colonial era, to the segregationist practices during apartheid, and the processes of land reclamation by the formerly dispossessed in the contemporaneous postapartheid present. Exile, too, indicates spatial dispossession, which is emotively accentuated by the reading of this lost space as 'Home'. A dialogic reading of space views space as a locus of meaning constituted by competing discourses that attempt to fix and impose meaning on this delimited space. As Virginia Blum and Heidi Nast have noted, "space is constructed by the constant dialogical interaction of a multiplicity of voices; at any point in space and time it is possible to see a chronotope which is more or less fixed depending upon the strength of competing centripetal (monological) and centrifugal (dialogic) forces" (2000, 82). Similar tensions occur between apartheid's national biography and the national biography as a narrative of 'the Struggle'. Both are monologic, territorial narratives that delimit and affix meaning to South African space. In their attempt to reinsert themselves into national space, the musicians undercut the apartheid national biography as a metanarrative for the rightful ownership of 'south africa'. They achieve this by offering counter-narratives that challenge apartheid's territorial claims, supported by the narrative of 'the Struggle'. The poetics of the musicians' topographic imagination and their limits form the subject of Chapter Three.

Any attempt to fuse the dialogic play of these chronotopes is an attempt to limit choices, and withdraw agency from the reader: to impose *meaning*. Identity-formation in postapartheid South Africa centres on warring or contesting narratives over 'our

history'. Various historical narratives compete for the status of ultimate referentiality or authority in the name of national interest, democratic redress or some other prerogative couched in discourses ennobled by the past's interpretation. Meanings contained in these contesting narratives in turn point towards a certain understanding of history. They also suggest a specific group's relation to, or identification with, the meaning contained in that history. Ultimately, these groups confirm their identity as a group and/or individuals in postapartheid South Africa by appropriating or rejecting certain narratives of history. This rejection or appropriation implies the acceptance of certain explanations of past events as true.

I as a female black South African became vaguely aware of my wider surroundings through rupture: leaving a dusty township in the Eastern Cape to occupy the lush topography of South African suburbia in 1993, a year before South Africa's 1994 elections. Driving through this township in 2004, I noticed that a small footpath that used to lead straight to my 'Home'[10] had been built upon, and I could not see an alternative road – there was no possibility of a return. As a young female black South African alto saxophonist, I found a rich jazzing culture in the Eastern Cape, where someone is somehow related to someone who knows how to play the alto and can teach me more. As a Musicology student, I found none of these people's stories apart from those of Miriam Makeba, Joe Mogotsi and Hugh Masekela. I found little of the Eastern Cape jazzing culture in these, only a re-enactment of a familiar tale. As an English and History student along with other students, I learnt the tyranny of history, particularly that of the South African past; I also saw how it can be subverted in a myriad ways by subjects that assert agency against its seeming inevitability. I function thanks to these discourses. Through reading against what Frederic Jameson has

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[10] Unlike Rushdie's return visit to his home in Bombay, the once vivid colours were now faded and a little grimy. The interior was probably worse (see Salman Rushdie 1991, 9).

elsewhere termed "strategies of containment" prevalent in realist texts, which privilege resolution and construct that resolution as 'inevitable', I attempt to reclaim a small portion of South African music historiography from the mythologizing national biography. By tracing the itinerary of silencing of South Africa's everyday chronotopes, I attempt in this study to create more choices, to insert more stories at strategic and interruptive interstices – to reinscribe music's historical importance in a broader 'south african' imaginary.

Chapter 1

Narrating the Story of Departure

This chapter examines how the plots of the musicians' autobiographies are made to seem similar to aspects of South Africa's national biography. Similar themes, events and actions recur across both types of texts. How these are interpreted and given meaning, both in the autobiographies and in the national biography, shapes the form of the autobiographies to read as stories of a particular kind. The kind of story preferred, as we shall see, is one that approximates most closely to the national biography as 'the Struggle'. Specific narrative strategies are used to achieve this: the reading contract encouraged by their autobiographical form, and the previous positioning of the narrators – black male and female musicians previously at the fringes of apartheid society. These considerations, and more to follow, circumscribe the horizon of expectations we bring to the reading of the autobiographies.

Two conceptions of plot assist our analysis. The first takes plot to be an element of narrative discourse that tells a particular story by focussing on the *events* that make up that story (Abbott 2002, 194). Miriam Makeba (1988 and 2004), Joe Mogotsi (2002), and Hugh Masekela (2004) are linked by the similarity of their plots, identifiable particularly through the types of events that have been selected for narration. These events include: birth, departure from South Africa, and return to South Africa. The constituent event that makes this plot a South African story of exile is departure. Presenting the preferred events for narration without qualification, however, ignores the way plot organises facts to present the text as a bearer of a certain type of meaning (White, 1978, 172; Brookes 1984, 12). Our second conception of plot, therefore, views plot as "a structure of relationships by which the events contained in the

account are endowed with a meaning by being identified as parts of an integrated whole" (White 1987, 9). As autobiographies, the texts aim to construct the story and the person in the story. This presumes the existence of an integrated, coherent and knowable self, whose story can be told in a clear and factual language that the autobiographer can control. These assumptions are social constructs or myths, predicated on society's desire for such an individual or type of life-story (Evans 1998, 1). This chapter illuminates their dependence on cultural fictions. I argue that the musicians' autobiographies assume their narrative shape through complex uses of South Africa's national biography and the type of hero desired by this national biography. Following Bakhtin's analysis of monologic discourse in Dostoevsky's short novels, I observe that the autobiographical consciousness is here dismantled and its utterances are dispersed or refracted across potential discourses available in order to explain their story and themselves (in Dentith 1995, 157-194). In my study, these potential discourses coalesce and intersect at the chronotopically significant moment of the musicians' departure from South Africa.

Departure is a significant event both in the country's national biography and in the story of South African political exile. For example, in Es'kia Mphahlele (1959) and Todd Matshikiza (1961), who had already left the country at the time of writing their autobiographies, it frames the story recounted by the narrator. For Bloke Modisane (1963), another departee and eventual exile, it is the point towards which the narrative is directed and in which it culminates. Departure is a moment of crisis and in/decision, a threshold that must be surmounted, typified both through making the decision to leave and then managing to leave. It is also the first figure of physical disconnection for the autobiographies' protagonists. In the country's national biography, departure is conjoined with the careers of various anti-apartheid political parties after the National

Party's electoral victory in 1948 (Israel 1999, 1-2). The narrators of the autobiographies in my study also left after this time: Miriam Makeba in 1959, Hugh Masekela in 1960, and Joe Mogotsi in 1961.

Apartheid has been narrated as the primary if not sole backdrop that propels the desire to depart from South Africa. Despite the singularity of the reason, apartheid did not exert this dispersing role uniformly. While some were forced to flee from apartheid South Africa, others chose to leave (Bernstein 1994 and Israel 1999). For example, Hilda Bernstein's collected interviews of (former) exiles divides the different waves of departure thematically: the 1960 departures are "the Trailblazers" who left under the cloud of a state of emergency and Sharpeville; departures of the 1970s fall under "The Insurrection", which characterises the nature of political activities of the 1970s and 1980s. Departees of the 1950s, on the other hand, are a miscellaneous crew collected under a section titled "Nomads and Pilgrims" (Bernstein 1994).

Departure in the 1950s

For politicised South Africans, departure in the 1950s was 'voluntary', and was encouraged by "a combination of actual or anticipated violence" felt by the departees (Israel 1999, 18, 42). Outside this context, departure has been commonly interpreted as a reaction to the implementation of apartheid policies at a personal or individual level. Accordingly, as Israel concludes, those who left the country at this time very rarely "claim that they were forced to leave and they do not seem to have called themselves exiles at the time" (24-25). These departees also did not see their departure as permanent.

In this vein, leaving in the 1950s was a moral and personally motivated decision. Ezekiel (Es'kia) Mphahlele's narration of departure from South Africa in *Down Second Avenue*, for example, fits these criteria (1959). Mphahlele's text places the responsibility for leaving finally on the individual. The text's performance mirrors this thematic move, as it proceeds from depicting the social milieu of Second Avenue to focusing on the narrating consciousness. As the text nears its end, we read ever longer meditative interludes and enter more into the reactions of the narrator to them. Although the narrator becomes the organising centre, he still narrates his position as superfluous, where "a resolution of [his] personal conflicts could never alleviate the miseries of Shanty Town" (1959, 179). This focus on the individual's superfluity and isolation is a typical move in South African black 'exile' autobiographies of this time (see Matshikiza 1961 and Modisane 1963). For Mphahlele, the disconnection is a mental preparation for his pending physical departure. Chabani Manganyi's authorised biography of Es'kia Mphahlele, which is written in the first person, imaginatively captures the changed focus of the text:

> I chose exile and to say I was not conflicted is not the same as saying that the decision was an easy one. Every important decision burdens us with uncertainties; what made it easier for me was the fact that I had no other choice but to leave the country in the particular circumstances of my life at that time. Angry, bitter and politically involved as I was by this time, I did not see myself finding fulfilment from engaging in political acts whose immediate public value could not be grasped. It could have been cowardice, poor judgment, egotism or a combination of these and yet one thing was clear during those critical months when I was preparing to leave: I still needed to grow. The present failed to enchant me and it is as if there was a future out there on the distant horizon beckoning me to move on. I could not grasp this future, or articulate it. I was in full possession of myself and that mattered.
>
> (Manganyi 1983,162)

Departure in this extract takes the form of an argument, with the story reading like its elaborate solution. The moral argument in this extract is between choice and force, which are made to support each other and assert the primacy of the individual. Apartheid, having rendered Mphahlele superfluous as a teacher, is given as the reason behind his decision to leave. Departure, though an actively made decision, is portrayed as a resultant action made from the lack of alternative choice: it is a choice that is no choice. Mphahlele uses his ineffectiveness, caused by his banning by apartheid policies, to legitimate his departure, thus relinquishing his individual agency to historical determinism. The availability of choice, untenable as the options presented by the situation may be, is nonetheless still a position of privilege in South Africa's exile story. Such a choice has not been uniformly available to would-be political exiles: for some the 'decision' to remain would have spelt their imprisonment and almost certain death (Israel 1999, 30). The preconditions for making such a choice also differ depending on the departee and their reasons for leaving. For example, during the 1950s departure was actively condemned by certain anti-apartheid political parties, who argued that the amount of monetary capital required for one to 'escape' effectively excluded the most disadvantaged people, and so using one's privilege to escape the situation undermined the efforts to dismantle it (Israel 1999, 29). Mphahlele is given leave to narrate his departure in the manner showed by the extract above by events and themes in the national biography: specifically, by the implementation of the Bantu Education Act in 1955 that led to his banning, and the ineffectiveness and disunity of the anti-apartheid political parties at this time.

Miriam Makeba as a 1950s Departee

The 1950s, as I have already noted, have been characterised as a 'pre-exile phase', where those South Africans who left the country, even if politically active, "did not think of themselves as exiles, and did not leave according to some premeditated political strategy" (Israel 1999, 30). Rather, the main reasons given for leaving were personal, ranging from the desire for further education, personal dissatisfaction with the beginnings of apartheid, and occasionally through circumstances that made staying an untenable position, as was the case for Mphahlele (Bernstein 1994, 23; Israel 1999, 30). In the musicians' autobiographies, however, these personal motivations are interwoven into the broader narrative of political exile in South Africa, whose definition includes a sanctioned departure by one's political party, and a specific political mission assigned to the departee outside the country (see Bernstein 1994 and Israel 1999). Crucial to this politicisation of departure is a "retrospective reinterpretation of the reasons for departure" (Israel 1999, 54).

Such reinterpretation is evident in both Makeba (1988) and in Makeba (2004). In both texts the reader is told that Makeba's reason for departure is personally motivated, primarily to further her musical career, with the opportunity to go overseas as second (2004, 50). The opportunity is created by the filmmaker Lionel Rogosin's request that Makeba attend the Venice International Film Festival in order to promote his film, *Come Back Africa*. The desire for departure is further personalised through the introduction of her then boyfriend Shunna (Sonny) Pillay, who had already departed for London:

> Shunna and I had talked about trying our fortune overseas, coming back home afterwards to live better. Shunna applied for a passport and he got it straight away. I applied for my passport. I had to wait. Shunna left the country before I did. With Shunna gone the anticipation was not easy.

(Makeba 2004, 50)

The personal reasons given for leaving South Africa – career and romance – mark Makeba a 'typical' 1950s departee. The manner in which the actual departure is told, however, is as an adventure. More accurately, it is told as a South African *political* adventure whose protagonist is a black township female. In both texts, we are presented with a mysterious/mystified plot that gradually moulds itself into a plot of mysterious political intrigue whose nature, in the end, seems preordained and inevitable.

After stating her reasons, Makeba recounts the flurry of events that followed Rogosin's request. In both texts, the pace of the story at this point quickens, whole months are fitted into a couple of sentences with much dramatic impact. This frantic narration conveys the speed at which things had to be done, and introduces an element of danger into this excitement. From the narratives, we learn that although leaving one's country because of a film may seem relatively guileless, departure may not be that simple. As Makeba reminds us,

> the film is still controversial, and *my departure from South Africa has to be kept quiet*. All the work is done with as little fuss as possible. Gallotone does not give out a press release, and the papers do not announce that I am going away. *Anything might happen*. Only my mother knows I am leaving.

(1988, 73 my emphases)

The danger remains an unexplained and vaguely looming threat – that it is specifically a covert anti-apartheid film with which Makeba is involved is assumed to be sufficient reference for the reader to construct the source and form of the danger. The mystery of the departure is summed up by the central sentence ("Anything might happen").

The text's attempt to offer another justification for Makeba's departure becomes more laboured, as the strategy now moves to narrating what was not done. Thus for example Makeba relates that Gallotone *did not* announce her departure. In a moment that makes up the primary constituent event in the exile plot, an event that by its very nature implies the existence of choice, focusing on inaction increases the element of suspense and the layers of mystification that make this narration work.

This narration places Makeba the protagonist at the receiving end of prevailing structural restrictions in South Africa – the same appeal to historical determination at work in Mphahlele's narration of departure. Against the flurry of activities, the spectre of apartheid law as an omnipresent disabler of the narrative action forms an ominous backdrop. In Makeba (2004), this malevolent presence is embodied in the entry of apartheid police. The counter-placing of the personal and the political is here striking. For at this point, Makeba has completed her painful story regarding a failed pregnancy. This moment of personal tragedy heightens the dramatic entry of the police officers. The stereotypical role and function they play in the story is clear from the passage in which they are first described as "these two white men" and then as "the *baas*":

> While I was recovering in hospital these two white men came to see me. I was in pain, but I had to sit up because the *baas* was there. They had with them a thick folder full of clippings of me performing here and there, everywhere. They had articles that had been written about me in all the papers like *The Bantu World*, *Zonk!* and *Drum*.
>
> (2004, 50)

The figure of Makeba in popular literature as the 'Nut Brown Baby', constructed within the masculinist discourse prevalent at the time, is unlikely to have aroused the suspicion of apartheid police. Christopher Ballantine has analysed the changed

representation of women singers around the 1950s, noting that at this time the inclusion of such singers depended mostly on their " sexy decorative qualities," which confined them to this particular stereotype (2000, 378-9; see also Allen 2000). The point of controversy, the politicised mystery, is gradually revealed to arise from the sighting of Makeba in the house of Monty and Myrtle Berman, who were white communist anti-apartheid activists, during the filming of *Come Back Africa!* Makeba explains to the reader that "these people" investigated her because she had applied for a passport. The interrogation does not lead anywhere – no further threats or follow-up interviews are narrated by Makeba. The purpose of the telling is done: it was simply done in order to dramatise apartheid, and, at the end,

> After waiting for months I finally got that damn passport. I didn't have to jump the fence. As soon as I got my passport, I made arrangements to leave – fast. Ian Bernhardt took me to the airport. I met him at Dorkay House and he took me to the house of some white girls in Hillbrow to wait for him. I went there wearing a nanny's uniform. Ian came and took me in his car to the airport. I had two little suitcases with whatever rags I had and another suitcase with all my shoes in it. I got on that plane.
>
> (2004, 52)

The extract illustrates the culmination of a great-escape narrative, but it tells a complicated story. For Makeba (2004) admits that unlike the other exiled South Africans at the time, she "didn't have to jump the fence". This downplaying and refutation of struggle-hero credentials, of which the great escape narrative forms a considerable part (see Israel 1999), is at first admirable. For compared to other 'escape stories', collected for example in Bernstein (1994), Makeba's exit was in the end untroubled and safe. The seeming resistance toward the label 'struggle-hero' is nonetheless undermined by very inclusion of the story of those who jumped the fence as a possible point of comparison. Makeba, in this way, becomes luckier than the

others, rather than just lucky. This is borne out by the sentence describing that Makeba had to leave – "fast". Again we are not told why Makeba had to leave fast, and we do not need to be – for the story has now been set up to read like an escape narrative of a particular kind.

The narration of departure as mystery shrouds the telling of departure in veils of politically charged subterfuge, in both Makeba 1988 and 2004. The intransigence of the apartheid state 'reveals' this mystery to be an element of apartheid's repressive structures directed at its dissenters and would-be departees. In both cases, the element of choice is negated, revealed either as a choice that is no choice or as inevitable. This position presents apartheid as a hegemonic discourse that fully determined the subject's role and function in the prescribed realm. The hegemonic nature of apartheid as a discourse has generated consent across the scholarly field. The view that characterises apartheid as hegemonic does so insofar as it defines such a discourse as "a framework delineating what is possible, what can be said and done, what positions may legitimately be taken, what actions may be engaged in," and maintains this dynamic (Norval 1996, 4). Despite its attempts, however, apartheid was not a foolproof blueprint for controlling South African society. Examples of negotiated resistance, assumptions of illegitimate positions and manipulation of the system do, after all, make up one part of the 'South African story'. These personal accounts are such examples, as were the stories from other exiles, which "showed that minor victories were achievable; it was possible to outwit the South African state" (Israel 1999, 59).

These features undercut the implied lack of choice attributed to Makeba's departure, whose abnegation of relative autonomy is increased by narrating her departure as one that was also prophesied. The first intimations of Makeba's pending

departure occur during her mother's possession spells from *amadlozi* (ancestral spirits). At this time, the spirit known as 'Mahlavezulu', speaking through her mother, prophesies to Makeba: "You will leave South Africa. You will go on a long journey, and you will never come back" (1988, 70). By using the voice of a spirit, or by narrating her leaving as prophesied, Makeba explains her departure to be inevitable. *Amadlozi* and apartheid being external factors decreed by nature and politics respectively, matters of decision are seemingly left to fate – it was not up to her. Thus we get a kind of escape story, which attempts to negotiate a delicate balance between foreknowledge of inevitability (because of both the dictates of historical determinism and the prophesying of *amadlozi*) and suspense (because the story takes place in the context of apartheid).

Departure in the 1960s

As the apartheid state's militancy intensified in the 1960s, so the tenor of departure changed. South Africa in the 1960s was characterised by increased use of state apparatuses for the purposes of repressing any formal and informal dissent from apartheid's opponents. As Paul Maylam has noted in his analysis of South African historiography narrating this period,

> The state's repressive apparatus was steadily strengthened after 1948, especially from the 1960s. A series of harsh security laws were passed increasing the capacity of the government and the police to suppress political opposition, in the process undermining established judicial procedures.
>
> (2001, 185)

Apart from these measures, whose realisation culminates in the massacres at Sharpeville, Langa and Nyanga (see Luthuli 1982, 198), racial segregation in the

sixties was solidified. In its solidification, it affected each individual South African life, albeit in different ways and from different sides of the political equation. Political parties were forced to move underground, and the State of Emergency of 1960, followed by the witch-hunt flavoured treason trials, introduced a vocabulary of war into the acts of departure. In this intensified climate, politicised South Africans left the country in droves:

> The main outflows followed Sharpeville in 1960, Rivonia in 1964, and the enactment of the Terrorism Act in 1967. After 1960, exit for political activists and their families had a qualitatively different meaning: more believed that they were left with little choice but to cross the border; often illegally, more people were instructed to leave by their own political structures; more knew that they were leaving South Africa 'for the duration'.
>
> (Israel 1999, 30)

The motivation for leaving in these circumstances, following Israel's analysis, was more politically motivated than the moral and personal imperative identified in the 1950s. Political structures to which individuals belonged actively helped those who needed to leave, and sanctioned these departures. In the 1960s, moreover, it became both more difficult and more urgent to leave, and more departures were accomplished through illegal and clandestine means. This was the time of the 'trailblazers' and the 'Rivonia generation'.

Joe Mogotsi's "Farewell to South Africa"

Mogotsi's account of departure is brief, forming a small part of the chapter titled "Farewell to South Africa" (2002, 65-68). Characteristic of the rest of Mogotsi's story, the mood evoked of the departure is matter-of-fact and very little dramatisation of events is found. The chapter recounts at a slow narrative pace the activities of The

Brothers while they were waiting to leave for London. The prevailing political climate of the time is described but not evaluated. Its description, however, implicitly provides an explanation and a justification for departure as a preferred choice. Rather than political, the reason for Mogotsi's departure at this time is the perceived musical opportunities abroad for the cast of *King Kong*, and in keeping with the book's project, the careers of The Brothers. Thus although Mogotsi describes departing as "sweet sorrow" and recalls that "a great lump" came to his throat, at the end he concludes that leaving "was good for the Brothers. We had exhausted the local scene with long years of touring. This was a wonderful new opportunity" (Mogotsi 2002, 68).

The narrative also relates departure as a form of counterplot for thwarting the apartheid regime. Ian Bernhardt, again, makes his appearance as the chauffer and organiser of the musicians' union, organising papers for the musicians as he did for Makeba, "running around hustling" (Mogotsi 2002, 65). This account of clandestine activity accords with the tenor of the political departures in this era, conveying an impression of the exit of The Brothers, along with that of the cast of *King Kong*, as politically subversive. This inserts Mogotsi's narrative into the political story of exit in South Africa.

Hugh Masekela's account of departure

Unlike the previous narratives, departure makes up a significant portion of Masekela's text. The structure of the book encourages this apportioning, as it is divided into three segments: 'Home', 'The World' and 'Africa'. As the three titles suggest, home is a point of departure. In Masekela's story, every opportunity is used to make possible his eventual exit from South Africa: by writing to his former

schoolmaster and anti-apartheid activist, Father Trevor Huddleston, by asking friends whose departure precedes his to help him (98-99), as well as asking other influential friends such as the Bermans. The time that it took first for Masekela to procure an overseas scholarship, and then to acquire the necessary papers to leave South Africa legally, is recounted at length in the story. It begins in 1956, where Masekela recalls asking Huddleston to help him secure a music scholarship upon the latter's arrival in London because, as he writes, "I knew that if I stayed in South Africa, my career would be doomed" (2004, 81). The primary reason given for leaving South Africa, as in the other autobiographies, is that of pursuing a musical career that would be hampered by apartheid's restrictive laws. As the story continues, however, other reasons for leaving gain prominence. Political pressure is seen to impinge directly on music in such a way that the jazz hero also becomes a political hero of a kind, as for example when Masekela recalls that, during the same year,

> I kept writing to Father Huddleston, who was now in England, asking him to help me obtain a music scholarship overseas. His replies affirmed his commitment to help me, but I was feeling increasingly desperate. The government was harassing the shit out of the arts community. My continued association with the deported priest and with his political allies caused the Special Branch Police to keep me under surveillance
>
> (2004, 86)

The rest of the chapter sketches the dramatic tension that accompanied the wait for the passport. Masekela receives enough money for his round-trip ticket to England, plus pocket money, and then recalls: "I was a step closer to getting out of South Africa. I was thrilled but stayed guarded. I really had to be cool and stay below the police radar" (108). The passport arrives mid-May, frantic plans are made to finalise Masekela's departure:

I rushed in my father's car to tell Ian Bernhardt the news. He quickly called the travel agent to book me on a plane the next day … The following morning I picked up my tickets and pocket money, drove back home, and started packing … Fearing that the Special Branch Police could show up anytime, we had made my departure as low-key and secretive as possible, because the fact of my having been present in the Bermans' house during Monty's arrest hung like a dark cloud over my exit … Although I was very sad to be leaving, deep in my heart I was excited and relieved to be leaving this cursed, godforsaken land … I was paranoid. I kept thinking the Special Branch Police were going to show up and arrest me. I was anxious to clear immigration. After I passed through the turnstiles and the security officers, I turned and waved to everyone who was now pressed against the fence … I entered the plane and was shown to my aisle seat by a white stewardess who insisted on calling me "sir". Everybody else on the airplane was white. I was praying feverishly for the Special Branch Police not to show up … When the airplane finally took off, it was as though a very heavy weight had been taken off me – as if I had been painfully constipated for twenty-one years and was finally taking the greatest shit of my life.

(108-110)

The main theme of apartheid South Africa during the 1960s used in this telling of exit is the prevalence and pervasiveness of the apartheid police and the persistent hounding and surveillance undergone by anti-apartheid (or merely black) South Africans. Apartheid and its agents provide the catalyst that speeds up the action to read like a great-escape narrative. Masekela narrates his departure as a prolonged flight away from the 'dark cloud' of apartheid police. As with Makeba (2004), a mini-event – that of being seen in the Berman's house – is the hinge upon which the politicisation of his narrative depends. The painting of departure as an elaborate adventurous plot shrouded in controversy and anticipation dominates as a result. This politicisation contrasts with the figure of Masekela in the rest of the 'home' section. Throughout that period, Masekela's reasons for departure are to improve his musical career, rather than flight from apartheid. This is why the introspective reflection that follows is a startling contrast. The extract occurs early in the retelling of the exit.

Masekela, having recently written to Huddleston regarding the scholarship and his impending departure reflects:

> With escalating repression by the apartheid government, and with resistance against it growing every day, I could envision myself being swept away by the powerful currents of radical activism and – given my big mouth and general fearlessness around authority figures – my chances of living very long were rather slim. To progress in my musical career, I would have to get out of South Africa.
>
> (81)

It is when attempting to locate this potential 'struggle-hero' that the tenuous unity of Masekela's construction becomes evident. Masekela resists being seen as a struggle hero, both verbally and through his actions related above. His departure, however, is cast in the mould of an adventure, propelled by the singular accident of being caught in the house of Monty and Myrtle Berman. Where agency was deferred in Makeba by narrating her departure as pre-ordained and prophesied, for Masekela it is deferred through the perceived effects initiated by the primary accident, in response to which he seemingly has no alternative but to flee. The narrative writes itself as a document of a 1960s departure in this manner, by appealing directly to the perception of apartheid in these times, and to stories of political departures that mostly occurred in this period.

The Lure of the Adventure Tale

> Realist modes of representation are neither natural nor obvious, but are extremely complex and deeply impregnated with values and assumptions. Indeed, it is a characteristic of dominant forms of realism to conceal their very nature as values by presenting themselves as, transparently, reality itself.
>
> (Donald and Mercer 1981, 70)

In sum, the departures of the 1950s were mostly voluntary, while those of the 1960s were either coerced by apartheid's strictures and/or politically sanctioned by anti-apartheid parties. However, this distinction rests upon a mythologisation of South Africa's story of exit. There is no empirical evidence that all departees after 1960 were observing their political party's directives, or that they all left to further the anti-apartheid cause. Moreover, those wishing to leave in the 1950s at times also encountered the difficulties faced by 1960s departees[11]. These differences are further elided by the departees' retrospective reinterpretation of their departure to read as narrative accounts of risky escape, whether they left the country in the 1950s (for example Makeba) or in the 1960s. As Israel has observed, along with narrating bureaucratic difficulties, accounts of exit have been commonly presented "as dramatic, stirring accounts of derring-do ...[which] tell in graphic detail how the Security Branch was eluded, borders crossed at night, and snatch squads avoided in the front-line states of Southern Africa as each ... made their exit" (1999, 58-9).

The four autobiographies read here present themselves as coherent accounts that map the lives of the musicians under discussion. Based on how they have organised the events of their stories in a particular manner, we are guided as readers to view departure as their initiation into a life of musical struggle in exile. To convince us of the undesirability of departure, the narrator/protagonist presents us with the difficulty of leaving, be it a logistic difficulty (implying opposition from apartheid law), or an emotional difficulty (implying attachment and commitment to South Africa), often both. The moment of departure, therefore, becomes a rationalisation of a choice, which is nevertheless portrayed as no choice. I have shown how this portrayal

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[11] For example there is no real difference between the difficulties faced by Mphahlele (1959) and by Modisane (1963), although they left at different times (see especially Mphahlele's collected letters in Manganyi [1984]).

forecloses any potential scrutiny regarding the type of choice made: for Makeba, prophecy becomes the finalising legitimating cause; for Mogotsi, professionalism dictates that there was no more to be achieved by staying in South Africa; and for Masekela, an accidental sighting in the house of communist anti-apartheid activists sets off a chain of events over which he seemingly has little control. All these strategies initiate a chain of cause and effect that ends in the musicians' departures.

This straightforward projection, however, does not hold up to close scrutiny of the narrative discourse itself. Tensions abound in the narration of departure, fortuitously vacillating between the use of music as a reason to leave and that of the national biography. Mogotsi's neutral retelling of The Brothers' exit from South Africa uses music as a reason, while implicitly appealing to the reader's sympathy by using the conditions of apartheid as a dialogising context. Masekela uses music in order to present himself incidentally as political hero and primarily as a jazz hero. He does this by utilising what is known about police activities during the South Africa of the 1960s and by using the narrative of flight that was the lot of political exiles of this time. Makeba 2004 shows knowledge of other exiles' accounts of departure and constructs a politically significant narrative. Unlike Makeba 1988, in the later text, there is hardly any mention of the mother's role, her daughter is barely mentioned, and Mahlavezulu is stripped of any predictive power. Her meeting with the apartheid police, who proceed to interrogate her while in hospital, gains narrative dominance. This is the most explicit example of the process of retrospective narrative reconstruction of events to construct political significance.

This political significance is dependent on postapartheid constructions of the country's national biography, which has allotted significance to, and placed certain events within, a hierarchy of importance (examples would include the Defiance

Campaign, Sharpeville in 1960 and June 16, 1976). Such emplotment of events evidently puts Makeba in a disadvantageous position, for according to this scheme nothing 'significant' happened at the time of her departure. By contrast, Mogotsi and Masekela can, and do, easily use the political climate of post-Sharpeville South Africa to legitimise their departure. Rather than gravitate toward itself, then, the narration of departure is an anxious discourse, whose sideward glances flicker toward both the national biography, specifically to its postapartheid guise as a story of 'the Struggle', and to stories of political exile.

The motivation behind this, I would suggest, is to construct the subject in the tales. The desired subject constructed in these autobiographies is the narrator/protagonist as a politically committed exile hero. Awareness of other political heroes in the South African landscape, however, necessitates a renegotiation of such an identity. Music, or the subject as musician, becomes a talisman for the terms of this renegotiated commitment. What this would seem to suggest is that, in the autobiographies, music is used as a loophole. Bakhtin defines the loophole at length:

> A loophole is the retention for oneself of the possibility for altering the ultimate final meaning of one's own words. If a word retains such a loophole this must inevitably be reflected in its structure ... Judged by its meaning alone, the word with a loophole should be an ultimate word and does present itself as such, but in fact it is only the penultimate word.
>
> (in Dentith 1995, 190)

Music's discursive role in these autobiographies functions in such a manner, and leaves the narration of departure as ultimately an unfinalisable narrative. The manufacturing of political reasons and the inclusion of historical factors to explain departure suggests that, at least for the musicians, music alone fails as a legitimating narrative for explaining departure. At the same time, it is also used as the primary,

ultimate, reason for departure in all the autobiographies.

If the loophole retains the possibility for altering one's words, then in autobiography it retains the possibility for altering one's identity. Such play is evident here, as in these autobiographies one's identity as a musician is called forth to perform discordant functions: it permits the withdrawal of one's answerability to political factors by appealing to its primacy, while also being foregrounded as the reason for the protagonists' surveillance, repression, vulnerability, intimidation and, ultimately, flight. This dismantling of authorship undermines the security of the autobiographical pact, defined by Philippe Lejeune as dependent on the identicalness of the author, the narrator and the protagonist (1989, 5). In these texts, we have a constant shifting of assumed identities, from political hero, to victim of historical circumstance, to musician. We are petitioned by the mode of realism at work in the autobiographies not only to ignore the inconsistency, but also, at the moment of departure, to accept the integrity of the departee unquestioningly.

The importance of the narratives of departure varies. They justify and rationalize the reasons for the departure; through recounting what influenced the decision to leave, they personalize the story of South African repression; through their grand escapes, the narratives indirectly show that it was possible to challenge and thwart the apartheid machine; and, most importantly, they contribute to the construction of the narrating hero. This function is evident in both narratives of voluntary departure such as those of Mphahlele and Modisane, and in those of 'forced' departure; but is most evident in the adventure tales of the 1960s, whose grand narrative Israel has termed the 'great-escape' narrative.

The great-escape narrative indexes the corresponding degree of repression from the apartheid state. What links it to other narratives of exit is the uses it makes of certain

character types who perform the same function in the texts of this time in general, such that accounts of exit by Matshikiza, Mogotsi, Mphahlele, Modisane, Makeba and Masekela show a similar confrontation between those who help or hinder their efforts to leave. Despite these similarities, the great-escape narrative is nonetheless a specifically *political* story, and the musicians' autobiographies do not fit into this mould easily. Although these musicians were at the receiving end of the repressive state apparatuses, they did not overtly belong to any political party, certainly not as important members who could benefit 'the Struggle' abroad through their departure. Nevertheless, Israel draws them into this social milieu by noting how jazz musicians associated with Dorkay House, whose involvement had included raising funds for the African National Congress (ANC), had lost their 'audience' once this party was driven underground after the declaration of the State of Emergency in 1960 (1999, 34). The story of music and repression is a well documented one in South African music historiography. The relationship between the two does not make for simple telling. It involves, among other factors, considerations of the role of external repression involving issues of race; as well as internal repression, which involve issues of gender and class (see Ballantine 1993, 63-86). Its linkage by Israel with exit or departure from South Africa is in my view rather more tenuous. After all, only relatively few musicians left South Africa during these repressive times; many more stayed behind. Not all the jazz musicians were patrons of Dorkay House, nor were they all involved with direct fundraising for the ANC (see Ballantine 1993 and Coplan 1985).

It is not only alongside history that the musicians' autobiographies pitch themselves in their apologia for leaving, but also other exile stories of departure, specifically those of political exiles. The stories of departure by political exiles have

certain thematic features, which have become stylised in the constant demand for their repetition, and have filtered into the musicians' personal accounts. Israel, too, has noted how "these accounts seem to have been used again and again like a well worn path. Like many routines, they were not always exposed readily to further scrutiny. In some cases, it seemed that people were remembering the already told stories rather than the original actions" (1999, 58). In our encounter with the textual event of exit, therefore, we do not encounter departure as an inevitable result of impersonal historical forces, but as a carefully constructed narrative that is made to seem inevitable.

Chapter 2

A Fugue of Disruptions: Signifying exile.

Exile is integral to the meaning and impact of the musicians' autobiographies. We have seen that when departure is narrated in the autobiographies, historical factors determine the direction of the depicted action, while the protagonist retains agency only insofar as s/he can react to these forces. These historical forces are infused with a causal logic that is supported by the autobiographies' narration thereof in chronological biographical time. Thus in the previous chapter, plot, operating under the supportive guise of realism, 'explained' the musicians' departure as a historical necessity to be understood through reference to this history and to other exile accounts of departure. Plot, therefore, sought to encompass and assimilate the heterogeneous experiences of these musicians within the time of the national biography. Autobiography, in general, is an appropriate vehicle for such a synthesising project. Like conventional historical or realist narratives, it constructs events according to a naturalised causality that allows authors "to convey the impression that lives are lived in orderly and coherent ways" (Evans 1998, 134).

Exile is said to consist of three elements: forced exit, dissenting voice and struggle to return (Israel 1999, 7). Closer examination of the creation of an identity of exile shows a more complex dynamic, such that an overriding and all-explanatory exilic plot becomes an idealisation or a mythologising thereof. Moreover, "the establishment of an identity of exile," as Israel contends, "was not an *inevitable* consequence of the exit of South Africans from their home country. It needed to be imagined, theorized, communicated, accepted, policed and defended against critique" (1999, 156 my emphasis). Exile, in other words, is a construct, a creative act (Breytenbach 1996, 40).

The linear shape of the autobiographies conceals this constructedness. The autobiographies adhere to the 'departure, displacement, return' trajectory which structure exile narratives. This trajectory constructs what Israel has termed a 'meta-identity' of exile (1999, 138-9). The meta-identity is a deliberate invention, a point of stability or reference grounded by ideological constructs of what an exile should be and how one becomes an exile, "an identity with a distinct authentic nature to which it was the exile's task to conform" (ibid.). As a construction, exile has engendered narrative types that seem to fit into this template or 'plot', including those of the musicians.

In this chapter, this meta-identity is problematized. For rather than the naturalised cause and effect prevalent in the autobiographies' designing of departure (or displacement), exiling is a rupture. Drawing on Bakhtin, we may say that with this official severance from nationhood, the exiles inadvertently occupy a changed "chronotope" (Bakhtin 1981, 84). The chronotope of the narratives prior departure fall under what we have termed the adventure tale of the great-escape narrative, characterised by veiled imminent danger, furtive movement, speed of execution and near misses, and a certain type of hero that emerged from it. Chronological biographical time in the mode of the adventure tale is a figure of connection that links the stories of the musicians to that of South Africa. Once overseas, this time disappears; the link persists in the realisation of the musicians' departure – as they do further their musical careers. This change agrees with Bakhtin's observation that changes in the chronotope "or in people's basic conception of time and space, are to be explained by historic transformations in their mode of life" (Dentith 1995, 53). The narrativity of exit rests on the texts' uses of time in their narration. The texts all use chronological biographical time as their primary means of emplotment. This time

seems to correspond neatly with the historical events that occurred in South Africa at the time, especially if these are given a continuist or linear reading. The simultaneity between events narrated in the personal accounts and those narrated in the national biography, as well as the seeming causality flowing from the national biography to the autobiographies, strengthens this correspondence. It may even be said that the *kind of temporality* of the national biography prepares the kind of time in the autobiographies (Morson and Emerson 1990, 422). The image of the musicians brought forth by this chronotopic concordance is one of the subject as meaningful and as relevant, taking upon his or herself the qualities attributed to other politically significant South African anti-apartheid 'heroes': constantly under surveillance, committed to the struggle or to compromise, as befits the model to be emulated.

The exiling moment differs from departure, I argue, largely because it is not desired for its own sake. It introduces a chronotopic *dislocation* that is evident at three levels. The first dislocation reinterprets departure or exit as a type of exile. It prepares the construction of the exile as one who desired to, but was prevented from, returning. The second is evident in the encounter between the chronotope of the national biography and that of the musicians after departure. Here, apartheid South Africa's invidious chronotope infringes on the chronotope of the adventure tale, and the musicians' encounter with it negates the leap to freedom that departure had previously signified. This juxtaposition produces a disintegration of self-hood's location in time and space, a dislocation from the national biography that is then made official by bureaucratic exiling. Finally, rupture is also seen as an enabling opportunity to withdraw from the undesirable chronotope of the national biography. Exiling in this way bursts the limits of plot's chronological biographical time, and challenges the authorial/subject positions assumed by the autobiographers in the construction of

departure. We enter the exiling moment aware that a new kind of time begins, marked above all by the complexity of what in the end we may term the chronotope of exile.

The Reinterpretation of Exit as Banishment

As I have already argued, the musicians in this study view exit as a desired move, and the dominant emotion after departure is relief. This desire is attributed to the undesirable conditions in South Africa: departure is a choice that is no choice. Thus resentment is directed towards the historical context that brings about the desire to depart, rather than towards the desire itself. This suggests that exit was forced as well as wanted. This duality – exit as desired and exit as forced – governs the narration of exiling in various degrees.

The reinterpretation of exit as exile complements the changed tenor of departure in general:

> The notion of exile was theorized in the 1960s by people who left after Sharpeville … by the time the hard core of political activists had arrived [in the United Kingdom] in the mid-1960s and the ANC shifted back to Africa, some understanding of exile had been settled upon.
>
> (Israel 1999, 141)

By the time the autobiographies under discussion were written, then, the construction of an identity of exile had already reached some type of consensus. A key feature of this identification, at least for the musicians, was the reinterpretation of exit. Exit, already constructed as a politicised necessity, must also be seen as forced, as banishment. Banishment in the autobiographies is set up from the narration of departure, and is evident in the hint of sadness that colours the relief with which departure is otherwise narrated. In the recollection of their departure, a brief moment

of reflection arrests the speed of the adventure. Makeba, for example, recalls: "If someone were to tell me that I would never be returning, and I knew this for certain, I would never go away" (1988, 74). Likewise, Masekela recalls: "the reality of my departure hit me full-blast because for the first time I had a strange feeling that this would be the last time I would be seeing ... all the people I had known all my life" (2004, 109).

These moments temper the narrated excitement of departure. They reinscribe it as a loss that is signified by those who are left behind. It is this introduction of loss that marks the beginning of exit's reinterpretation as banishment. Prescience of this kind in autobiography is, however, a problematic concept, for what is being described has of course already happened. The time of retrospective recollection, where the realisation of departure's potential permanence is 'revealed', is foreshortened in both Makeba (1988) and in Masekela (2004) to coincide with the action being described. At the level of utterance (the past as recreated in the autobiography) this produces dramatic irony and heightened sympathy into the reading of the text, for the reader is aware that what the narrator perceives as a possibility does come to be (the utterance therefore points to a perceived other 'reality' – to the contemporaneous chronotope of the author as a former exile). Autobiography, as a retrospective reflection on past events, proceeds from the present time of narration. It follows, then, that earlier events are always already marked and mediated by this present time of narration. On this level of enunciation, (the re-creation of the past in the present unfolding of the autobiographical act[12]), hesitation inflects the narration of leaving with loss at the level of signification, and recasts departure as a form or stage of exile. At this level,

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[12] I take these explanations of utterance and enunciation from John Paul Eakin (in Lejeune 1989, x).

the inclusion becomes a *staging* of prescience. The constructedness of the narratives is in this way foregrounded.

Timothy Brennan has written that, "many words in the exile family divide themselves between an archaic or literary sense and a modern, political one: for example, banishment vs. deportation; émigré vs. immigrant; wanderer vs. refugee; exodus vs. flight" (1990, 61)[13]. When the autobiographies narrate departure as political, the notion of exit as flight (according to Brennan a modern political concept) dominates. For flight to be viewed more sympathetically, the adventurer must be rewritten as the victim. Moreover, flight must be reinterpreted as reaction (against pervasive historical forces) rather than desire (for personal advancement through music, or for the sake of leaving). Also, 'departure to' must be understated in favour of 'departure from', thus further rewriting departure as a wrenching from, with those (and that) left behind as the objects of loss. This is the first construction of exile.

The First Creation of an Exile: I have left vs. I cannot go home

When interpreted as consummated desire, departure is not equated with exile proper in the autobiographies. The personal reasons for departure are highlighted, and are further justified by the musicians' involvement in the musical life of their host countries. At this point in the narratives there is a complete disappearance of South African time-space. In time, however, abrupt reminders of home make it necessary for the musicians to return to South Africa. Prior the appearance of these personal imperatives, no desire is expressed by the musicians for return. Hints of nostalgia that are at times expressed by Masekela are immediately qualified as for example when he

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[13] The concept of exile as banishment is also suggested in Edward Said's essay "Reflections on Exile", though he downplays this version of exile for its secular, modern and political type (see Said 2000, 181).

laconically explains: "I missed my family, but I wasn't missing my country yet" (2004, 144). For the others, no such feelings are expressed.

The requirement to return is personal, but it is introduced alongside the grim events of post-Sharpeville South Africa. At this time, "many of those that had left in the 1940s and 1950s now no longer found it possible to return" (Israel 1999, 30). For the musicians, the prevention of return occurs through advice. Thus Masekela recalls that in 1963, whilst he was feeling increasingly blasé about studying,

> The pain of being unable to return home was becoming unbearable. A certain recklessness was creeping into my lifestyle. My parents' divorce triggered a new restlessness in me. I began to develop an aching desire to return to South Africa, teach music, and help my mother cope with her new responsibilities of having to care for my sisters on her own while my father prepared to take a new wife ... I was aching for the township life and decided that I would return to South Africa. I felt very strongly that I had learned everything in America that I needed to know, and it was time to share my experiences back home. I had made enough money to kick-start a new life in South Africa.
>
> (2004, 162)

Previously, Masekela had only expressed desire to return to his family, not to "the township life" or to his country. By saying that he "had learned everything in America" that he had come to learn, Masekela downplays his initial reasons for leaving, which were to follow a politically-free musical *career* rather than education. Thereafter, Masekela writes that he was advised against returning. The advice centred on the potential danger to his personal safety should he return to South Africa. Harry Belafonte warns that Masekela's temperament might place him in direct confrontation with the authorities and that in the isolation of South Africa, none would be there to protest his inevitable arrest or worse (162). This advice is ignored. Makeba is also said to have expressed her concern. Upon meeting the Bermans in London, they also warn him about the possible arrest that would await his return (163). His mother also

writes a letter expressing her displeasure. Finally, his sister Barbara, in London at the time on an exit permit from South Africa, pronounces his desire to return "insane" (163). In the end, Masekela writes, "All of this made me reconsider my decision to go home," and he seems subsequently resigned to view America as home "for better or for worse" (163).

Like Masekela, Makeba receives advice discouraging her decision to return. As with the other musician, the advice comes from those outside South Africa and those who had been left behind, especially family. Makeba (2004) hears news about her mother's death from Harry Belafonte's offices then makes immediate plans to return to South Africa:

> On my return to New York I rushed around trying to make arrangements to get to my mother's funeral. I called my people at home. *Bhut'* Joseph advised me that it wouldn't be safe for me to go back. Belafonte warned me against trying. But me, I said, "There's no way I'm not going home for my mother's funeral!" I couldn't imagine it. I went to the South African consulate. I would renew my visa. I would go home.
>
> (70-71)

Whereas ambivalence marked the narration of departure, return has to be unquestionably desired. This is clear in the reasons the musicians give for their desired return: Makeba's mother dies in 1960, and in 1962 Masekela's family disintegrates due to his parents' divorce (Makeba 1988, 97 and 2004, 70-71; Masekela 2004, 162). As we have seen, advice against returning is usually motivated by fear for the musician's safety. This gives some continuity with the narration of departure, which, because of its controversy, had been politicised and made to seem necessary and dangerous. It is also important that the advice comes from other people – rather than a personal disinclination. Remaining outside, then, has to be a reluctant decision.

These features of prevention through advice retain the constructed image of the narrator/protagonist encountered in the narration of departure. Masekela retains his position as a potential political hero through explicit echoes of the characterisations we have encountered previously: his outspokenness as a source of potential danger, and his sighting at Monty and Myrtle Berman's home. Makeba's shock at hearing the news about her mother and her inability to go home repeats the dynamic of personal and political present in her narration of departure. For both musicians, the advice given by those inside South Africa and outside is duly disregarded, presenting a type of hero whose desire for return is unwavering.

The inability to return home is also viewed in conjunction with the state of the nation. This still portrays the musicians as ineluctably linked with the national biography as they were in the narration of departure. Prevention through advice therefore accumulates the signs that incrementally mark them as certain types of heroes, by virtue of their (continued) (in)direct or potential victimisation by the apartheid state. We are still operating within chronological biographical time. There is, however, another type of exiling, which involves the exiling moment itself, and the manner in which this action is narrated. For inasmuch as the reasons for departure were attributed in various ways to the national biography, it would follow that exiling would be the culmination of such attribution. Analysing this event we are led to ask: in the retrospective recollection of this moment, is the national biography imagined as an explanation of why the person is being exiled? Further, does its narration follow the problems of those who are left at home and still live out the scripts of the national biography?

The Second Creation of an Exile: Bureaucratic Exiling by the South African State

The exiling moment marks official severance from home. Its narration operates either as a caesura, or as a moment of reflection or 'taking stock', or simply as an unexplained absence whose intervallic irruptions punctuate the flow of the narrative. Before this event, a series of symbolic encounters with 'home' occur. These include music from home (Masekela), news from home usually about the death of a loved one (Makeba), other upsetting personal news (Masekela), or news about the horrors at home that make contemplated return inadvisable (Makeba, Masekela and Mogotsi). Added to this is the primary symbol that represents South Africa, which must be confronted in order to return – the South African consulate (in the United States) or South Africa House (in the United Kingdom). Here, apartheid South Africa irrupts into the chronotope of the adventure tale, and the musicians' encounter with its repressive tools negates the leap to freedom that departure had previously signified. An example of this may be seen in Todd Matshikiza's *Chocolates for my Wife* (1961), written after he had left for the United Kingdom to tour with the South African musical *King Kong*. At this moment in the story, Matshikiza recalls his sojourn at South Africa House in London, where he had gone to read some South African newspapers:

> Ah! South Africa House imposingly situated to the left of Nelson's Column. I had been standing there when I suddenly realised I was looking at the sign of the Springbok, white South Africa's national symbol … The white South African doctor who had sent me to hospital for my eyes, had said of course you can get South African papers at South Africa House. That gave me the excuse to go in … carefully, cautiously, calculating for myself which way the safety exits were should an emergency arise … I went round the table looking like one searching for something to read … Something inside of me said, lift up your head, and when I did I found numerous eyes, blue, green and fiery red, peering at me from all round the reading-room. I left the table in the centre of the room and found myself crouching pressing against the wall as though someone was pushing me. I found myself in the silent, mute company of the

"South African 'Native' Bronze Heads" by a sculptor named van Wouw. They were to me grotesque. The first bore the title, "Native Awaiting Sentence". The other was called, "Sleeping Kaffir" ... I walked out of South Africa House and stood outside the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. I do not know how long I stood there until I felt a hand on my shoulder. A voice said, "Why don't you come inside, my friend." It was a clergyman from the church. When I got inside I suddenly realised I was soaking wet from head to foot. It had been raining while I stood out there.

(1961, 18-20)

In this moving account of encounter with racist white South African power, time regresses. Symbols of South Africa, such as South Africa House or the consulate in the United States bring with them not only the official space of home, but also its invidious time. Time does indeed stop for Matshikiza, suspended by the stultifying, almost claustrophobic, aura of official South African space. Matshikiza's exclusion from the communion of reading pushes him away from any communal imagining of nationhood. (There remains also his fascinating observation that there was nothing he could find an excuse to pick up and look at, suggesting a fundamental exclusion from discourses on South Africa circulating at the time). The language used to describe this metaphorical exiling is telling. It is mostly in the passive voice, describing most effectively what was done *to* him: so for example he finds himself crouching "as though someone was pushing" him. We may take this to be a symbolic or metaphorical pushing, galvanised by the politics of exclusion that formed in part the logic of apartheid, sanctioned by a racial ideology. It is not surprising, therefore, that he finds himself in the "silent mute company" of South African frozen "natives" and "kaffirs", themselves representations of the cultural and political space afforded black South Africans at the time: marginal, silenced, and confined to the time of a frozen history. The politics of the national biography's chronotope for the first time do nothing for the exile except produce a nothingness, an existential time-warp that, even

in the synthesising project of narration, preserves its chronotopic fragmentation, inducing only a sense of non-time: "I do not know how long I stood there".

There is a similar dynamic in Makeba's autobiographies. Her encounter with South African time-space takes on various nuances, whose common point is that at the end there is a disintegration of self-hood and its location in time and space. The passport Makeba procures to depart South Africa limits her travels to Europe (1988, 77). Later, she applies for a visa for the United States (1988, 79; 2004, 55 and 57). Probably due to her success there, she overstays her US visa (1988, 90). Upon her wish to renew her visa to return to South Africa, her passport is stamped invalid, effectively exiling her (1988, 98; 2004, 71):

> I am nervous when I go into the South African consulate. Here I am once again nothing but a native black without rights. The darling of the American newsmagazines and music industry, the girl who charmed New York sophisticates and started a fashion trend with her hair and clothes, here she is just a kaffir who doesn't know her place. The man at the desk takes my passport. He does not speak to me, but to himself when he says, "Miriam Makeba", as if he was expecting this moment.
> He takes a rubber stamp and slams it down on my passport. Then he walks away. I pick up my passport. It is stamped "INVALID".
> For an instant my breath catches in my throat as I realize what has happened. They have done it: They have exiled me. I am not permitted to go home, not now, and maybe not ever … with the single impression of a rubber stamp, I am in exile. I and my daughter, alone in a West that is bright and rich but is foreign to us.
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> (1988, 98 see also Makeba 2004, 70-71)

As with Matshikiza, we observe the regression of time into that of South Africa's apartheid national biography: Makeba regresses into "a native black without rights", "a kaffir who doesn't know her place". Within her biographical time, Makeba had emerged as a rising musical star whose progress was catapulted by her departure from South Africa. This time is here overwhelmed by the time of the national biography,

which sought to write black South Africans outside its privileged purview of desirable citizens. With the reality of exile introduced into the story in this form, we see again the chronotopic dislocation that results from this encounter: America or 'the West', though previously imbued with images of hope and opportunity, become – as home – the space of alienation and banishment.

Masekela's narration of exile differs from the above. After Masekela decides against returning to South Africa in 1963, while his papers were in order, in 1964 his passport expires and his request to renew it is refused, thus rendering him stateless. This is related later on in the autobiography, when events occurring five years later (narrated time) are recounted. Having remained in the United States after 'reconsidering' his decision, in 1968 Masekela decided to travel to Zambia to visit his sister Barbara in Lusaka:

> My only problem was I didn't have a passport. In 1964, after my first one expired, I went to the South African consulate in New York and applied for a new one. Every time I enquired about its status, I was told an answer had not yet come from Pretoria. After several years I got the message and stopped trying.
>
> (2004, 192)

It is only as an aside that Masekela's expatriation and the manner in which it was done are revealed to the reader (see also Masekela 244). The expatriation is mentioned only in isolated moments throughout the text (it does not even appear as an entry in the index). The reality of enforced distance from South Africa only reaches its height in Masekela's narration of his mother's death in 1978 (311). By this time, Masekela was already an outspoken anti-apartheid activist. Upon hearing about her death, therefore, he possibly realised the futility of applying for a visa and could not return for her funeral (312). There are several possible reasons for Masekela's method

of narration. For exile to be imbued with enough bathos, the desire for return has to be sufficiently potent. In other words, exile works within the narrative's hierarchy of meaning only when it functions as prevention. Thus after relating how he was prevented from returning home when he so desired (or felt he was required), his request for papers to travel elsewhere have minimum value in the story *as a story of exile*. The theme of exile as non-return reappears when Masekela realises that, like Makeba, he cannot go home for his mother's funeral.

We have seen that in the narration of prevention from return by advice, the prevailing chaos of post-Sharpeville South Africa is used as a dialogising context. The envisioned danger to Masekela's person is heightened through reference to this chaos. Such use of the national biography downplays Masekela's agency in the decision against return at this time. Where Masekela's narration detracts from the chronotope of the national biography is in its *intervallic* narration of exiling, which does not follow the peak and low points of the national biography's chronology. A possible reading of this intervallic narration is that its form enacts the arbitrariness of his subsequent bureaucratic exiling, where no reason is given for the refusal to renew his passport, and no explicit tie to the national biography is mentioned in conjunction with the act.

In sum, having made it difficult for the musicians to leave South Africa, the state and its foreign apparatuses now refuse them re-entry. In other words, bureaucratic prevention launches the exile into the chronos of expectancy to return home. Because this expectancy cannot be realised, it renders the exilic habitation permanent, and infuses the topos that is lost with all the desire born of belatedness, making the chronos of home that is remembered more urgent. This is why in these texts the reality of exile is not narrated as 'I have left', but as 'I cannot go home'. The dramatic

point in all the texts is reached with this realisation of forced stasis. The case of the two musicians was not an isolated incident, but part of the lot that befell other (politicised) departees. For example, Es'kia Mphahlele, in *Afrika My Music*, relates a similar dilemma:

> My younger brother, Baasie (Solomon), was ill with throat cancer. As I had surrendered my South African passport in 1959 (Rebecca in 1960), to take advantage of a British passport before Nigeria became independent, I had to apply for a visa to visit my brother, his family, and my sister. I did this through the consulate in Nairobi. My application was turned down. I had written a number of articles for the Nigerian press in which I attacked white racism in South Africa ... so it figured.
>
> (1984, 45-6)

What sets the musicians apart from Mphahlele, who was overtly political and had already been banned while inside South Africa, is that the political stature of the musicians at the time was insignificant. Indeed, the musicians themselves comment on their arbitrary banishment. Here is Makeba after being exiled:

> I flee the building. I do not dare ask questions, because I know the answer ... They are displeased with me. I have gone too far. I have become too big. *Maybe they fear I will speak out against them. I have not said a word about politics in all the newspaper stories that have been printed about me. But I am still dangerous.*
>
> (1988, 98 my emphases)

It is the arbitrariness of the exiling that heightens the dramatic impact of the scene. It portrays the exile as a victim, particularly as she has not actively offended Pretoria in any way. It can be supposed that the revoking of the passport is due to Makeba's associations with members of the African-American community involved in the Civil Rights Movement at the time – such as Harry Belafonte – such that although she had

not spoken out in the same manner as for example Mphahlele (1984), her visibility and worldliness would, in the vocabulary of the time, make of her a spoilt native who did not know her place. Masekela's story reveals a similar arbitrariness: no reason is given, either by him or by the state, for the refusal to renew his passport. Therefore, while actual departure severs links with South Africa's national biography, its reinterpretation as loss and banishment connects the musicians to a *politicised* version of the national biography. Once the chronotope of the national biography infringes into their chronological biographical time, however, it induces a chronotopic dislocation that fractures this link. Arbitrary exiling exacerbates this chronotopic dislocation. For unlike the construction of a politically meaningful departure or banishment that the musicians prefer in narration, the arbitrary nature of bureaucratic exiling by the South African state cannot be made sense of within this construction of political significance.

South African historiography marks this arbitrariness a characteristic of 1960s 'grand' or 'total' apartheid, whose focus on routinizing bureaucratic control was part of its oppressive pillars (Maylam 2001, 185-186; Norval 1996, 104). As its restriction of black South African mobility affected those still living in the time of the national biography, so it did to those whose return it deemed undesirable. Here is Mphahlele again in *Afrika My Music*:

> Back to 1962, the African tour. After arriving in Salisbury I tried again for a visa. I had the silly idea that as the journey would be just across the Limpopo, a visa should not be that difficult to obtain. No luck. I was never going to see my brother again. If ever again I hear someone say bureaucracy is impersonal, I shall scream. Because that says nothing about what I felt then. Still less about what I feel today.
>
> (1984, 53)

This example shows above all the non-contemporaneity of the exile's chronological biographical chronotope with that of the national biography. This non-contemporaneity effects a division of space into South Africa and *any other* space elsewhere as insurmountably 'other'. Mphahlele's "silly idea" is his assumption that distance from South Africa is a matter of degree, of measure. His conception of time clashes and is defeated by the absolute official time of the apartheid national biography. For inasmuch as the logic of apartheid was built on a system of impossible binaries, this logic stretched to include apprehensions of space (*volksland* vs. homeland, or South Africa vs. the rest of the dark continent). What was at stake for the guardians of the national biography, then, was to maintain this *kind* of time or chronotope.

When read chronotopically, the musicians' bureaucratic exiling by the apartheid state is in fact meaningless. The rubber stamp that rendered Makeba's passport invalid and the disregard accorded to Masekela during his enquiries, were all part of the system. If the masterplot of the national biography and the meta-identity of exile are kept in mind during the reading of the exiling moment, we are led to a possible reading that locates *fear of meaninglessness* to be the narratives' catalyst. For it is this meaninglessness, arguably more than the exiling itself, that would render the musicians *inessential* to the national biography. After all, the manner in which the musicians were exiled is a familiar story in 1960s South Africa. Moreover, exile, was also endured by other politically significant persons in South Africa, symbolised by banishment to Robben Island, whose task was directly linked to the national biography as 'the Struggle'. The exiling moment, then, challenges the authorial/subject positions assumed by the autobiographers in the construction of a politically significant departure. The chronotopic crisis it introduces is symbolised in

the autobiographies by the disintegration of identity. For example, Makeba's expatriation forces her to realise: "My family. My home. *Everything that has ever gone into the making of myself,* gone!" (1988, 98 my emphases). The loss of everything that has gone into the making of oneself, however, is not greeted with equal despair. With Mogotsi, it becomes a moment of liberation and rebirth, and the very severance from the national biography symbolises possibility for less tyrannical processes of identity (re)construction.

Mogotsi's final severance from South Africa differs from those of Makeba and Masekela, as he chooses not to return and foregrounds this choice. This choice is retold against the background story relating *King Kong*'s rejection in America and the cast's pending return to South Africa in 1962:

> We had hoped the States would have been a possibility and were really downhearted when that did not work out. But we realised that we had no future going back to South Africa. That would be disastrous ... We had to decide whether to return home or stay in England ... The Brothers were very reluctant to consider going back. We were near the end of our tether. The only way for us to progress was to stay out of South Africa and seek new pastures. So we decided to stay in London. The management said if we stayed they would not pay our fares home later. And there was no offer to assist us to remain in London. But we felt we had no choice.
>
> (2002, 74)

The firmness against return is as unwavering as the reasons given by Makeba and Masekela *for* required return. The same reasons Mogotsi had given for departure (professional), become his reason for deciding against return, which is written as a choice that is "no choice". After this, there is no further linkage to the national biography in the narration of his decision; indeed, The Brothers would be alone in London, without the network already developed by Masekela and Makeba in the United States. Whereas for Makeba and Masekela the moment of exiling meant a

conflict and at times complete disintegration of the self, for Mogotsi it is written as an opportunity not only to defend the self but also to (re)define it. For him, non-return is motivated by the opportunity to be a certain version of himself: a musician. This is evident from his enumeration of the reasons why returning to South Africa would be, as he terms it, "disastrous":

> I remembered the way the police treated us blacks, the pass laws and all the restrictions we faced. And the oppression was increasing all the time. These were grim times in South Africa. I thought of friends who worked in the docks in South Africa who changed their names and pretended to be Americans … And others who called themselves Coloured and spoke Afrikaans to avoid arrest. These subterfuges had given them privileges they could never enjoy as Africans.
>
> (73-74)

This presents an encounter with South Africa, this time through memory, whose appearance preludes the narration of the exiling moment. The focus on South Africa concerns the violence to the self that comes from the workings of apartheid. Mogotsi's narration of exile imagines a sympathetic addressee to whom an appeal to the (mythical) primacy of authenticity to oneself is made. Another subtle withdrawal from the national biography is his exit from the pretences needed to thwart apartheid's official machinery. This withdrawal is more than from the 'life' but also from a role whose function directly relates to the scripts of the national biography – a script that had crafted his departure in the mode of controversy and 'hustling' (see previous chapter). Mogotsi therefore, in departing from the national biography also departs from the adventure tale of the great-escape narrative. The self-imposed exiling strategically escapes the arbitrariness of reaction enforced as a way of life for black South Africans' encounter with apartheid power.

The Exiling Moment

The narration of exiling is therefore a complexly negotiated and imagined terrain. Its status in the protagonists' autobiographies is phenomenologically acute, while its importance in the wider sphere of the narrated past has negligible significance except when operating as prevention of return. In their desire to merge with the national biography from which they were severed, however, the musicians convert this insignificance or arbitrariness to a moment of significance. Exiling has to be elevated to the position of a constituent event and thus mark the narratives as South African exile autobiographies. This integration marks the boundaries of exclusion governing the narration of exiling that the narratives attempt to conceal. These boundaries depend on viewing the exiling moment as a bedrock for explaining both preceding events and those to follow, as 'originary': a 'first' moment in the new historical sequence begun by exile, unknown through any recourse to previous understandings of the national biography (see Currie 1998, 82 on the Derridean originary).

Can we, however, speak of an originary exiling 'moment'? Wedded as they are to the national biography, how can we separate the narrators' exiling from the processes of alienation that affected South Africans at this time? In privileging the term 'exile', we must ask what this sign excludes, and how this exclusion is erased by the texts through the extraction of exile as an originary event. Drawing on Mark Currie's reading of Derrida's politics of narrative, we observe how "the word cannot be extracted from the process of language" (1998, 81). Similarly, the notion of exile and the restriction of movement cannot be separated from the narrative of South Africa's national biography as a whole. As Currie continues:

> A moment, like a word, only comes into being as a structure of exclusion or an undivided presence. A moment can only be present when it is not yet in the

past and no longer in the future. But any definition of what a moment is, any attempt to cleanse the moment of the trace of past and future and see it as pure presence, will be forced to impose arbitrary boundaries which mark off the present from past and future. As with any structure of exclusion, the moment then becomes an entity in its own right but only by virtue of the fact that it has arbitrarily excluded the relations that constitute it.

(1998, 81-82)

The inability to refer to the national biography as a referent (however problematic) in the narration of the exiling moment shows the process of exclusion at work in the narratives. Throughout our chronotopic investigation of the musicians' exiling moment, it has been clear that in the attempt to narrate exiling, the authors have sought to exceptionalise exiling as a personal wrong. They have done this by highlighting exiling as prevention from return, rather than explore it as part and parcel of the pervasive workings of bureaucracy at the time of grand apartheid. They have specifically aligned their exiling with a heroic tale of South Africa's political exile narrative that has coalesced to form a 'meta-identity' of exile.

In this way, the alienation of the dispossessed in South Africa's apartheid of the 1960s becomes integrated into the horizon of intelligibility that is exile in these texts. We can therefore say that the chronotope of exile operates as one of absence, but it is the absences themselves that are written as blanks of meaning against which the significance of exile is inscribed and is made possible. These absences are those who are left behind and the land that is left behind – narrated as loss, as sacrifice. These absences are mute; their discourse is always mediated by the organising centre of the autobiographical consciousness. They appear as figures that symbolise the 'wrenching from', and the extent of their sacrifice and chronotopic distance is used only to reinforce the musicians' inability to return.

Analysing the construction of exiling as an event, and tracing the marks whose exclusion are necessary for it to be an event, we have been able to see that the national biography is used strategically by the musicians to make their own exiling signify. In order to do this, they align themselves with the heroic narrative of political exile, underwritten by the broader narrative of the national biography as 'the Struggle'. This heroic narrative, in postapartheid South Africa, is a powerful one. In establishing dialogue with only this narrative, certain experiences of alienation assume greater importance than others, and certain ways of being an exile become more important than others.

The forms of alienation that constituted South Africa's everyday chronotope in the 1950s and the 1960s are many; they caused a no less painful and arbitrary dislocation for those who were left behind. The musicians' stories of exiling are part of this milieu. Yet the national biography, as a narrative of national liberation, selects exemplary departures, affecting sacrifices and banishments. But, to serve the current biography of the nation that reduces South Africa's past to heroic clashes with the apartheid state, these selected instances of exiling must be constructed as 'our' most important stories.

Chapter 3

Topographies from/of Absence: Re-membering South Africa

PLOT: 1. (a) A small piece of ground, generally used for a specific purpose. (b) A measured area of land; lot ...4. A secret plan to accomplish a hostile or illegal purpose; scheme.

Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot*

In the musicians' autobiographies, space and spatiality are of more narrative value than time and temporality, though they may not be conceived separately from the latter. In the previous chapter, it emerged that narrated crises in temporality were in part grounded on the official conception of space and the narrator/protagonist's relation thereto. Space, in South Africa's national biography, *is* the plot – with plot perceived as territory and as landscape. Conceived as such, plot generates explanatory narratives for different ways of claiming the space 'south africa' as signifier and referent. Because the autobiographies are constructed on an unproblematised documentary realism, descriptions of space *as* (a) plot rely on mimesis. Insofar as mimesis presumes the existence of an outer 'reality' or context that need only be re-presented, this narrative device is useful. For the historically verifiable facts of the national biography, during and after apartheid, provide the autobiographies with a ready story that recounts the power dynamics of land ownership throughout South Africa's history (Robinson 1990, 1996; Maylam 1996). During particular South African 'epistemes', one type of narrative has asserted power over others as a metanarrative for the rightful ownership of 'south africa'. There is always, then, (acrimonious) dialogue between the narratives: within the national biography, between the national biography and the autobiographies under discussion, and within

these autobiographies. This dialogic interrelation is discernible through a chronotopic

investigation that documentary readings may occlude.

A dialogic reading of these competing narratives avoids fetishizing space. As

Henri Lefebvre has noted, by ignoring the interrelations that inform the production of

spaces,

> we fall into the trap of treating space 'in itself', as space as such. We come to
> think in terms of spatiality, and so fetishize space in a way reminiscent of the
> old fetishism of commodities, where the trap lay in exchange, and the error
> was to consider 'things' in isolation, as 'things in themselves'.
>
> (in Merrifield 2000, 172)

Lefebvre's observation guards against the treatment of 'south africa' as a sort of

'transcendental signified', sufficient in and of itself, beyond 'play'. The inscription

and delimiting of this chronotopic coincidence – 'south africa' – needs to be viewed

as a catachresis, in that "like all proper names it is a mark with an arbitrary connection

to its referent" (Spivak 1999, 188).

Inscription or attribution of signification into space is an act of power whose

effects are felt ontologically and epistemologically. As the inaugural sign of the

colonising moment, signification is exemplified by a proprietary 'imperial gaze',

which creates the space surveyed in its act of appropriation (Gregory 2000, 303). This

gaze constitutes in Gayatri Spivak's terms a 'worlding', whereby colonisers wilfully

view the contemplated space as an uninscribed earth upon which they may make their

'mark' (1990, 1). Any delineation of space within this colonial 'mapping', then, is

marked by purpose rather than merely nominal (Coetzee 1988, 32; Penn 1993, 32;

Marais 1996, 19). Whether one refers to this process as 'worlding', 'inscription' or the

'imperial gaze', all such permutations index the uneven distribution of power over the said territory[14].

In the national biography's demarcation of 'south africa' as territory, explanation through narrative came *after* the act of naming and/as claiming. The forms of narration used hid the *activity* of appropriation involved by aestheticising the territory claimed (Coetzee 1988, Penn 1993). To this end, guardians of the national biography constructed the territory as a backdrop or 'natural' context amenable for claiming.

In our reading, we scrutinise the contradictory inscriptions that define the chronotopic coincidence 'south africa' hegemonically, and we problematise South Africa as a 'transcendental signified'. We take for granted that 'worlding' forms part of imperialist discourse (Morton 2003, 18), whose counter-discourses have generated various forms of other 'worlds'. These other 'worlds' have sought to present an alternative reality or space to that engendered and inscribed by the imperial gaze (see for example Mudimbe 1988, xi). We discern several orders of mimesis, both in the national biography and in the autobiographies, that narrate South African space. The first mimetic narration is historical realism, which is dependent on historical accounts of the territorialisation of the land. The second involves counter-narratives that have challenged the national biography's claims. The third takes 'south africa' as a space of struggle for meaning and belonging. Cutting through the different conceptions of 'south africa' then, is the recognition that "worlding is also a texting, textualising, a making into art, a making into an object to be understood" (Spivak 1990, 1).

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[14] In South Africa, this purpose is evident for example in the many names the geographic territory has assumed over time: from a Cape, to a colony, to a Union and, finally, a Republic.

'south africa' as Territory and Historical Realism

Historical realism, in this context, refers to the contents of a historical epoch as recounted in the national biography. As such, it is a primitive version of realism, as realism has seen a shift in emphasis from content to literary treatment (see Furst 1992, 5-6, 8). Space in this context is seen as territory. Robert Sack (1983) has defined territoriality as " 'the attempt by an individual or group to influence, affect, or control objects, people and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over [a] geographic area'" (cited in Robinson 1996, 19). In South Africa's national biography, territorialisation is evident in the series of laws that marked the dispersal of black South Africans from their accustomed spaces. Controlled access to space was determined by factors such as the country's economy, race, local and state policies. As Maylam has observed:

> [The 1913 Land Act] prohibited African land purchase in white rural areas, and the 1923 Urban Areas Act denied Africans the right to freehold title in municipal townships ... the Native Laws Amendment Act in 1937 ... barred [Africans] from buying landed property in urban areas outside the reserves ... More significant, in terms of the regulation of space, was the Group Areas Act of 1950. This is often seen as the key component of apartheid social engineering.
>
> (1996, 9; 22 see also Norval 1996, 130-131)

These political and historical dynamics are particularised and concretised in the musicians' autobiographies. As Lilian Furst has observed of literature's mimetic approach to writing, "Realism presents a concrete, individualised figure embedded in the context of a particular place at a particular time. The impression of fidelity to life which it creates stems above all from the individualisation and particularisation of the figures" (1992, 6). In other words, protagonists in literature, and perforce in autobiography, are chronotopically positioned (see Bakhtin 1981, 84-85; Holloway

and Kneale 2000, 77). Within the historical chronotope of segregationist South Africa, they occupy a racially, economically and spatially[15] marginalized positionality

The musicians seek to assimilate the narrated historical chronotope of 'south africa' into their life histories. They do this primarily through contextualising descriptions of birth, thus inaugurating a personalised historical chronotope. Apart from Makeba (1988), these descriptions take up little narrative space in the texts. They sufficiently establish the authors' chronotopic positions such that their *signatures* point not only to the autobiographical contract (in that the reader realises that the author of the tale is also the subject of the text), but also to the text's narrative discourse, where this narrator/protagonist is also 'the grammatical person' – the 'I' – in the tale (Lejeune 1989, 6). For example, Makeba (1988) writes that at the time of her birth, her father was seeking work in far away Johannesburg (3). This implies that Makeba, like many other black South Africans, was born in one of the satellite townships whose marginalization is one of the primary features of the apartheid landscape (Robinson 1996, 5). Masekela opens his autobiography with an account of where he grew up, which was "on a dusty, tree-lined avenue in Kwa-Guqa Township, Witbank, about one hundred miles from Johannesburg" (2004, 4). Finally, Mogotsi tells us that he was born in Pimville, also noting that "Pimville was a black township south west of Johannesburg. It was built to house the workers from the factories and the great gold mines of Johannesburg – Egoli, the city of gold, as it was known" (2002, 11).

For all three musicians, then, birth in 'South Africa' meant an arrival into an already circumscribed space. They are already marginalized, and their place in the socio-economic landscape has been predetermined by the political structures of the

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[15] The protagonists' positioning in terms of gender is also of crucial importance, but for a different argument to that concerning us at the moment (but see Allen 2000).

territory at the time. In assimilating the real historical chronotope to the narrated chronotope of the autobiographies, therefore, the grammatical 'I' assumes a 'role' that embodies and exemplifies the 'fate' of the many who occupied the same positionality. The dialogue maintained here is with the content of apartheid's national biography. For what the instrumental assertion of power affected by the segregation of space meant was, "in essence, [that] a set of differential citizenships were being carved out in urban space" (Robinson 1996, 5). To challenge the enforced terms of this citizenship, the narrated space of birth has to be reimagined accordingly: ownership must be asserted.

Asserting Ownership: Myths of Beginnings and Historical Realism

Commenting on grounding ideologies of national identity and nationalism, Anthony D. Smith observes that theories of nationalism receive their legitimating narrative by asserting authentic belonging. This authentic belonging is contained in the distant past that is regularly revisited to affirm or confirm this "autochthonous" and "originary" identity (2001, 29-31). National identity, in other words, is grounded not only on the identification of bounded space but also on a bounded and valorised 'absolute past' (Bakhtin 1981).

This unity, however, is precarious (Bhabha 1990, 1). Its inauguration, institutionalisation and maintenance are a continual synthesising process that attempts to construct a preferred version of the nation. The effort to circumscribe geographic boundaries is echoed in the efforts to contain a pristine authenticity that is constantly under threat from time. Thus the absolute time that characterises national biographies stresses the continuity of timelessness or perpetual renewal, apparent, as Homi Bhabha states, in "the attempt by nationalist discourses persistently to produce the

idea of the nation as a continuous narrative of national progress, the narcissism of self-regeneration, the primeval present of the *Volk*" (1990, 1).

In South Africa these discourses, too, form a continuous narrative whose commonality rests only in *continuity* but is otherwise variously inflected from different sides of the political spectrum. The narratives generated by different readings of this national biography give rise to contesting theoretical fictions[16] or political mythologies. According to Leonard Thompson, what is meant by a political myth, is "a tale told about the past to legitimate or discredit a regime; and by a political mythology, a cluster of such myths that reinforce one another and jointly constitute the historical element in the ideology of the regime or its rival" (1985, 1).

The political myth favoured by the ruling Afrikaner powers during apartheid centred on theories of race and the entitlements of a superior race, with Afrikaners naturally occupying a privileged space in the constructed hierarchy. Further dimensions to this raciology were constructed – one of which involved the development of Afrikaans literature (see Coetzee 1988, 125-6). The other had homegrown Calvinist undertones, where the Afrikaner nation – already somewhat usefully homogenised by the establishment of a 'national' literature – was viewed as a Chosen People with a God-given destiny at the tip of dark Africa (Thompson 1985, 29; Coetzee 1988, 2; 118). To legitimate this narrative in secular serial time, however, it became not only important that these events be commemorated, but that they be metaphorically adapted to remain useful in a different chronotope. Hence Thompson observes,

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[16] Gayatri Spivak defines a theoretical fiction to be a "methodological presupposition without which the internal coherence of an argument cannot be secured" (1999, 82)

The most dramatic event in the upsurge of Afrikaner nationalism was the symbolic ox-wagon trek of 1938, which celebrated the centenary of the Great Trek [culminating on a hill overlooking Pretoria] ... There, on 16 December 1938, the centenary of the Battle of Blood River, which marked the defeat of the Zulu Kingdom, more than 100,000 Afrikaners ... attended the ceremonial laying of the foundation stone of the Voortrekker Monument. Men grew beards, women wore *voortrekker* dress, for the occasion.

(1985, 39)

That the Great Trek, seen as a symbolic journey of struggle for the wandering Afrikaner nation to found their Promised Land, was celebrated during this time is suggestive. As an event, it condenses the forms theorists have noted in narratives of national identity: from evolution to eventual triumph. The Calvinist myth in this way dovetails with a discernible historical event and the two mutually reinforce each other, forming as such a political mythology. The Great Trek is also a specifically chronotopic metaphor, both for its evocation of a complex temporality and also because it denotes a conquering of space by the travellers (not for nothing does it end in Pretoria, the then capital city of the country)[17]. This political mythology chronicles the political claiming of land and its territorialisation by the apartheid state against its others in the mode of struggle[18]. Its symbolic use during the rise of Afrikaner nationalism in the late 1930s, indexes the movement of this myth to a hegemonic social imaginary. As Aletta Norval, drawing on Ernesto Laclau has noted,

apartheid changed from being a myth associated with the experiences of a particular group, to an imaginary horizon acting as a surface of inscription for the ordering of all social relations. This movement from myth to imaginary involves, as Laclau argues, the metaphorization of the literal contents of particular social demands; that is, a retreat of the concrete demands informing the myth such that it starts to function as a general surface of inscription of any social demand.

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[17] The inimical space of Pretoria as 'home' plays a large part in the construction of an exile identity. At times, it is even the only real point South African exiles have in common (see Israel 1999, 110).
[18] The efficacy of the myth appropriated by the Afrikaner-led apartheid state – the story of wandering Israelites in search of a promised land – points to this mode of struggle (see Coetzee 1988, 2).

(1996, 9)

It is no longer, then, about the Great Trek. It is significant therefore that the temporal weight of apartheid's national biography stresses that black Africans "are deemed to have arrived in South Africa no earlier than the first Dutch settlers ... [and] ... therefore have no greater historical claim over the land than Whites" (Thompson 1985, 29; 70). Thus the Chosen People (time immemorial), through overcoming strife and struggle (serial secular historical time with divine predestination), have now conquered the vicissitudes of serial time in the present, as they were always meant to do.

The autobiographers' entry into the apartheid national biography's chronotope attempts to assert belonging. This is achieved by the autobiographers' seizing of an equivalent historical realism to contextualise their birth. Thus Miriam Makeba, after introducing her personalised historical chronotope interrupts her narrative to state: "I must tell you how things happened for us, the original South Africans, so you will know how the evil of today came to be":

> In the 1600s the Dutch came to our beautiful seacoasts on the southern tip of the great African continent ... We, the Africans, had developed a just and complex tribal life *before* the Europeans came. Our *ancient* laws and traditions, like our art and architecture, *grew from our profound closeness to our land*. We had grown crops on our great plains and built village huts beside our riverbanks *thousands of years before* man entered the Western Hemisphere. There were tribal wars, but we lived in *harmony with the land* for so long we had no reason to think this harmony would not last forever. Ours was a marriage, a love affair – the land would nurture us, and we would honor the land. But the land was too rich and too good. The powerful and greedy invaders saw this at once. Came each new period in history, our land provided the natural resource that was needed ... For these riches the European settlers fought one another. We Africans were not consulted or even paid attention to. We were pushed aside, robbed of our land. When we protested we were massacred. A handful of whites took power, and with their boots they pressed

the faces of an entire people to the dirt. Three hundred years have passed, but the weight of oppression is still on our backs. The taste of dirt, flavored with our tears and our blood, is still bitter.

(1988, 5-6 my emphases)

As seen from this example, Makeba is aware of the historical dynamics of power that have placed her (and as she adds, her 'people') in an undesirable chronotopic position. Her version of history offers a diametrically opposed story that asserts, counter to the apartheid national biography's claim, her belonging – which is presented as prior and complete before European intervention. As with the apartheid mythology's theoretical fiction, her argument appeals to time (the absolute past) and attachment to space. Unlike apartheid's theoretical fiction, however, appeals to the 'rightness' of black South Africa's primary claim to the land are legitimated by the immemorial existence of certain cultural practices. Moreover, the expropriation of land from black South Africans is explained by economic forces, rather than religious sanction. To these economic forces, Makeba also exposes the duplicity encased in apartheid's theoretical fictions, as she writes:

The whites have to justify their rape of our land, and so they claim we are inferior. We are not worthy of God's gifts. It says so in their Bible. They lay claim to our land and our lives and then, to add insult to injury, they patronize us. They say we are ignorant children. Our salvation and welfare are – alas! – "the white man's burden"

[...]

To justify the way they have stolen our land from us, the Afrikaners suddenly declare that the country was never ours in the first place. In fact, we never existed. When the first Dutch settlers arrived in the 1600s at the Cape of Good Hope, there were no natives to meet them. We are now told that our ancestors migrated down from the northern Transvaal after the white settlers had already established themselves.

(1988, 19; 26)

Having told the reader of the time, place and circumstances of his birth, Hugh

Masekela, like Miriam Makeba, follows his introduction with a historical dissertation

that provides an analysis of 'beginnings':

> The Ndebele kingdom stretched over most of the northeastern part of the country, a mineral-rich territory that British and Dutch settlers fiercely contested during the Boer War (1899-1902). Out of pure goodwill and honest charity, the Ndebele granted Dutch settlers land in which to carve out a settlement. But when English troops gained the upper hand and overran Dutch strongholds, the Dutch confiscated the remaining Ndebele territories, murdering any resisters, and leaving my young grandmother and most of her people landless, destitute, and on the run.
>
> (2004, 5)

The ironic tone of the narrator refuses to assent to apartheid's emplotment of South

African history as the Afrikaner's epic birth-evolution-triumph. Masekela's irreverent

position vis-à-vis this constructed Afrikaner epic is further shown by his parodic

appropriation and repetition of its argot. For example, while continuing his story of

the Ndebele dispossession, he relates that mining towns were then founded, wherein

"the 'conquered natives' were settled into townships from which were drawn pools of

unskilled laborers to work" (2004, 5). In this Bakhtinian movement of language,

where an otherwise hegemonic script is despite itself made to "interilluminate"

another (1981, 17), the epic national biography is wrested from its pedestal of "heroic

past", and, in its new context, undermines the finality implied by the term "conquered

natives". As Bakhtin has observed,

> By its very nature the epic world of the absolute past is inaccessible to personal experience and does not permit an individual, personal point of view or evaluation. One cannot glimpse it, grope for it, touch it; one cannot look at it from just any point of view; it is impossible to experience it, analyze it, take it apart, penetrate into its core. It is given solely as tradition, sacred and

sacrosanct, evaluated in the same way by all and demanding a pious attitude toward itself.

(1981, 16; 17)

Both writers defy the epic text's strictures – as events, as values and as ideologies. Against the grain of apartheid's national biography, the autobiographers' narratives assert their permanence and centrality to the story of beginnings, and decentre the 'core' of the national biography's theoretical fictions.

For the writers, accounting for the seizure of space by using historical explanation is a dialogue with the apartheid national biography or a dialogue *in absentia* (Todorov 1984, 77). For their counter-narratives to be unquestioned and unquestionable, certain rhetorical effects are necessary. The first requires a type of narrative that underplays its narrativity by using 'historical data' or facts as evidence. The musicians' counter-evidence is supplied by the lived reality of segregationist South Africa, whose very nature depended on the removals, partitioning and territorialisation of space (Maylam 1996; Robinson 1990, 1996). To this end, the dialogue initiated relies on an equivalent historical realism used toward different ends. On the one hand, the national biography and its narrative consolidation as political mythology and social imaginary form a uniform national language for the writing and interpretation of history. On the other hand, the truth or realness appealed to by the autobiographies depends on a movement that overhauls existing hegemonic discourses of the national biography. We have here, then, an example of dialogue based on external heterology, defined by Todorov as one "that is between the homogeneous style of the work and the other dominant styles of the period" (1984, 77).

Yet the seeming equivalence encouraged by historical realism is deceptive. For the autobiographies' aim, as forms of narrative, is not solely to offer a counter-narrative

of history, but to situate the subject being narrated. The latter may be viewed as an equivalent attempt at signification that we have already seen at play in the autobiographies' assimilation of plot and time. The efficacy of historical realism as conceived here relies on the texts' form and content. Description of space, as a contextualising device, forms part and parcel of this 'reality effect' (Barthes 1992, 136). Description, as Roland Barthes continues elsewhere, is devoid of plot's predictive aspect and may have little significance for plot. The "ultimate significance of this insignificance" (ibid.), has traditionally been borne by the aesthetic function that is tightly bound up with realism. Its function is precisely to accentuate the 'real' through sublating the process of its writing, and thus present the described reality as a direct encounter between "the object and its expression" (ibid., 140). As I have stated before, however, in this discursive sphere, space *is* the plot. As such, ways of imaging the space of 'south africa' have political as well as aesthetic functions. Moreover, naturalising the constructedness of this realism suggests that certain ways of viewing South African space are more 'correct' and untainted than others.

How does this process work in the autobiographies? Guardians of apartheid's national biography used theoretical fictions to imagine and propagate their ideal imagined community. They did this, as I have suggested, by using narratives that hid or underplayed the *act of appropriation*. In this way, their course to power was rendered natural, apolitical and preordained. The autobiographers, in turn, ruptured this narrative by repeating it in altered form in their life histories. For their purposes, they used the 'lived reality' of their past as the ultimate verification, as if this lived past were unchanged in their remembering and/or narration. For both, the process informing the construction of 'south africa' as appropriated/expropriated territory is occluded; as for the autobiographers, there is no indication to the reader that their

argument is essentially with a *narrative* that would seek to script their *experiential* chronotope in a particular way. As readers, we need not believe any of the actual accounts of 'south africa's' myths of beginnings. We need only believe the different legitimising narratives that are not only implicitly favoured by the different autobiographies, but also influence their form and content. The terms of this 'reality effect' pivot around these options. This may explain, then, the importance of realist detail forming the bulk of the autobiographical content in the stories prior to the narrated departure.

The First Counter-Narrative: Myths of Living and Narrating Home

> The creation of a sense of home – and homeland – is a profoundly geographical construction in a text ... One of the standard geographies in a text, exemplified in travel stories, is the creation of a home – be it lost, or returned to ... The starting event is always the loss of a home. Struggles to return are thus organised around a lost point of origin ... The notion of 'home'; created through this structure might be called a retrospective fiction – a nostalgic looking back on what has been lost.
>
> (Crang 1998, 47-48).

The argument that informs my reading of the musicians' autobiographies at this stage is drawn from Coetzee's still pertinent analysis of 'white writing'. White writing is writing about the self and its search for meaningful dialogue with Africa, a dialogue dependent on finding an authentic African language to express one's relation to the land (Coetzee 1988). Briefly summarized: in its relationship with 'Africa', this body of writings concerned itself with writing an intelligible landscape. This landscape was in the form of the space of 'south africa' as land and as landed property. In its desired communion, white writing has become noted for the ambiguities and silences that greeted its creators' call. One reason for this failure of reciprocity, Coetzee has observed, is the failure to find "a language that will be authentically African" (1988,

7). Such a problematic indicates the difficulty faced by an emergent consciousness inhabiting an unfamiliar chronotope, wherein language may be utilised to assimilate this chronotope to found a meaningful positionality. Insofar as this contemplating or writing Self seeks to commune or initiate dialogue with a significant Other – the landscape – it seems to accord with a dialogic conception of selfhood; whereby, "Self means nothing without the alterity or outsidedness that is provided by the Other" (Holloway and Kneale 2000, 74). Drawing on Bakhtin's observations on the dialogical self, Julian Holloway and James Kneale further note that this validating 'Other'/outsidedness/alterity takes place through our response to "the environment *and the others around us*" (75; my emphases).

Herein lies the contradiction contained in the poetics of white writing. The dialectic of white writing involves the self 'here' and an outside Africa that is 'there' (Attwell 2005, 16). It assumes that, with sufficient *contemplation* of the described landscape, this self may yet find an internally sufficient language to capture and represent 'south africa'. Because this contemplating self is in dialogue with an ahistorical naturalised expanse of space, it speaks outside serial secular time and space. Moreover, the landscape is an unresponsive and unchallenging other, submissive to the all-devouring 'eye/'I'' of the contemplating subject. Drawing on Henri Lefebvre, Blum and Nast note that "upon specular introjection of the landscape the ego's sense of power and coherence is shored up. More importantly, having reduced the world into a 'picture', the subject is seduced into believing that it alone has created the landscape as its own 'work'" (2000, 194). The pretence of dialogue is thus rapidly diminished and becomes increasingly apparent as an act of power, appropriation and claiming.

The political foundations for the failure of this dialogue are obvious. The failure does not stem from a lack of authentic languages indigenous to South Africa, only that "their authenticity is not necessarily the right authenticity" (Coetzee 1988, 7). They do not, by implication, speak the right kind of belonging. If at the time the necessity for this desired language was framed by the monological nationalist narratives we have extrapolated above, then the initiation of a dialogue that bypasses the Self's *human* Others echoes the apartheid national biography's erasure of (potentially challenging) other voices or narratives. There could not be true dialogue until the Self met with a responsive Other, occurring in a "*concrete socio-historical context ...* rather than a hypothetical set of self-identical norms" (Holloway and Kneale 2000, 75; 76). In other words, between two situated interlocutors. Therefore, by ignoring the languages of (South) Africa as Coetzee has noted, the scribes of white writing foreclosed any potential dialogue that might have ensued. Further, this deafness to the heteroglot chronotope is based on a willed failure. As Coetzee has noted, "the continued apprehension of silence (by the poet) or blankness (by the painter) stands for, or stands in the place of, another failure, *by no means inevitable*: a failure to imagine a peopled landscape, an inability to conceive a society in South Africa in which there is a place for the self" (1988, 9 my emphases).

Heteroglot 'south africa' must wilfully be put under erasure to generate narratives of power that accord with reified conceptions of the self and the contemplated space. This erasure persists due to the unequal structures of power that characterise the acrimonious meetings across South Africa's historical chronotope. Tellingly, as Coetzee has further noted, the poetics of white writing, which were centred on the concept of "the lone poet in empty space", thinned as ties with England loosened; what occurred instead was that on the one hand,

an African nationality, if not an African identity, was in effect imposed upon English-speaking whites, and on the other it began to be apparent that the ultimate fate of whites was going to depend a great deal more urgently on an accommodation with black South Africans than on an accommodation with the South African landscape.

(ibid., 8)

It is in this way that the politically and historically contingent nature of white writing is laid bare (see also Penn 1993, 31).

In the musicians' autobiographies, the dialogue evinced is a specifically human dialogue with (real or imagined) others in the community. The existence of the grammatical 'I' in the tale, in other words, is only affirmable relationally as a communal (albeit individualised) 'I'. The peopled landscape is therefore the obverse of the depopulated landscape imagined in white writing, and its credence gains prominence perhaps from the unavailability of the silent landscape (occasioned by the plot of apartheid's national biography). In the autobiographies, we read descriptions of everyday life, work, marriages and deaths. Most commonly, and echoing the autobiographies of the so-called 'Drum decade' authors such as Ezekiel Mphahlele (1959) and Bloke Modisane (1963), it is the dirt, dryness, congestion, flies, crime and people that are foregrounded. For example, Masekela relates that his place of birth, Witbank, is a town populated by, above all else, coal, coalmines and coal trains (2004, 3). Similarly, Mogotsi's memories of his childhood in Pimville read:

> Pimville was a black township south west of Johannesburg. It was built to house the workers from the factories and the great gold mines of Johannesburg – Egoli, the city of gold, as it was known. But there was no sign of the city's great wealth in Pimville. Most of the houses had two or three rooms in which the family had to live, cook, eat and sleep. There was no electricity or running water – we used to collect water in buckets from a tap on the street corner. We used gas lamps and candles for lighting. We had movable tin baths which we

filled up with buckets. The toilet was outside in the yard, and there was a
bucket to collect the faeces. It was emptied once a week by municipal workers.
My family lived in a three roomed block-brick house on leased property ...
Some of the houses were corrugated iron barracks left over from the war ...
there were few shops ... or legal places of entertainment ... To keep clean
there were communal showers for men and women.

(2002, 11)

Such descriptions of the township form a litany throughout the musicians'
autobiographies (see Makeba 1988, 9-10), and in other autobiographies written by
black South Africans (Nuttall and Michael 2000, 298-317). In the desire to populate
the landscape, the narration of lived space serves a political and historical function.
For spatial descriptions in the autobiographies echo the spatial segregation at the time
(Maylam 2001, 158). They also echo the perceived underlying function of this
segregation (for example, labourers to work in the mines), and present the combined
dynamic of the above; where black space gains its identity through lack (small houses,
lack of basic amenities) maintained by separation (the city's wealth does not trickle
down to, for example, Pimville).

Descriptions of the townships are, however, fraught with ambiguity. For the
narrating self is not only concerned to show that people were indeed living there. S/he
uses the negative view of the townships as an indictment against the legal
unlawfulness of expropriated space, yet also guards against the scripts of apartheid's
national biography that wrote the townships as convenient labour reservoirs rather
than as homes:

Whatever else Sophiatown was, it was home; we made the desert bloom; made
alterations, converted half-verandas into kitchens, decorated the houses and
filled them with music. We were house-proud. We took the ugliness of life in
a slum and wove a kind of beauty; we established bonds of human
relationships which set a pattern of communal living, far richer and more

satisfying – materially and spiritually – than any model housing could substitute.

(Modisane 1963, 16)

Home, at the end of 1953, is my very first house. Blacks are not allowed to own property anymore. We can only lease. I can't afford to buy a house, anyway, and I rent a little place in Mofolo ... Because of apartheid, all of the Africans are being herded into these townships that the government is building. My house in Mofolo is a gray prefab one just like all the others. It has four rooms: a kitchen, a living room, and two bedrooms. The bathroom is outside. The yards are not big, but the people of each house make nice little flower gardens in front. In the backyards there are vegetable gardens, and sometimes chicken coops ... My mother comes to live with me ... And Bongi comes, too. My house is truly a home ... The land is flat, and as far as the eye can see there are gray houses ... We make the best of these settlements.

(Makeba 1988, 52)

The most effective method of narrating space counter to 'white writing' is through the narration of home and childhood. Captured in Bloke Modisane's despairing assertion that "Whatever else Sophiatown was, it was home"; 'Home' in these autobiographies, and in black South African autobiographies in general, becomes a signifier shot through with contradictory meanings that continually underwrite and subtend the tensions of realist description.

Descriptions of home seek, in part, to re-invoke home as a communal and paradisal space to which it is safe to return. It is a point that seemingly lies beyond the machinations of the national biography (Nuttall and Michael 2000, 301). Predictably, it is coupled with childhood, which is temporally placed as the innocent other of the adult self that is situated in apartheid and exile. Though seemingly stable, home is also a precarious space, constantly under threat from the contingencies of life (both warranted and unplanned) and from the successions of removals effected by the apartheid government. This precariousness conveys constant temporariness to any dwelling, such that home as a signifier gains meaning only as a vanishing point.

The texts contain this transience in two ways. First, through recourse to a constructed childhood perspective that is uncomprehending[19] and whose needs may require an intimate space beyond the grasp of apartheid's territoriality. Thus although Makeba's mother is forced to go to the city to find work and leaves the young Makeba alone at home, the narrator recalls:

> I like to spend my time out in the flower garden. My parents love flowers. The house is completely surrounded by tulips, lilies, roses, carnations, violets, gardenias, birds of paradise, and poinsettias. It is lovely and colourful.
>
> (1988, 8)

Similarly, after the Masekelas move to Springs, east of Johannesburg in 1945, Hugh Masekela recounts:

> We were to live in Payneville, a model African township two miles east of the center of town ... The houses were some of the first built for Africans to have flush toilets. The place had electricity, street lamps, a modern clinic, a nursery school, modern schools for the older children, a shopping center, parks, and a cinema.
>
> (2004, 20)

Inevitably, perhaps, the plot of the national biography interrupts the 'prelapsarian' narrative of childhood. Foretold by the retrospective knowledge of the national biography placed alongside their move to Springs in 1945, we view with pathos Masekela's summation that, "It never entered in my mind that Payneville would be a passing dream, to be destroyed a few years later by apartheid" (20). However, the narrative voice of childhood again re-enters to wrest the space of representation and to rescue the idea of home-space from the territorial national biography. Thus for

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[19] Perhaps the most famous example of this incomprehension in South African autobiography belongs to Es'kia Mphahlele, who, beginning his autobiography, memorably wrote: "I have never known why we – my brother, sister and I – were taken to the country when I was five" (1959, 1).

example against the enforced move resulting from the destruction of Payneville which had necessitated the undesired move to Alexandra Township (27), this is how Masekela describes the relocation:

> One of the reasons my mother didn't want to move to Alexandra was that the township did not have flush toilets or electricity. The other was its reputation as the most crime-ridden township in all of South Africa ... Dust, mixed with the foul sulfur smoke of red-hot braziers and coal stoves, was visible in the glare of the headlight buses...This was Alexandra Township, a far cry from Payneville. But Alexandra wasn't all bad for me – wasn't bad at all.
>
> (27-28)

The precariousness of home complexifies the narrating voice that tells of childhood. Rather than the simple narration it is staged to be, it is thoroughly dialogized. It relativizes the national biography by making it unimportant, much in the same way that Masekela above reinterprets their relocation to Alexandra. In this way, this narrating voice decentres the unilateral determinism that is the national biography's source of interpretive and framing power. The staged narrating voice of childhood's guilelessness also accentuates the ignominies imposed on its home-space. It does this in two ways: first, it becomes, in effect, the unmarked moralising voice in the text that allows it to comment on the conditions of the township while also using its youthfulness to interpret them positively. Second, by its very existence through narration, it undercuts the myth of the depopulated landscape propagated by apartheid's national biography. In sum, the prelapsarian narrating voice of childhood effectively places the national biography under erasure.

The Second Counter-Narrative: Myths of Living Through Mythologised Places

The second way in which transience is contained in the autobiographies is through the politicisation of space and place. Here, the townships bear the role of mothers to a new homeland, a South Africa whose realization rests both in the present and in the future to come. This is done through emphasizing the political germination that had occurred in the townships before the musicians' departure, marked by now firmly mythologized places and populated by similarly mythical figures. Constructed in retrospect, the narration of the township's heroic spaces differs from the myth-making of the chronotopically significant Great Trek. There the symbolism's importance lay precisely in the fact that the event had occurred in the absolute past, in an already traversed space, and was available only for commemoration. By contrast, the narration of the townships points to an interrupted futurity, underwritten by the national biography as 'the Struggle'. The effectiveness of this mythologizing rests on two concepts: the portrayal of the location as 'naturally' free (be it freehold such as Sophiatown and District Six), with this freedom interpreted as a portent of things to come; and, on the musicians having been there at the time.

The politically mythologised places find their way into the musicians' autobiographies, alongside others such as Dorkay House (Masekela 2004, 87) and the Bantu Men's Social Centre[20] (Mogotsi 2002, 44; Makeba 1988, 45), and the University of Witwatersrand's Great Hall[21] (Masekela 2004, 98; Mogotsi 2002, 63; Makeba 2004, 47). Thus, Masekela, reminiscing about Alexandra Township recalls,

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[20] Both these venues were located in Johannesburg. They were entertainment and community centres, where actors, playwrights, and musicians met to practice, hold workshops and perform.

[21] The Wits Great Hall is noted as the only integrated performance venue in Johannesburg at that time. It hosted the premier of the musical *King Kong*, in which all three musicians participated. This is significant, too, when compared to the reception of another play in which Joe Mogotsi participated, *Emperor Jones*. When this play was set to perform at the University of Pretoria, which was strictly for whites only, the cast was refused entry into the hall and the performance took place outdoors surrounded by derogatory placards such as "*Kaffirs Go Climb Trees* and *Get The Natives Out Of Here*". As Mogotsi recalls, "It was frightening" (2002, 67). This juxtaposition echoes and enforces the

> Alexandra, like Kliptown and Sophiatown Townships, were black freehold communities where Africans could own property. It was also a political haven for radical activist leaders like Dr. A. B. Xuma, Walter Sisulu, Ida Mtwana, Lillian Ngoyi, Oliver Tambo, Albert Luthuli, and Nelson Mandela – all African National Congress stalwarts – who honed their organizational and oratorical skills at Number Three Square in Alexandra.
>
> (2004, 38)

Similarly, after Mogotsi moves from Pimville to Sophiatown he remembers of the famed township:

> A number of notable African leaders lived in the township, including Dr AB Xuma, president of the ANC until 1949, and Selope Thema, an elder statesman of black politics. And then there were the turbulent white missionaries, Michael Scott and Father Trevor Huddleston. Sophiatown was a very politicised place. The main meeting places were the Odin Cinema, where I saw Nelson Mandela and Trevor Huddleston share a platform and where the Brothers performed from time to time and Freedom Square, where many rallies took place.
>
> (2002, 43)

Thus not only are we told of the mythologised spaces and places, but also of those who embodied the mythology retrospectively constructed around them. There is, however, more to the story. For a closer reading shows that knowledge of these places and people has to be personal. The narrator, in other words, gains credence as a firsthand eyewitness – she or he has to have *been there*. Here, the dictates of realism transcend the requirements for a faithful mimetic account or verisimilitude. Such demands are not new in South Africa's literary history. For example, in Bloke Modisane's *Blame Me On History*, the residents of the razed Sophiatown had to show

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political dynamics of space that have constructed Pretoria as an apartheid stronghold persistent in the South African exile's narrative (see note 17).

similar knowledge of their surroundings to qualify for a house in the newly built

model township of Meadowlands. As Modisane narrates,

> The conditions were simple, the people had to establish fifteen years of
> unbroken residence in these areas, and to prove this the applicants were called
> upon to place and identify a variety of Sophiatown landmarks. This set off a
> vigorous know-your-township campaign, and some of the questions alleged to
> have been put to applicants were brought to the attention of *Drum* magazine.
>
> > *Who is the fattest woman in Sophiatown?*
> > *Who is Sophiatown's oldest Chinese woman?*
> > *Where is the biggest rock in Sophiatown?*
> > *Who operates the biggest fah-fee pool in Sophiatown?*
>
> [...]
> I went to the interrogation room in the Pass Office down Market Street,
> Johannesburg. I found a queue of people nervously waiting to face the
> inquisition; they were tense, mouthing each to himself questions and answers
> most likely to be asked ... It was like watching a terrible nightmare, listening
> to bits of audible fragments of monologues they were mumbling, names of
> streets, the postal addresses of Sophiatown's prosperous people, the names of
> the various missions of the Lutheran Church, the names and surgeries of
> medical practitioners. It was both comical and tragical.
>
> (1963, 110-111)

Thus is one macabre answer to Barthes' inquiry into the significance of insignificant

descriptive detail. For the imperative of intimate knowledge is also at work in the

musicians' autobiographies. The writing of space seemingly thickens the musicians'

link to the national biography. Because the narrating/narrated subjects of these

autobiographies are exiles, however, their accounts are always at one remove: whether

written from the outside perspective (from absence), or writing after return what they

had recalled while outside (of absence). It is perhaps appropriate, then, that Hugh

Masekela 'casually' mentions his now prominent schoolmates, one of whom is South

Africa's current first lady (2004, 42). It is also telling that, while recalling her

performance with The Manhattan Brothers during the signing of the Freedom Charter

in 1955, Miriam Makeba 'casually' relates that she met the young Nelson Mandela

(1988, 55). For Joe Mogotsi, this process of 'casual' name-dropping is heightened. He mentions in passing that Adelaide Tambo, the wife of Oliver Tambo (a prominent member of the ANC) is his cousin (2002, 10; 44; 104; 119). He also recalls: "When I moved to Dube I was living not far from Nelson and Winnie Mandela's home in Phefeni. I passed their home on my way to Phefeni, my nearest railway station, and would wave and exchange greetings with them" (2002, 43).

By so linking these places and people as integral to 'the Struggle', a chronotope is formed that repeatedly folds back to the space that has given birth to the homeland: the township. Though seemingly grounded in the lived everyday reality running counter to white writing, then, this chronotope is similarly mythologised. Mythologizing is achieved through the repetition of certain utterances (places, place names or people), of habitually uttering these utterances in certain discursive contexts (such as autobiographies), and setting them to work in a particular way. They then become conventions in the discourse on South African political history, and knowledge thereof indicates competence in this discourse, which is of crucial importance for the exiles. Stemming from this mythologizing comes a different perspective of space and time, as the litany of politically mythologised heroes[22] preserves the 'topographic aura' of the narrated chronotope.

Exiling, we noted previously, elicits an ontological rupture that leaves the narrator in a chronotopic nowhere with regards to time. We have also discerned the non-contemporaneity of the exile's chronological biographical chronotope with that of the apartheid national biography, which divides space into South Africa and *any other* space elsewhere as 'other'. That the icons populating the narrative of 'the Struggle' and the musicians were outside South Africa is, then, significant. It places both in the

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[22] Most of them, such as Oliver Tambo, were also exiles, while other were exiled to Robben Island, such as Walter Sisulu, Mangaliso Sobukwe and Nelson Mandela.

insurmountably 'other' space outside South Africa – in a chronotopic nowhere. The invocation of the politicians by the musicians, whether through singing, physical encounter or narration occurs in and from this 'non-space'. This chronotopic alterity becomes a space for narrating; more precisely, it is a space for narration. For the meeting with these floating icons of 'the Struggle' serves a function other than that of meeting important fellow South Africans elsewhere. They meet as exiles. Such encounters aggregate meaning discursively, and motifs of meeting contract time and keep the narrated account a South African account of history, of exile, and about a South African. In this way, the icons signify a continuing link of the exile to the national biography, established through a constructed continuity that arrests both the movement of time and the disappearance of space. For with this contraction of time, signified by the enduring presence of those invoked, 'south africa' is stabilised in empty time.

This function of the icons as links is evident in the musicians' narration of the time when return is allowed. Actual return is structurally marked by the appearance of Nelson Mandela exiting prison after his release in 1990. Without fail, this event is recounted in the narration of return. Hugh Masekela recalls:

> On Sunday, February 11, Jabu and I were sitting in our upstairs bedroom in our Harlem town house watching television with baited breath when Nelson Mandela walked out of Victor Verster Prison outside Cape Town. With tear-filled eyes we watched the gray-haired legend strut his stuff next to his wife, Winnie, their fists almost touching the sky. The parade in downtown Cape Town was sardine-can tight, people jammed shoulder-to-shoulder waiting to hear Mandela's first public words in twenty-seven years ... That September, after thirty years, I returned to the land of my birth.
>
> (2004, 350-351)

Similarly, Makeba writes:

> When I heard the news I could not believe what I was hearing. South African President FW de Klerk had announced the unbanning of all political organisations and parties ... political prisoners would be identified and released ... On February 11th 1990 Nelson Mandela was released. As I watched this on television I fell to the ground and cried ... I came home for the first time after 31 years.
>
> (2004, 202; 206)

In Mogotsi's text, the linking function of the 'Madiba factor' has greater importance because Mogotsi is not a 'returnee', having remained in Britain since his departure. Mogotsi's return is a textual resurrection of memory and belonging. It begins with the celebratory concert that was held at Wembley stadium in England to celebrate Mandela's release. Here, Mogotsi depicts Mandela as a "Lazarus", whose reappearance "was the catalyst for the renewal of our self-esteem as South Africans" (2002, 9). The triggering of memories is precipitated by direct encounter with Mandela:

> When we all went backstage after the concert to be thanked by Nelson Mandela, he spotted me in the crowd and lunged forward to embrace me. The detectives moved quickly to protect him but he shouted: 'Joe, where is Dambuza?' Then he spotted Nathan [Mdledle] standing tall above the crowd and gave him a hug. *A lifetime passed before our eyes* and Nathan and I were dumbfounded.
>
> (2002, 10 my emphases)

A lifetime passes before the narrator's eyes, time contracts, and narration (can) begin(s). The textual return becomes effective insofar as it *replays* selected events, peoples and places, in which, importantly, the mythologised figures and places we have noted become thematic touchstones and convey narrative continuity.

The desire for continuity leads to mythologizing. Return to 'south african' space is imagined as a return to a 'South Africa' before the repression of the 1960s and the

flood of exiling that had occurred then. In other words, return gravitates to the mythologised decade of the 1950s – whose focal points rest on mythologised spaces (such as Sophiatown), people (Mandela, Tambo), and events (such as the signing of the Freedom Charter). It is a return to a familiar *story*, not in any sense more 'real' than the improbable return envisaged when narrating childhood. That the musicians as 'returnees' – Masekela and Makeba – and non-returnees – Mogotsi – can accomplish such return shows that it is a rhetorical, narrative strategy.

The Limits of Mythology

So far, we have seen that the relationship between real historical time and space and the literary/represented time and space forms a complex web in these autobiographies. We have seen that the national biography and 'white writing' proffers a certain definition of 'south africa': as timeless, immutable and bounded territory. The autobiographers' counter-narratives challenge this definition. They show that the delimiting of 'south africa' as South Africa, rather than natural or preordained, is constructed and is officially sanctioned by apartheid's segregationist policies and ideologies.

Rupturing the national biography generates its own mythologizing. The autobiographers construct their own counter-myth that tells of an equally timeless greatness. They crowd the empty landscape with descriptions of home, with music, figures of historical importance, and seemingly everyday events. Both counter-narratives are supported by, and gravitate towards, the national biography as a narrative of 'the Struggle'.

In apartheid's national biography and in the musicians' autobiographies, 'south africa' becomes stabilised in some way. The musicians' (re)interpretation proceeds

from this stabilisation – it does not in any way initiate a change of form or tell a different story, neither does it evince a changed chronotope. Indeed, the writings grant space significance by suspending the temporality implied in the very act of naming/claiming 'South Africa'. For both texts depend on stability either as an enabling state for the implementation of power (the national biography), or, as an epistemological and ontological buoy that helps (re)assemble the chronotopic split occasioned by exile (the autobiographies). Recalling Lefebvre's observation cited earlier in the chapter, it is clear that South African space, in both types of texts, is variously reified. As Tom Mels has noted,

> Reification, in its most simple form, occurs when a living entity or transitory state of affairs – be it places, practices, people, life, thought, or objects – is understood or treated as if it were an immutable and isolated Thing. They are no longer recognised as the products of past, present or future human activity in a constant relational process of becoming.
>
> (2004, 9)

The attempt to place the chronotopic coincidence 'south africa' beyond play is such an attempt at reification. It does have its limits – where the autobiographers' continued pertinence becomes threatened by their methods of narration, and particularly by the realism on which they depend. Because the veracity of their accounts is grounded by intimate and particularised knowledge, *not being there* – the ontological reality – presents a problem for narration that is echoed in their narration of actual return. The most consistently narrated event, which occurred while all the musicians were outside South Africa, is the Soweto students' uprising of June 16, 1976. After this historical irruption, the 1980s are not only non-governable times but seem also to be beyond narration. We may ask ourselves, then, how the musicians attempt to insert themselves into this particular chronotope and retain verisimilitude.

Miriam Makeba lengthily relates the story of 1976:

The United Nations has declared 1976 the "International Year Against Apartheid". President Touré feels that it is appropriate for me to again give the Guinean address to the General Assembly. Once more I face the delegates, the press, the visitors. But there is added interest this year ... This is because my people have suffered the worst massacre that anyone has known in my lifetime. A new word enters the consciousness of the West, and from now on it will be associated with oppression, outrage, and blood. It is Soweto.

All of the black townships that are together in the southwest section of Johannesburg – Orlando East, Mofolo, White City, and the rest – are called Soweto. That is what Soweto stands for: South Western Townships. The word did not exist when I was growing up, but all of the inhuman treatments that make up our way of life were well known. Sixteen years ago, in Sharpeville, a march was held to protest the Passbook Law. This ended in slaughter, and the people were so intimidated that for years there was silence.

This ends with a great uprising that is started by the students ... I am in Mozambique when I hear the news over the radio ... I go from Mozambique to Europe for a concert, and there I see the first pictures of the revolt. The tear gas, the shootings and burnings: It is shocking. I am scared because I do not know if any of my family is involved. Two of my uncles died in Sharpeville. I wonder how many are suffering, now. Not knowing makes it worse ... The Soweto uprising never really stops. The authorities declare that "peace is restored", but from now on movement against the Pretoria regime grows. It is not as it was after Sharpeville. Now, the people do not rest.

(1988, 199-200)

In Makeba (2004), she again relates,

In 1976, a Centre Against Apartheid was established at the United Nations. Little had changed in South Africa. I realised how little was going to change when I returned to Mozambique for the first anniversary of that country's independence. The apartheid regime of South Africa did the unimaginable. On the 16th of June schoolchildren were gunned down and killed in the township of Soweto, South Africa. Many more were arrested ... I wished I was home. It was painful to be outside. When you see images of grown men chasing little boys and pumping bullets into them just as though they were dogs or something, you weep.

(155)

The reality of not being there changes the mode of narration. On first reading, this seems due to the nature and extremity of the narrated atrocity. Indeed the musicians' collective condemnation of the event bears this out. However, closer attention to the narration of the 1970s and the 1980s in the autobiographies tells another story. For these decades are unknown and unknowable territories, foregrounding the reality that 'south africa' had changed. Makeba and the others cannot but narrate that their encounter with the Soweto uprisings was textual (via photographs, television, and word of mouth from newly exiled politicians); and was prior to this unimaginable (and therefore cannot be appropriated into the trope of inevitability). This is because 'Soweto' had not existed prior to the musicians' departure. Its existence represents a reconfiguration of 'South Africa' that is accompanied by a politics of space different from that of the locations of the 1950s, such as Sophiatown or District Six. Thus even prior to this narrated event, the chronotopic insecurity presented by this unknown chronotope is clear. This is evident when Mogotsi returns on a temporary visa in 1972 to attend his father's memorial. He recalls:

> I was then taken to the family house in *the new Pimville*, because the old one had been demolished. My mother's house, with two bedrooms, had no inside doors. Only outside doors were built onto this house. Before I left South Africa, in 1961, we had had a big house with four bedrooms ...*It was strange for me to come into a situation like this* ... The people taking me around ... made sure that I did not get into any trouble. I had to comply with all these rules and it was terrible. *The country had really changed ... Johannesburg was a changed place.* I met with one or two of the old gangsters, from the Msomi gang and The Americans. They told me that the country had changed and was no longer like when the Brothers were around in the late fifties. Young boys had taken over and the old gangsters had no chance. They suggested that I should leave the scene and return to England before it was too late ...I got the message. My friend, Kelly 'Petsana' Michaels, had arranged for me to be protected whenever I moved around in the location ... Kelly was a hustler himself and knew all the shebeens. I remembered the ones we had frequented in the past and the good times we had enjoyed with our friends.
>
> (96-98; my emphases)

Though narrating different events for different purposes, it is clear that the writers' modes of plotting this change are similar: they both use their time prior departure not only to measure the extent of the change, but also to make meaning thereof. Be it descriptions of home or changes in 'the Struggle', time-space prior departure becomes the yardstick against which later events, *rather than the significance of the events themselves*, are understood and narrated. Encounter with this unfamiliar and unknown chronotope differs from the contrapuntal perspective that Edward Said has noted to be characteristic of exile:

> For an exile, habits of life, expression, or activity in the new environment inevitably occur against the memory of these things in another environment. Thus both the new and the old environments are vivid, actual, occurring together contrapuntally. There is a unique pleasure in this sort of apprehension … There is also a particular sense of achievement in acting as if one were at home wherever one happens to be.
>
> (2000, 186)

That is so, for at least as long as 'home' remains fixed against secular time and reconfigurations of space. The uncertainty wrought by the movement of time and space threatens the 'meta-identity' of exile, particularly if we follow the definition of an exile as "someone who inhabits one place and remembers or projects the reality of another" (Seidel 1986, ix). The failure of this project is most poignantly evident in Mogotsi's return home in 1972:

> the main reason for my coming was to visit the graves of my father and my son and have a family reunion to thank God and pray for those who had passed away, both family and friends. I discovered that the cemetery where my father had been buried was no more. It had been covered by a motorway.
>
> (2002, 96)

Mogotsi's narration displays the juxtaposition of non-contemporaneous chronotopes that lead to a somewhat less than pleasurable apprehension. In my earlier chapter, apartheid South Africa's chronotope, in the form of official South African space such as South Africa House, irrupted into the constructed adventure tale of the exiles to initiate either disintegration or regression in temporality. Here, we observe that South African time changes the musicians' perception of the country's topography. Where the intrusion of South African space initiated a non-time for the musicians, encounter with South African time (physical or mediated) catapults the musicians into a 'non-space'. Where before this 'non-space' was made an enabling space for narration, due to its link to a mythologised past sutured to mythological heroes and places, here no such narrative anchor exists. The fragmentary knowledge privy to the musicians becomes a state to which they subsequently are resigned.

This fragmentation of knowledge is echoed in the narration of actual return. Its effects are contained through the enacting of rituals repeated by all the musicians at certain points in their return, such as visiting the graves of the dead. Actual return is marked by the acknowledged failure of idealised return that had been joined to the triumph of the national biography as 'the Struggle'. For while permission to return is occasioned by a specific political event – by the decree voiced by then President FW de Klerk and the subsequent release of Nelson Mandela and others – actual return is confronted by the 'real' historical chronotope of everyday South Africa whose image the autobiographies had seemingly constructed. For example, after his initial euphoria and the hero's welcome he received, Masekela narrates his return as follows:

> Julius chauffeured me where I needed to go and helped reorient me to the
> country of my birth … trying to settle down in South Africa and relearn the

country from scratch. So much had changed, so many friends and relatives had died or settled elsewhere. If I had idealized a return to South Africa at all during my exile, my actual return was a sobering – if not depressing – experience.

(353; 356-357)

For Makeba (2004), going home had been a constantly desired state. Like Masekela, her initial return to South Africa was greeted with a hero's welcome. She is also re-familiarised with the South African landscape:

At my brother's house nothing had changed, my brother was staying in the same house [in Mzimhlophe]. There was the same little bridge at the station ... Some boys took me ...[and] ... made me *toyi-toyi*. I don't know how to toyi-toyi but they were doing it all around me. I just followed. I just ran with them as they were cheering. They were singing. They ran with me all over the streets, shouting.

(207)[23]

Though Makeba views with comfort the familiarity of her brother's home, soon the reality of a need for a home within South Africa, as opposed to South-Africa-as-home, becomes clear. For we must remember that prior to this moment, the concept of home had been embodied in South Africa as nation. Its reclamation had been realised by the processes of the national biography that had enabled the exiles to return from 1990. This officially sanctioned return accords with the constructed mythologized narratives against which 'south africa' had been imagined by the national biography and by the musicians' autobiographies. The reality of the 'ordinary' or 'everyday' chronotope, however – a chronotope that acknowledges the movement of secular time and

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[23] This process of being taken around pervades accounts by returnees. For example, upon his return Es'kia Mphahlele also writes, "I discovered jogging routes that restored a full acquaintance with the landscape I had begun to rediscover in 1976. My cousin's house is a few metres from the primary school that launched me hesitantly on the road to – how could one have guessed at the destination then? I followed the routes I remembered as old trails I carved out with the goats and cattle forty-five years before, leading to good pasture" (1984, 197).

unstable space – becomes increasingly unavoidable in the quest for an actual home. The ordinary chronotope's secular time, for all three musicians, demythologises space and time, and can only be greeted by a certain resignation. Hence Makeba writes:

> Before I left South Africa in 1959, I had a place of my own in Mofolo township … When I first came back home after exile I had gone to look for my house. There were other people staying there. They had extended it. When I had left it was a four-roomed house. I don't know how these other people got it or how my house could have been sold when I was not there. I went there and some very up-to-date young woman came outside and said to me: "Are you looking for something?"
> I said, "No, I just wanted to come and look at the house. This used to be my house. My mother lived here. My mother died here. My mother's funeral came out of this house and I was not here for it." She had no idea who the hell I was. She walked away arrogantly … I was never able to get back into that house again. I said to myself, "You must move on, Makeba. You go and find yourself another corner somewhere." I had been a gypsy all my life and here I was again.
> During this time I had also tried to go back to Prospect township and Riverside, the places I had grown up in. I wanted to find my grandmother and my sister Hilda's graves. They were gone. They had been built on. My elementary school was also gone, razed to the ground. During the removals, the people of Prospect township … had been moved to Orlando. The people from Riverside had been moved to Mamelodi. Prospect township and Riverside did not exist anymore. All that was there, that I could remember, was an old dilapidated little building which used to be the shop of an old Chinese man we called John muChina. That was all that was there.
> I turned 60 years old that year. Because I had no home of my own I had the party at the home of Yvonne Chaka Chaka and her husband Dr Mhinga. Tata Mandela came, Tata and Mama Tambo came. It was very special but I still had nowhere to stay. I continued my search for a home.
>
> (2004, 215)

Thus we see the limits of mythology, and the end of a comforting narrative of a national biography culminating in a triumphant return. The security of home regained in return, is another journey in the musicians' lives – one they would have to construct outside the chronological biographical time of the national biography. Return in the autobiographies is imagined as a righting of the losses incurred by exiling. This view of return as righting maintains its narrative neatness and is strengthened by the

autobiographies' dialogical engagements with other narratives. However, the internally stratified chronotopes within each autobiography lays bare the instability that grounds descriptions of South African space. Todorov, while interpreting Bakhtin's theories on the history of literature, extrapolates another type of dialogue to that *in absentia*: a dialogue "*in praesentia*, within the work, which ... contains the heterology within itself" (1984, 77). Bakhtin's heteroglot genres readily evince a corresponding heterochrony, thus relinquishing linear time and the unidirectional trajectory of plot and finalised meaning. Although internal chronotopic dialogism is also evident here, the autobiographies attempt to preserve the linearity of plot and time through the use of realism and chronological biographical time in ways already explored. The adherence to realism, however, becomes the autobiographies' own undoing. Faithful description of a chronotope of idealised everyday life, when confronted by the everyday chronotope, presents a crisis of assimilation that, instead of fulfilling the plot function signified by return – that is, return as dénouement or point of rest, reclamation and righting – undercuts and renders it problematic. Although home is a variously inflected and refracted word, in the autobiographies it is presented as a monological word referencing originary space, against the other homes made in exile. The idea that the wanderer or exile makes a home of wherever s/he may be, conceals the more disturbing thought that originary Home is itself equally evanescent, fragile and vulnerable to the vicissitudes of time. Continuity through mythologizing is thus an attempt to arrest the movement of time, and thus retain a claim to a space that is threatened by time.

Analysing the imaginings of 'south africa' – as space, mythologised places, home and events – lays bare the dynamics that go into the making of 'South Africa' as a chronotopic coincidence. It exposes the dynamics of ownership and reification that

are occluded in the national biography and in the autobiographies. Both types of texts, it seems, are counter-narratives of power that fail to capture the complexities of the 'south africa' they purportedly represent and reclaim. It is only from the reification of this space, 'South Africa' as transcendental signified that the meta-identity of exile may be maintained. The extent to which the musicians' autobiographies reclaim, re-present and remember the 'lived reality' of 'South Africa's' everyday chronotope is therefore open to debate. For in fetishizing the narrated space, 'South Africa' is treated as space as such, significant only as an object of nostalgia. In this way frozen and made into an object to be understood, focus then moves to the narrating consciousness as the creator of this space rather than to the relations that inform the production of 'South Africa'. This allows the musicians to construct a past and a future 'South Africa' within whose narrative ambit they can reside – an empty time big enough to embrace their departure and accommodate their return.

A chronotopic analysis exposes the complexities and fragmentation of the musicians' topographic imagination that are smoothed over by the 'reality effect'. It shows that the autobiographies cannot possess the all-seeing 'eye' that would encompass the space they claim to represent. At one level, this 'smoothing over' may be motivated by the desire to (re)construct, represent and re-member originary space, to salvage an always already lost, yet always desired, chronotopicity. However, it is difficult not to read a willed absenting of complex 'South Africa' to preserve the aura of alienation and politically significant absence by the musicians. Apartheid's national biography has 'worlded' the delimited territory with mythologically significant places, and exiled black South Africa from its ideal imagined community. The musicians' topographies of absence may one day be accused of furthering a similar absenting.

Chapter 4

The Biographical Illusion: Representations and/as Representatives

What is important is the real presence of the body of Christ in the host. Of course, there is always a baker, too, who has a hand in it.

Phillipe Lejeune *The Autobiography of Those Who Do Not Write*

The final stage of my chronotopic analysis investigates the chronotopically positioned 'self'. This self is a complex literary figure emerging from the negotiated interstices of the autobiographies' plot, time and space. Because the texts are autobiographies, we could reasonably expect the assertion of a self that insists on a personalised, relatively autonomous chronotope grounded in chronological biographical time. This, however, would rest on the as yet unquestioned stability of the texts, whose status as autobiographies has so far not been interrogated. While this study argues that in the autobiographies we encounter not so much a narrated past but storying itself, what we have not thus far considered is that the subjects, too, may encounter their lives in such a manner, as storying. This could be due to the hegemonic national biography, which seeks unilaterally to (re)present and position the subject in a particular chronotope and plot, and offers this as the only significant positionality: the plot of ontological marginalization and segregation grounded in spatial and socio-economic terms, the exilic story as a culmination of physical and epistemological alienation, and the eventual alignment in the illegal plot or scheme that would undercut apartheid power. Though this may be so, we have also located the failures of the national biography to accord significance to certain events or states in the subjects' lives. For example, we have noted the arbitrariness that plot attempts to harness, the non-time occasioned by exiling, and the non-space caused by an unstable topographic imagination.

The title page and other paratextual information, to which the load of the autobiographical contract leans (see Eakin in Lejeune 1989), show that the musicians' texts are collaborative ventures. The subjects act as verbal *sources* of information to complete these stories (see also Lejeune 1989, 188-189). Exploring the texts as autobiographies of 'those who do not write', to borrow Lejeune's terminology, makes it possible both to investigate the musicians' social and/or political positioning as subjects, and also to note how this positioning acts as an 'author-function' (Foucault 2001 [1969], 1622-1636). Both levels of investigation are important. We have already cited Breyten Breytenbach's observation that to be an exile is to be written, in other words to be constructed (chapter 2). John Paul Eakin, in his foreword to Lejeune's work, has also argued that "the self who writes is written" (1989, 22; see also Olney 1998, xv). The constructedness of the 'self' as author renders unstable the very possibility of the 'true self' that is the predominant horizon of expectation in autobiography. It lays bare that this expectation is itself a result, or an effect, of an autobiographical and social contract that conditions how we write or speak our stories and who may speak these stories on our behalf. More generally, it supports the perspective that views the authoring self as intrinsically dialogic. As Morson and Emerson's study of Bakhtin's writings on authorship notes, "when we tell the story of our own lives autobiographically, what speaks in us most often is *not direct experience or memory* but a narrator with an imagined other's values and intonations. 'I-for-myself', Bakhtin says, 'is not capable of telling any stories'" (1990, 217 my emphases). Echoing Bakhtin, Lejeune argues that even when a text is not a collaborative autobiography, "a person is always *several* people when he [*sic*] is writing, even all alone, even his own life" (1989, 188). There is therefore no Archimedean position of absolute authorship, but a politics thereof, such that "one

becomes an author only when one takes, or finds oneself attributed, the responsibility for the emission of a message in a given circuit of communication" (ibid., 193). The combination of a multivalent, politicised dialogue engaging previously marginalized voices, the creation of the communal 'I' in the texts, and the texts' collaborative forms, problematise any simplistic readings of the autobiographies. We may argue, then, for a division of authorship and expose the position of singular authority as one that is constituted by textuality and politics.

As we are concerned with the creation of authorship and authority to narrate, we engage with the political ramifications of representation. I argue that the creation of a communal 'I' in the autobiographies assumes its representative status by *simulating* collectivity. The political ramifications of this simulated collectivity are echoed in Gayatri Spivak's concerns regarding representation, as she argues that structures that underpin aesthetic representation are repeated in political representation. For Spivak, the difference between aesthetic and political representation, "is that aesthetic representation tends to foreground its status as a re-presentation of the real, whereas political representation denies this structure of representation" (Morton 2003, 57). To illustrate her argument, with recourse to Marx, she distinguishes between two modes of representation: *Darstellung*, which is representation as aesthetic portrait; and *Vertretung*, which refers to representation by political proxy (2003, 57-58). Maintaining the distinction between the two modes of representation, for Spivak, prevents assuming that what is portrayed is unified and singular and may unproblematically be spoken for. This 'speaking for' lies in mistaking symbolic representation as 'being-in-the-other's-shoes', as *Vertretung*. As she further warns:

> This collapsing leads to the fundamentalist mistake: assuming that always imagined and negotiated constituencies based on unstable identifications have

literal referents: 'the workers', 'the women', 'the word'. But there is no *Vertretung* without *Darstellung* ... the two terms are locked into complicity with one another.

(Spivak 1996, 6)

Collapsing the two forms of representation, in other words, leads to the catachresis that we have identified on several levels in the autobiographies. By implication, the potential heterogeneity of the plots of departure, the experiences of exiling, and the remembered practiced spaces of 'south africa' are either ignored or simplified. Identification and simulation are actively constructed in the narratives. A portrait of South Africa that captures the so-called 'ethos' of certain periods, certain narratives, and mythologized places is presented within which the subjects attempt to accommodate themselves. While the autobiographies do, indeed, foreground their status as re-presentations of the real, they tend to mask this repetition through employing realism as their mode of writing. This enables them to use this 'real' as an unproblematised literal referent that then prepares their positions as its representatives.

The complicity between *Vertretung* and *Darstellung* is evident in the texts' formal instability. This is because autobiography and biography, as forms of life writing, subscribe to different orders of representing the self as truth and to different orders of establishing the 'real'. As Catherine Parke has noted,

autobiography and biography [are] distinctly different kinds of rhetorical constructions with different legitimising strategies, grounds of authority, and points of view. Autobiography ... posits the speaker's expressed truth to self as its preeminent claim and value. Biography, by contrast ... takes as its truth criterion not the authenticity of the insider's view but the "consistency of the narrative and the explanatory power of the arguments" based in the individual's relatively comfortable relationship with her or his culture's ground of assumptive value.

(2002, 108)

Autobiography, then, need not be historically verifiable beyond the agreement between the author, narrator and protagonist; while biography, as Parke suggests, needs as its legitimising and dialogic background cultural or theoretical fictions that have, in one way or another, become the norms for reading and understanding 'lives'. Collaborative autobiography, by implication, straddles the two, as more often than not the dictator-transcriber relationship is supplemented by other voices. With this consideration in mind, Andrew Bennett extrapolates two problematic scenarios. For him, the debate on collaboration not only involves questions of historical veracity and questions of authorship:

> In the end, the debate comes down to a fundamental difference between a conception of collaboration that maintains the distinction between individuals within a collaborative culture, and a 'poststructuralist' conception that suggests that individuality itself is split, divided, disseminated or dispersed within a literary culture that is radically multiple, fundamentally collaborative.

(2005, 103)

In this chapter, we shall examine how the social/political positioning of the musicians as subjects distinguishes them from others within a culture that has collaboratively 'written' the national biography. From this, we also consider how this negotiated 'author-function' is dispersed in South Africa's discursive sphere. The end view is to examine how this negotiated authorship is given leave to speak, and is spoken by, history. This is because for black South Africans previously silenced by apartheid's national biography, as with other so-called 'minority autobiographies', the permission or attribution to narrate has often been denied (Anderson 2001, Harlos 1995, Nuttall and Michael 2000). Revisionist historiography, social history and to a

certain degree anthropology, in South Africa and elsewhere, has sought to counter the 'silencing' effects of the unequal distribution of authorship. As Gary Minkley and Ciraj Rassool have observed, in South Africa,

> Social historians have seen their work as characterized by the attempt to 'give voice' to the experience of previously marginal groups and to recover the agency of ordinary people. The documentation of these pasts, conceived as 'hidden history', sought to democratize the historical record.
>
> (1998, 90)

The attribution of authority in the South African context is therefore an empowering act, and the writing of autobiography by the musicians is, by extension, an appropriation of narrative authority (see also Harlos 1995,134). Because the ensuing dialogue initiated by this narration is with, and within, a politicised circuit of communication – South Africa's national biography, exile and South African music historiography – the veracity of the account as fact, witnessing or indictment toward 'democratising the historical record' gains precedence.

We shall call this democratisation the biographical illusion[24] and concern ourselves with how it is established in the autobiographies: by the subjects, by other voices, and by the collaborative construction of the national biography. We discern two forms of this biographical illusion. The first attributes indubitable authority to the narrating subjects, by foregrounding the texts as their own words: as unmediated truthful utterances that retell their lives from direct experience and memory. It will become evident that, while held up as exemplars, the authoritative subjects need other collaborative voices to authenticate their tales. The first biographical illusion attempts to reinscribe *Darstellung* as *Vertretung* – to portray those that have been constructed

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[24] I borrow this phrase from Pierre Bourdieu, though my use of it differs from his (see Bourdieu 2000)

as ones who have constantly been in the other's shoes, despite their singularity. The second biographical illusion sees the same collapsing of these forms of representation. Here, however, the musicians encounter their lives as narratives subsumed by the national biography's matrices of meaning: singularity is effaced. Instead, they are relegated to the position of protagonists within a larger complex, and are used to authenticate the national biography as a narrative of 'the Struggle'. The assumption held by the collaborative authors of 'the Struggle' is that every stage of the musicians' lives – including exile – is bound up with the workings of the national biography, thus their status as *Vertretung* is easily established. As one with and of the masses, their appearances within the story of the national biography seem unproblematically representative, the rupture and splitting occasioned by exile disappear. Thus simplified, the communal 'I' may then function to simulate not only collectivity, but also consensus.

The First Biographical Illusion: Authenticating Voices in the Autobiographies

> The writer should contribute only insofar as this can appear to be coming from the model. The expression of a plurality of points of view (that of the model on his life, and that of someone else on the model) defines immediately another type of text (with another type of reading contract). In diverse forms ... we are dealing with intermediate texts between autobiography and biography. A person's life can appear through someone else's narrative. Better, the spoken word or the writing of the model can be collected and put together by a third party.
>
> <div align="right">(Lejeune 1989, 190)</div>

For Christopher Harlos, central to the adaptation of Lejeune's autobiographical contract to include collaborative autobiography "is a focus on the way in which the autobiographical contract is modified in the paratextual material – titles, subtitles, prefaces, forewords, afterwords, and notes – where the terms of collaboration are

generally made explicit, announcing the 'grounds by which the reader measures his/her own experience of the text'" (1995, 146). Corroborating voices in collaborative autobiographies, including the ones under study, substantiate and support the testimony of the one written. Through them, the texts implicitly lean towards a privileging of biographical verifiable truth as a stabiliser against the vicissitudes of memory, to lend credibility to the model as author. These voices may take many forms: in the musicians' texts under study, they include not only the interviewees who are usually cited as extra sources in the co-author's acknowledgements page; excluding photographs, I have also included other paratextual materials that frame the autobiographical narrative and (implicitly) condition readers before and after they encounter the narrative proper.

Miriam Makeba's first autobiography is written with James Hall, about whom all we know is that he is a "Los Angeles-based author" (1988, dust jacket). Hall gets short shrift in the marketing strategies of the book, while Makeba, the more famous partner, receives top billing. His function in its making is also marginalized through the emphasis on the dust jacket that states: "*Makeba* is her story – in her own words". The authenticity – or rather, the authenticating voice of the book – lies in the phrase 'her own words'. Obviously, this implies that the story we encounter or experience is itself an unmediated recounting of the speaking subject's past. Focussing on Makeba's story as 'her own words' presents its writing as transparent, and neutralizes the work of co-author whose task is to (re)order, and to construct chronologies and hierarchies of the received material; in short, to make it into a story.

We as readers meet James Hall once, in an interesting metafictional moment that displays the text's collaborative nature. It occurs near the end of the book, where Makeba recounts:

There is a young man who is staying with me this summer. He is writing my life's story, and this book will let me speak to many. We sit in the garden in the moonlight, while the neighbors play their bellaphones and the mosquitoes buzz outside the safety of our insect repellent, and I tell him many things. I tell him things that I have never told anyone, all the sad stories. We cry. I do not know, but I think this man may be *isangoma* like me, which is unusual, because he is white and he is from California. He tells me that people will find courage from my story. It embarrasses me to hear this; in my heart I know I am nobody special. I am just me, Miriam ... But the funny thing is, I am finding courage just speaking of the past. I am sorting things out, and it leaves me feeling clean.

(1988, 245)

Though *Makeba My Story*'s collaborative status is in this way displayed, its writing and paratexts encourage a reading thereof as a singular, first person, present-tense narrative. The metafictional turn brings the narrated present on par with the narrative present (that is, the story being told with the telling). In this way, it intensifies the constructed immediacy of the text through highlighting the text's simulated phonocentricity[25], while also reminding the reader that we are encountering a *story* in process. Counter to Morson and Emerson's observations cited above, this makes the writing of the text seem a direct experience at the level of enunciation (it seems as if we are listening to her speaking or even experiencing what she is in fact narrating); simultaneously, at the level of utterance, it makes the memory and transmission of past events seem direct and unmediated (it seems as if she is reliving the past). As Lejeune has observed of the use of present-tense narration in autobiography, the narrative present induces indecisiveness, which gives "the illusion of a direct enunciation". It is "a figure that introduces an apparent disruption in the distinction between story and discourse, and between anteriority and simultaneity ... everything

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[25] Phonocentricity or the phonocentric illusion is a Derridean term referring to the assumption that speech-acts are emitted by subjects "whose identity and presence are constituted before the signifying operation", toward objects, or stable "signified concepts", dependent on the speaker's "pure and free spontaneity" (see Derrida 2002, xxvi).

happens *as if* the story were becoming contemporaneous with its narration" (1989, 54-59).

In this text, the illusion of a direct enunciation is clear. Because we hear a single narrating voice, we assume that we are reading a text that is the result of one writing consciousness. Introducing its textual addressee displaces the centredness of this voice; we no longer seem to be the privileged voyeurs of unmediated experience and narration. However, the autobiographical pact's emotional effectiveness is maintained and indeed heightened by the confessional situation that is drawn for the reader; in particular, by the time in which the confessional situation occurs in the book (at the depth of depression for the narrating subject, and because of the present tense, at the depth of depression in the narrative).

In the 2004 autobiography, the processes that led to the writing and publishing of *Makeba My Story* are revealed. Makeba recalls being asked by her tour manager, Jay Levy, to write her life story. It is Jay Levy, who introduced Makeba to James Hall:

> [James Hall] flew to Guinea. He stayed with me for some weeks in my house. While we were talking and talking he was taking notes. I was talking and he was writing. All day he would observe what I was doing. In the evenings he would sit and just look up at the stars. I would watch him looking because I knew people in America don't see stars like we do out here in Africa. It was James's first time in Africa. He had this look in his eye. I had seen that look in my mother. Like he could see things. He was like a white *sangoma*. I told him this. Years later, as a result of our discussions, James Hall travelled to Swaziland and ... was introduced to the world of the *sangomas*. My word was confirmed ... He became a *sangoma* and a highly regarded one at that. At one time he even served amongst the *amabutho* of the Swazi king. He became a member of the king's counsel. James Hall helped me write my first book.

> (2004, 189)

Such are the processes that led to Makeba 1988 and the relationship between the two co-authors. In 2004 however, the terms of collaboration are different. For the co-

author, Nomsa Mwamuka, Makeba 2004 "is her first book". As the dust jacket further tells the reader: she "is a director and co-owner of South African company Nisa Global Entertainment ... She holds a BA degree in language and literature from the University of Zimbabwe and is currently studying for a Masters Degree in Communication through Malmö University in Sweden". On the acknowledgements page, Mwamuka cites a number of people who helped her during the making of *The Miriam Makeba Story*, "and were there to *relive* the memories with Mama Makeba" (my emphasis). Again, we note that the writing process is subsumed by the preference for immediacy: the interviewees, seemingly, were not prompted to fill in the gaps of the narrative; they merely had to 'relive' their memories. In her Co-Author's Note, which appears as the very last page of the text, Mwamuka writes:

> Zenzile Miriam Makeba, 'Mama Makeba', for me, is a woman of substance who has constantly strived to give of her best and with excellence. A propitious turn of events offered me the opportunity to record and transcribe the Miriam Makeba story and, in early 2003, that is what I set out to do. When Mama Makeba started to talk to me, I, with my minidisk in hand, was given an amazing historical and cultural journey through Africa and the world in the most personal and accessible way. In true African oral history tradition, Mama Makeba spoke to me as grandmother to grandchild, mother to child, woman to woman. She spoke as a creative being, a singer in self-expression, a human being with her excitement, her frustrations, her joys, her anger, her love, her disappointments, her happiness and her fears but mostly with laughter. Sometimes she would be exhausted after a performance, needing to relax after a tour, surrounded by many great-grandchildren, family, friends or fans. She'd be busy cooking in her kitchen, preoccupied about an important meeting, anxious about the Makeba Centre for Girls, nervous about giving a speech and at times she just didn't feel like unearthing her past – but always, she showed respect for me and our project. I also had my own challenges, sitting with this woman whose contribution to the world had resonance long before I was even thought of! But I didn't have to worry – Mama Makeba gave openly, telling her story, to me, to us with love ... Mama Makeba talked – and our conversations, now *Makeba – The Miriam Makeba Story*, have life on paper ... So here it is – a story, a document of a life, perhaps a document of our culture and of our times – Mama Makeba's contribution to the growing number of African stories in print. This story is by no means holistic but it is, to all intents and purposes, the voice of Mama Makeba, a glimpse of the life of Mama Makeba.

The compositional procedures here are recounted in detail, and seem to support a view of the collaboration as a democratic and balanced project that displays the dynamics involved when synthesising past events into a narrative. This display seems to counter the immediacy and spontaneity suggested by the relived memories attributed to the other interviewees. However, a closer look at the Co-Author's Note suggests that this same privileging of immediacy is at work. Mwamuka states that she was able "to record and transcribe the Miriam Makeba story", a project to which Makeba contributed willingly, resulting in "our conversations, now *Makeba – The Miriam Makeba Story*". It has to be noted, however, that throughout the described process Makeba *talked*, while the resulting text is *written*, even though it may have "life on paper". Failing to theorise the translation and transposition of the oral to written (which is presented as a mere comma, signalling an unimportant pause from one speech genre to the other, not really worth noting), the co-author shifts the focus away from her authorship.

Mwamuka's authorship, however, is ineffaceable, particularly when comparison is made between the seemingly haphazard compositional process and the very carefully periodised, teleological and illustrated result that is *The Miriam Makeba Story*. Her role is far more than that of transcriber and recorder with innocent minidisk. Therefore, while the haphazard scene that seeks to write the composition of the book as almost an aside contributes to one type of immediacy, it in turn obstructs another by unwittingly accentuating the eventual ordering that would have been necessary to create narrative. By sleight of hand, however, this relationship between interviewer and interviewee, and the compositional process, are justified. They are subsequently

described as indicative of a "true African oral history tradition", albeit with a minidisk. Such characterisation conditions, and is perhaps also conditioned by, the naming of Makeba as Mama Africa by the general public. It further portrays the subservient position the scribe evidently assumes in relation to her. Where Makeba is seen to talk spontaneously and in-between everything else, Mwamuka constructs herself as a passive recipient: as "grandchild", "child", and "woman". These intimate, feminised and infantilising descriptions further characterise the personal setting sketched out in the Co-Author's Note, more so by the respectful calling of Makeba as Mama Makeba and Mwamuka's overawed recognition of Makeba's contributions. Combined with the classification of the text as part of African oral history, we are then, as readers, explicitly told what type of text this is: a "story" that forms part of the "growing number of African stories in print". The story then is in this way partly attributed authority. It is specifically "Mama Makeba's" contribution to this collection that is highlighted. Her contribution is seen as more than her story and more as "a document of … our culture and of our times". This haphazard life in other words, is also specifically presented as history, and Makeba is positioned as its author. This positioning distinguishes her from others, and enables her 'to speak' (to) history. What is important is that the final elision of the story's mediation into narrative is the characterisation of the text as, "to all intents and purposes, the *voice* of Mama Makeba" (my emphasis).

There are other authenticating voices in the text. These, however, have a different purpose to the above, as they bring to the fore the politics of representation that have already been implied in the dust jacket. The book begins with a Foreword by Stokely Carmichael – who was a prominent member of the African-American Black Panther movement, a civil rights activist and Makeba's ex-husband – taken and abridged from

his biography *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Times of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)* (2003) (in Makeba 2004, 6-7). Here, Makeba as a political activist, as a singer, as an exile, as Carmichael's wife and as ambassador 'Mama Africa', is admirably recounted by Carmichael. These attributions echo the celebratory tone that is prevalent throughout Makeba 2004. There seem, then, to be contradictions between the tones adopted in the book. Makeba as subject downplays her importance with convincing humility, one that views with some discomfort some of the labels attached to her (apart from her description as a musician). The co-author, for her part, constructs a narrative that portrays Makeba from all the perspectives recounted by Carmichael; she co-opts Makeba's discomforts within this frame, marking them as illustrative of a proper degree of humility from a subject of such stature. Thus while naming it 'the voice' of Makeba, the book is patently not so when considered as a narrative. The markers of orality that abound in the book, such as including words in so-called 'township lingo' and shifts in tone, among others, stage the appearance of orality. Makeba as narrator and author in this way disappears or is effaced.

All this displays the tensions in the text's vacillation between biography and autobiography suggested by Parke. For here we can see that where *Makeba* leans toward autobiography, the phonocentric illusion of the text as 'the voice' of Makeba, and the corresponding effacement of the co-author's role, are important. The authority of the text as an autobiography depends on this. As biography, however, authentication relies on collaborative and corroborating voices. These voices need as their legitimating strategies wider dialogising narratives that *attribute* socially cogent values to the narrating self. In the South African context, then, the impressions these voices have of Miriam Makeba indicate to a large extent the grounds one may occupy to assume authorship: to speak (to) history.

The use of dialogising narratives and corroborating voices to infuse the text with biographical 'reliability' is further evident in Joe Mogotsi's text. Mogotsi 2002 is written with the author's wife, Pearl Connor. John Patterson and Lars Rasmussen further edit the book, as it is part of their Booktrader's Jazz Profiles, with Mogotsi (2002) forming the third book in the series. Apart from these multiple authors who share the copyright, Mogotsi mentions others in the acknowledgements page, including:

> Brian Alleyne for work on the early text ...Jim Bailey for providing us with archival material on The Manhattan Brothers ... Alf Kumalo for his photographic history of The Manhattan Brothers.
>
> (2002, 5-6)

The book also includes a bibliography and a filmography. These refer to works not only on The Manhattan Brothers, including the important music historiography of Christopher Ballantine's extensive research on the group (see also Mogotsi 2002, 103). They also include fictional and non-fictional works that cover their period, including the work of noted ethnomusicologist/anthropologist David Coplan, and Miriam Makeba's (1988) autobiography. Where in Makeba 1988 and 2004 the authenticating voices were relegated to the margins of the narrative, or reflexively displayed, in Mogotsi, they are incorporated seamlessly into his narrative. Mogotsi's text, already a collaborative autobiography, leans even further than Makeba toward the biographical pole. That the text engages dialogically with scholarly texts on South African music and cultural history, and also with fictional works that describe that period, by implication invites comparison and reinforces the narrated 'ethos' as comparable, familiar and 'true'.

The biographical leanings of Mogotsi 2002 are to an extent reflected at the level of rhetoric. In chapter 1, where the narration of departure as a constructed adventure of political escape was examined, we noted that unlike the others, Mogotsi's narration was matter of fact. His inclusion of background material that implicitly gave reasons for his departure was used merely as a dialogising background rather than a source that actively changed the tenor of the narration. Read against our argument now, one may see the evenness of the text's narrative as due not only to its multiply-mediated manner, but also to its striving for the biographical plane. Mogotsi, then, is also not sole author of his tale: as subject/author, he disappears not only in-between the narrative of The Manhattan Brothers, but also in-between that of the sources to which the text refers. Here, the autobiographical stature of the book operates insofar as Mogotsi is the narrative's putative centre, and as far as the attribution of authorship on the front cover matter.

The above processes operate in a similar manner and are to an extent magnified in Masekela 2004. Masekela's *Still Grazing* is co-written with D. Michael Cheers, who holds a doctorate in African Studies from Howard University, has co-edited and written two books and currently teaches at the University of Mississippi (2004, 394). Like Mwamuka, Cheers also reveals in the acknowledgements page, relegated to the margins of the text, that he owes thanks to Masekela's family, friends and acquaintances that he had interviewed for their "insights", "valuable morsels" and for "sharing [their] 'Bra Hugh' stories" with him (385). In addition, there is a "Recommended Reading List" (377-381). Like Mogotsi's bibliography and filmography, the reading list spans other South African autobiographical works such as Makeba 1988 and Nelson Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela* (2000); postcolonial texts such as Bhabha's *The Location of*

Culture (1994), other jazz autobiographies like Miles Davies's and Quincy Troupe's *Miles: The Autobiography* (1989), and writings on exile such as Chinua Achebe's *Home and Exile* (2000). These texts, we are led (most likely by Cheers) to suppose, would lead to a more responsive understanding of the story recounted in *Still Grazing* and it is within this delimited discursive context that the text should ideally be read. Such is Masekela's positioning as author. It is from the negotiated interstices of these dialogical discourses that his function within the given sphere occurs.

Though these biographical inclinations are strong in the text, the desire for autobiography is also evident at the level of the narrative discourse. Examples of this occur early in the narrative. For example, beginning the story of his birth and beginnings, the narrator apostrophises an implied addressee when noting: "(mbhaqanga was the dominant music of the townships in South Africa – a sound as joyous and sad as anything in the world, *but I'll get to that later*)" (3; my emphases). Later on, when he describes attending his aunt's wedding, relating the impression the music played there had on him, he remembers: "It was in those days in Witbank that music first captured my soul, forced me to recognize its power of possession. It hasn't let go yet. *But I'm getting ahead of myself*" (4; my emphases). Though these examples are few, they are nevertheless telling. For in their stop-and-start, stuttering manner, they convey the impression of a narrating voice beginning its story haltingly, in the process of active construction. In this way, we are conditioned to feel as if we are present in the enunciative present, rather than witnesses of a completed, already written product.

The vacillation between biography and autobiography, therefore, confers instability regarding how we read the texts, and the 'self' constructed in each. Both forms are concerned with the construction of a certain type of 'self', couched in the

'real', and convincing to its addressees. This self attempts to erase distance and encourage recognition, in the quest to construct the communal 'I' that we have identified as a feature in the musicians' autobiographies. As an autobiography, the immediacy engendered by the phonocentric illusion attempts to assimilate this 'I' in a manner similar to the processes of *Darstellung*, but masks this as *Vertretung*. In other words, it attempts to represent a portrait of a 'typical' individual who inhabits the same chronotopic position as the ones of whom s/he speaks, here South Africans oppressed by apartheid and other South African exiles. This symbolic, iconic representation, in turn, is rendered representative, supported by the corroborating voices that lend the text biographical veracity. That the collaborative voices corroborate the narrator's testimony implies that this communality is based on shared experience rather than simply example. For example, in Carmichael's portrait of Makeba referred to above, that Makeba's uncles died in the mass slaughter at Sharpeville while Makeba was in the United States, is written to read that she "had survived the murder of her family members by police" (2004, 6). The conflation of these two senses of representation results in the assumption that what these texts portray is unified, singular, and may unproblematically speak for others.

What cannot be escaped, however, is the constructedness of the narrating and narrated 'I'. For the resultant portraiture (the text) is shot through with the traces of the discourses the musicians wish to speak in order to sound in the other's shoes: they themselves are a result of these discourses – they have been texted by their co-authors, in films, newspapers, scholarly discourse, among others. Hence the anxious dialogue with which they engage these discourses. The collaborating corroborating voices, though at first seemingly roped in as natural backdrop to the picture being painted, in fact crowd and overpower the autobiographical subject. In the end, this writing "is not

the writing of an identifiable and personal 'other', but a kind of floating writing, an autobiographical form with no subject to ground it" (Lejeune 1989, 190). As Lejeune further explains, it is a writing that "grounds in his [*sic*] role as subject the one who is responsible for it or the one to whom the responsibility is given" (ibid). The responsibility lies with the one whose name appears largest on the title page. But the story is not theirs, for the narrative conventions they appropriate are those that are in currency, that are amenable to the construction of selves in a specific chronotopic context, and that have *significance* in the discursive sphere. As Mary Evans has concluded, "the more truly 'missing' persons of auto/biography are not the silent millions but the subjects themselves, the people who have been subjected to the auto/biographer's gaze and still manage to remain rooted less in their own circumstances than the assumptions of the biographer" (1998, 137). Thus the terms of collaboration here involve less the poststructuralist notions of split subjectivity than a conception of collaboration that creates subjects and authors them to speak. If the authority to speak has been dependent on significance to the national biography – as the texts have so far shown themselves only too aware – then maintaining this significance means allowing the so-called self as signified to be continually deferred. Inasmuch as this is a textual concern, it is also a political one, for we may then ask how and where these subjects, now deferred, are instead placed according to the demands of the national biography, and what significance lies in their biographically affirmed but autobiographically compromised positioning.

The Second Biographical Illusion: The Bakery, or, Amandla

> we should reexamine the empty space left by the author's disappearance; we should attentively observe, along its gaps and fault lines, its new demarcations, and the reapportionment of this void; we should await the fluid functions released by this disappearance.

This section examines how the musicians' lives have been portrayed in film. I focus on Lee Hirsch's *Amandla: A Revolution in Four Part Harmony* (2002), which is 'about' the role of music in South Africa's anti-apartheid struggle. Though there are other filmic representations of these musicians, their consideration is beyond the scope of this study. I question what kinds of 'I' appear or disappear and how their positioning is made to seem representative. Finally, I consider the potential ramifications this mode of representation has on the writing and reading of the national biography and the musicians.

The manner in which the musicians reassert their roles as authors may be seen through examining the chronotope of the narrative situation. The narrative situation presents the subjects as musicians. We have already noted that throughout their texts, the musicians refer to music in their narration. For example, in our examination of plot in chapter 1, we observed tensions in the narration of departure, which fortuitously vacillated between the use of music, and use of the national biography, as a reason to leave. The musicians also use music in another way. Hugh Masekela uses lyrics from some of his songs, indicated by italics, to supplement his written narrative. Makeba 1988 transcribes songs that variously act as commentary on the described situation of the national biography and the personal narrative. Makeba 2004 repeats this strategy, further using her album titles as chapter headings and including an extensive discography. For Joe Mogotsi, the inclusion of music takes many forms, as the text contains not only an extensive discography, but also transcribed charts of some of The Brother's classics. The inclusion of music in their texts serves the same corroborative function as the previously examined collaborative voices. It marks the

musicians' authenticity as subjects or authors, as it is also a measure of their achievements and their successes as musicians that give them authority to speak.

This authority allows the musicians to bring their perspectives to a story that, as I argue, is not really their own story. For their music enters in a disjunctive way into the narratives – as breaks that quite clearly interrupt the narrative flow. In the autobiographies, then, music may be viewed as a Bakhtinian utterance, as it interanimates or interilluminates the range of speech genres constituting the texts. As Jason Toynbee, drawing on Bakhtin, has argued, the dynamism that arises from this interanimation refracts rather than directly expresses authorial intention, therefore rendering music "an ensemble of coded voices" (2003, 105). Concluding his argument, Toynbee further notes that music or coded voices "are comparable to Bakhtin's utterances, being pieces of musical fabric with an identifiable source and therefore also a particular social milieu" (105). Occurring as it does within an irreducible social milieu, music is therefore chronotopically identifiable. Because music 'tells more', it cannot be reduced to a simple illustration of the stages of the national biography that are narrated at any one time; rather, it is in constant generative and creative dialogue with myriad speech genres forming the text as an evolving whole.

Through its idiosyncratic inclusion in the written narratives, music inaugurates a narrative that demands to be read and heard on its own terms. Its irreducibility enables an argument toward yet another disappearance of the author. The 'empty space' left by this disappearance generates its own play of meanings. This play involves the ineluctably dialogic relations between context, music and identity, that in their interaction present what Bakhtin would term an 'open unity'. In this way, the chronotopic game changes. Music cannot be assimilated into any of the other

authoritative discourses that crowd the discursive sphere wherein the texts, written or visual, circulate. Similarly, music also changes the representation game, as its dialogic nature, which preserves this open unity, resists any collapsing of *Darstellung* and *Vertretung*. Sound tracks the narrated chronotopicity without implying unproblematic similitude to what is portrayed. Representation is in this way problematized as a desired goal linked to both personal and broader realisations. The potential dynamics of meaning that music may acquire through its encounters and interactions with other speech genres in the discursive domain are left unfinalized.

Attempts to harness the possible play of meanings introduced by the use of music in both the written and visual texts occur. In the written autobiographies, music is used as a gambit, in that simplistic analogies are made between the story being narrated and what the songs are seemingly about. In other words, for the written autobiographies, there is no consideration of the argument that would propose that music, as its own discourse, may generate its own chronotopic play that is complexly relational to that set to work by language and narrative. This harnessing is more evident in *Amandla*, which uses music to comment or represent the events and stories that it sees as elements in South Africa's liberation struggle. It dates this liberation struggle to be from 1948-1990. So-called watershed historical events form the film's narrative anchors: the victory of the National Party in 1948 and the beginning of apartheid, the pass laws of the 1950s, the Sharpeville massacre and the beginning of the armed struggle in the 1960s, the Soweto uprising of 16 June 1976, the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 and the first democratic elections in 1994. Such are what we may term the constituent events of the national biography.

Each of these events in turn becomes a section that divides and determines not only the direction of the story, but also the music to be contained within it. Further flagging

of the narrative can be seen in the blurbs that begin each section. These blurbs contain

brief 'historical' (some might say simplistic and dramatic) introductions of what we

are about to view. The beginning of the film contains a written preface that reads:

> In 1948 the white government of South Africa began one of the most brutal
> systems of racial segregation the world has ever known. "Apartheid" made
> Africans of colour aliens in their own land. Millions were forced to leave their
> homes and live in impoverished townships where they were denied the most
> basic rights of African citizenship. For over 40 years Africans fought back
> with non-violent protest. Eventually, some turned to armed struggle.
> Throughout the struggle, there was music.
>
> (Hirsch 2002)

The extract is historiographically disturbing. This is due to the many untheorised

tenets of its emplotment. Without pretending to exhaustiveness, we can isolate some

of these concerns. First, there is the assertion that "the most brutal system of racial

segregation" in South Africa began in 1948. Such an assertion makes formal

apartheid, as a system of racial segregation, seem an aberration from what had gone

on before. By privileging the 1948 elections as an event, the brutality of a political

and historical process with longer roots in the country's past is made to lie in its

naming. Similarly, processes that fought against this unnamed segregation are glossed

over, as non-violent protest is interpreted as ineffectual when compared to the armed

struggle. This prepares the periodisation of the struggle for national liberation as a

process of increasingly effective means. This in turn enables the national biography as

'the Struggle' to be narrated as an inevitable story of resistance culminating in 1990.

Paul Maylam has noted the dangers inherent in such simplistic periodisation of South

Africa's past. As he cautions:

> Any stress on discontinuity in the history of the South African racial order

might lead to the conclusion that apartheid, post-1948, was an aberration, a monstrous departure from what had gone before, rather than a culmination of a long history of racial oppression. Such a view tends naturally towards a demonisation of the National Party, particularly Verwoerd and his henchmen, and a softer stance on pre-1948 patterns of discrimination and oppression.

(2001, 6)

Although it may be acknowledged that apartheid as policy was a "hideous completion" of South Africa's long germinating segregationist history, Maylam also cautions against overemphasising continuities (ibid.). While highlighting continuities avoids treating 1948 as a spectacular event and pre-1948 as 'small fry', it may also occlude the fact that policies implemented after 1948 were more stringent. We are led to conclude, then, that any discussion of South Africa's past cannot unproblematically disregard the complex admixture of continuities and discontinuities that mark its plot. The tendencies fostered by simplification and their implications are evident in *Amandla*. For the characters populating the film may, without exaggeration, be termed 'the good' (blacks) and 'the bad' (whites). There are very few 'good whites': poet and prominent member of the South African Communist Party, Jeremy Cronin; and the late political activist, Helen Joseph, who is listed in the obituary of fallen struggle heroes. The former state president, FW De Klerk occupies an ambivalent position in the moral dynamics of the film. Seen in this way, they are at a distinct disadvantage when compared to the roll call of black political heroes listed in the national obituary, these being: Govan Mbeki, Albert Luthuli, Dorothy Nyembe, Oliver Tambo, Lillian Ngoyi, Steven Biko, Chris Hani and Francis Baard. This is apart from the others included in the body of the story, and apart from the towering shadow of Nelson Mandela that dwarfs all the characters in any case. By contrast, 'bad whites' outnumber the good: footage of an early Nationalist parliamentarian equivocating on

apartheid; footage of the then Minister of Native Affairs and later Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd famously defining apartheid as 'good neighbourliness'; a death row warden by the name of Johan Steinberg; a 'Madam' in a government film; and a group of "Retired Riot Policemen" gathered around a braai (barbecue). This of course is apart from the many anonymous white riot policemen whose sole purpose seems to chase, kick and beat up black rioters to no eventual avail. There are no bad blacks in the film.

The issue, however, is not about demographically correct quotas of representation. It is that in *Amandla*, the liberation struggle is simplistically reduced to race. This simplifying occurs at the levels of belief, attitude and thought, and implementation of power. On the one hand, raciology explains South Africa's racial practices of the time, manifested at the level of human interaction. More importantly, it elucidates the racial grounding of apartheid's implemented policies, "epitomised most obviously in the post-1950 apartheid system" (Maylam 2001, 8-9). The institutionalisation of power at the service of raciology, therefore, is well served by the mythologisation of apartheid in the film. On the other hand, it cannot be supposed, as *Amandla* tends to do, that these policies corresponded to a collective racial consciousness. For racial consciousness "refers to a set of beliefs about perceived differences between human groupings based on colour, physical type and culture. Such beliefs may be widely held, but they tend to be loosely articulated, expressed in popular attitudes and behaviour patterns, but not systematised in a body of theory or scientific discourse" (Maylam 2001, 7-8). By systematising this perceived racial consciousness into *narrative*, the film effectively naturalises and renders a chronotopically specific set of human relations as inevitable. South African historiography's aim, therefore, would not be to rewrite the National Party, Verwoerd and his 'henchmen' as seraphic, but to

examine critically how these forms of racism circulated in South Africa's discursive sphere throughout its history. Because *Amandla* does not do this, this constructed racial dichotomy persists throughout the film, giving rise to other stereotypical binaries that structure the moral matrix we are positioned as viewers to assume toward the story told.

Having selected and ranked what it deems to be the constituent events in South Africa's national biography, and infused them with a moral imperative, the film further naturalises these stories through the evocation of place. The story here, too, is familiar. For example, the introduction to the narrated 1950s reads:

> Apartheid mandated the destruction of thriving black communities like Sophiatown. By the 1950s, all blacks were forced to relocate to government-run "townships" like Meadowlands [...] In the late 1950s, laws were enacted making it illegal for black South Africans to move about the country without a passbook. The people took to the streets in resistance.
>
> (Hirsch 2002)

In this narration, there is no detraction from the mythologizing of place we had noticed in the written autobiographies. Yet again, Sophiatown as home gains its bathos because it is narrated as a vanishing point, again contrasted to the township Meadowlands. The simplification attending this story is by now familiar. In the film, the populist/nostalgic descriptions of Sophiatown as a 'thriving' conglomerate of music, shebeens and beautiful women are maintained. So is its status as a brewing cauldron of political uprising; accordingly, then, we are shown brief snippets of what may possibly be a rally at Freedom Square in Sophiatown and the location's eventual destruction. The famous extract of Miriam Makeba singing Dorothy Masuka's "Into Yam" in a shebeen in Sophiatown for the filming of *Come Back Africa*, which catapulted her into fame, is also shown. No other 'place' is depicted in such a manner,

not even Sophiatown's usual counterpart, District Six. For the rest, the evocation of place is subsumed under the unceasing exhibition of violence in the townships.

What are we to make of this wilful contraction of South African space? Apart from Sophiatown, it seems, we are not expected to concern ourselves with topographic peculiarities or differences across South Africa and through time. What is important is the display of violence, in order to craft its eventual overcoming at the end of the film. In *Amandla*, the spectacle of destruction and forced removals, exemplified by Sophiatown, is privileged over any other examination. What is important in the film is that these communities were 'thriving' – a blatant simplification. It is this desire for the spectacular that mandates the film's focus on Sophiatown and nowhere else. The selectivity of the narrative is glossed over by one simple word contained in the blurb cited above: "like". With this assertion of similarity, Sophiatown is made unproblematically to stand for *all* manner of expropriation and destruction of space. With this, comes the homogenisation of those who were disenfranchised, leading to a blatant untruth that asserts that the entire African population were made to move from thriving locations to government-run townships. This simplification of South Africa's past arises from unquestioning reiteration of mythological versions of the national biography, which above all else focus on spaces, places and times we have noted before: preferring the spectacular story of urban resistance and activities against apartheid.

The film's largest selling point is its use of people's stories to personalise its narrative. Prominent on its DVD cover is that it won the "Audience Award" and the "Freedom of Expression Award" at a Sundance Film Festival in 2002. The recognition of 'freedom of expression' acknowledges the film's attribution of authority to those who have stories to tell, and are given leave to tell these stories

without hindrances. In this way, the interviewees participate in the same politics of authorship as are at work in the autobiographies. However, the extent to which *Amandla* does attribute authority to those who speak is contestable. The pretence at autobiographical authority is consistently undermined by the film's impatience to portray 'the Struggle'. The people's stories are important only insofar as they illuminate and/or exemplify what the film wishes to communicate. This is the second biographical illusion. As Alistair Thompson has argued,

> Recorded oral testimony is not just an historical source to be mined for information and subjected to historical interpretation by the interviewer and other historians. In an interview the narrator not only recalls the past; they also offer an interpretation of that past.
>
> (1998, 25)

By contrast, in *Amandla* people's stories are made to fit each demarcated historical epoch through extensive editing and to *comment* on this so-called epoch. Hirsch and his crew, in more ways than one, direct the line of meanings the people's stories may have. Moreover, there is no disagreement between or within the voices. Apartheid, this seems to suggest, was monolithic and unchanging for disenfranchised South Africans of every hue, class or gender – across a combination of all these variables. This effectively subverts any ostensible attribution of authority. For when complex characters and their stories are reduced to elements in a narrative, they are at best characters or protagonists under the heel of Hirsch's story. The awarding of the "Freedom of Expression Award" to *Amandla*, then, should be viewed against these considerations, as I would argue it is based on a staging of voices and an imitation of a democratised historical record that functions as a simulation of heteroglossia. Equally, its fetishization of apartheid as spectacle might explain its "Audience

Award". There is little difference in this strategy, it seems to me, from the violence done to agency by the hegemonic national biography. Minkley and Rassool have criticised this dominating approach in South African oral and/or social history. They note that in the presentation of oral remembrances,

> Collective memories ... were analogous to the remembrances of individuals, linked by group experience of race and class in communities and shared by the *ideal* memory of these individuals. Multiple individual voices *equalled* collective memory and *represented* collective identity.
>
> (1998, 93 my emphases)

This has made South Africa's stories of the past and the tellers of these stories, subject to teleology. As such, there is little difference, even, between the deceased song writer and political activist Vuyisile Mini's story, around whom *Amandla* putatively revolves, and those who live to speak their tales in the film; both are at any rate placed at strategic points to fill in Hirsch's vision. Theirs are interchangeable experiences; indeed, apart from the inclusion of Nelson Mandela and the activities of the African National Congress, they need not even have been there. *Amandla*'s inclusion of apartheid's micronarratives through using people's stories assumes that these stories are autonomous, that people's memories are not influenced by public versions of this past. In short, it ignores the dialogic complexity that we have been teasing out throughout the study.

This framework has also been mapped onto music. Using the story of Vuyisile Mini as the progenitor of struggle songs, the film places as its foundational theory that struggle gave birth to certain types of music, which music then commented on what was happening at the time. The film states at the beginning that: "throughout the struggle, there was music". It seems to fulfil this observation through its smoothly

edited mixture of background music, and snippets of singing from those interviewed who knew or remembered the songs considered important. Mini's famous protest song *"Nants' indod' emnyama Verwoerd"*[26] is introduced in this manner. The filmic processes that tell the story of this song typify the narrative strategies of the film: a song is introduced, proof of its commonality is established through the evident knowledge thereof by the interviewees, the song then becomes a soundtrack to anonymous masses that are depicted living through apartheid – shown doing the *toyi-toyi*, being forcibly removed from their homes, producing pass books, marching, striking, being shot at or beaten. In this way, multiple, unheard, individual voices are placed in a position that may be spoken by this song, thus again simulating collectivity and consensus.

Speaking on music in South African society in the film, formerly exiled South African jazz musician, Abdullah Ibrahim[27], offers a slight censure to the invisible interviewer as he explains, "The thing that saved us was the music [...] It's not even what we call liberation music, it was part of liberating ourselves" (in Hirsch 2002). This censure is insistently ignored throughout the film. Herein lies our biggest contention with *Amandla*, as its representation of music and musicians, and their role in South Africa, is subsumed by its extremely narrow definition of freedom songs and songs of freedom. Charting the popularity and ways in which music might mean in society cannot be accomplished unproblematically, as Shirli Gilbert warns. Echoing Ibrahim, she observes that music's journeys are "obviously informal and unregulated, and it is impossible to extract from them an essential collective narrative" (2004, 11). Nonetheless, this is exactly what *Amandla* has done; in so doing, it has reduced the

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[26] The song's Xhosa title indicates an overt challenge to the then Prime Minister, Hendrik Verwoerd, as it translates: "Here comes the black man Verwoerd". It is also sometimes called *"Pasop Verwoerd"* – Afrikaans meaning "Beware Verwoerd".

[27] Abdullah Ibrahim (or Dollar Brand), like other (formerly) exiled black musicians, is not included in this study as a whole only because he has not (as yet) written an autobiography.

many roles that music may take up in disenfranchised communities to a mythology that romanticises and essentializes the past as "a simple dichotomy between apartheid and resistance" (Minkley and Rassool 1998, 95). In her study, which is concerned with women's anti-apartheid experiences in song, Gilbert observes that women's freedom songs weighted the concerns of struggle for national liberation and gender equality in complex ways (2004, 12-14). *Amandla*, apart from token glances on the issue of 'maids and madams' in South Africa, does not examine how women's experiences of apartheid might have affected song. Other positionalities are also summarily dismissed. In *Amandla*, all blacks are natural combatants, inevitably assuming this position against a monolithically oppressive regime. They are a mass of crowds literally marching to the rhythm of history, soundtracked by the songs that have been chosen to speak them. This strategy must be treated with a fair bit of misgiving. In the end it tells us nothing apart from enacting the master-narrative of resistance.

Contrary to its mandate, then, which it states to be the investigation of music's importance during the decades of apartheid, *Amandla* simplifies the importance of songs. Songs, to refer to Gilbert again,

> constitute a valuable resource for social historians attempting to understand the dynamics of subjugated communities, particularly those communities for whom conventional channels of communication and expression are restricted or proscribed. Songs, in these contexts, are generally created and disseminated orally, are easily remembered, and if popular can spread with remarkable rapidity across wide-ranging social and geographical landscapes. As such, they can constitute an effective shared space where interpretations of and responses to the situation at hand are expressed and engaged with on a communal level.

(2004, 11)

Because *Amandla* skims the extreme surface of this 'shared space', it writes these songs as "one-dimensional stories of heroic resistance" (17; see also Minkley and Rassool 1998, 94). This is particularly evident in the stories recounted by the formerly exiled musicians. Though the musicians are seemingly given space, indeed privileged, to voice their experiences, musical or otherwise, they nevertheless do so within a restricted frame. This is clear not only from what they say, but also where they are positioned in the film. The musicians are not really brought in to tell their tales, but to explain and illustrate what has already been decided will be the tale to be told.

The musicians enter into the film's narrative as metonymic voices that symbolise authority. Their commentary is apportioned in such a way that they function as roles, and it is roles that have been attributed to them in the (global) popular imagination. Unsurprisingly perhaps, then, Masekela is presented as the fearless trumpeter who speaks his mind, and comments on songs overtly aligned with this 'temperament'. Similarly, Makeba's labelling as 'Mama Africa' is repeated in the way she is made to comment about being a domestic worker in South Africa during apartheid. Nothing uttered by the musicians disturbs the flow of *Amandla*'s narrative; rather than authors, they and their music become instead corroborating voices for the film, further serving its desire to simulate collectivity and consensus toward its subject matter.

The musicians also speak collectively as exiles. This occurs in a section narrating the general arrests, exodus and banning of political leaders and undesirable persons during the 1960s. The musicians are here used to give the film its autobiographical slant and the 'history from below' flavour towards which it (pre)tends. Makeba speaks of her prevention from returning to bury her mother and the death of her daughter in exile. Masekela remembers his fear of forgetting his home languages while in exile. Their stories are ruthlessly constricted to mean within the narrative, and their purpose

seems only to illuminate the *effect* of the workings of the national biography, rather than tell of their experiences of absence. The intricacies we have observed in their written narratives appear nowhere in this narrative.

The purposes of this simplification and reduction are obvious. Functioning as icons, as Michael Titlestad has argued, "metonyms are cut loose from their discursive moorings and, in new combinations, signify only a territory of loss, at once obliterated by the apartheid state and sacrificed in the interests of our own myth-making" (2004, 37). As metonymic figures, the formerly exiled musicians cannot afford the indulgence that accompanies autobiography. As subjects, they are literally robbed of their stories and become instead positioned only to speak with the national biography. This 'speaking to', we have argued above, is a position of power. However, the terms of trade that attribute to them this voice, do so at the cost of their peculiar micro-narratives. They become, in effect, mere representative allegories of correct historical and political practice – the ideal South African exiled musician.

Conclusion: Representations and Representatives

> there is a sharp and categorical boundary line between the actual world as source of representation and the world represented in the work. We must never forget this, we must never confuse – as has been done up to now and as is still often done – the *represented* world with the world outside the text (naïve realism); nor must we confuse the author-creator of a work with the author as a human being (naïve biographism); nor confuse the listener or reader of multiple and varied periods, recreating and renewing the text, with the passive listener or reader of one's own time (which leads to dogmatism in interpretation and evaluation). All such confusions are methodologically impermissible.
>
> (Bakhtin 1981, 253)

The texts' formal instability undermines the phonocentric illusion. Rather than 'pure' and 'free', the musicians' identities are collaboratively constructed to function in

excess of their proper names. Their proper names, like their life stories, become instead signs that are given meaning and significance by the national biography and other authoritative discourses. It is these discourses that variously designate or withdraw their authorship (Foucault 2001 [1969], 1626). Simply put, the identities of the musicians gain significance in the national biography as figures of metonymy, explained elsewhere by Michael Titlestad as a sort of 'cultural shorthand' (2004). In other words, the very names of the musicians have become sufficient markers of the type of musician, struggle hero and exile preferred by the national biography. Bourdieu has noted that the proper name "can only attest to the identity of the *personality*, as socially constituted individuality, at the price of an enormous abstraction" (2000, 302). The cost of the abstraction in the texts studied here is considerable: it occurs at the expense of a nuanced study of the musicians as complexly positioned selves; it simplifies the difficult itinerancy of exile; and metonymy's extrinsicality makes exile a 'black box' untheorisable beyond its significance as a consequence of the national biography, and rarefied beyond debate if not experienced.

Metonymy, as Bhabha has defined it, is "a figure of contiguity that substitutes a part for a whole (an eye for an I), [and] must not be read as a form of simple substitution or equivalence" (1994, 54). This is because this complex substitution and/or supplementation recalls Spivak's warning against the collapsing of *Darstellung* (eye) and *Vertretung* (I). Metonymy, therefore, constitutes what Breyten Breytenbach has observed to be exile's largest irony (1996, 41-48). To sum up his observations, Breytenbach wryly observes that since exile frees one from the constricting apartheid national biography, one is both free to imagine the past and the future of that past. Within this positioning, however, one is also always already constructed, as entry into

this imagining is often dictated by one's meta-identity as an exile. One becomes "a collection of singularities cut loose, of names and pronouns and fingernails and things and animals and small happenings" (48). 'The exile' is slotted in to make meaning to and for the observers and to her- or his-self. This slotting into the interstices of a particular discourse does not guarantee context and complexity; it may reify rather than democratise the historical record. This reification occurs in all the autobiographical texts studied here. The musicians disappear as authors not only in narratives that are ostensibly about their lives, but also in the hegemonic national biography. Therefore, while their representations (portrait/*Darstellung*) and their status as representatives (in-the-others'-shoes/*Vertretung*) allocates them a privileged positionality from which they may speak (to) history, this allocation only occurs via an abstraction that sees them reduced to actors in the narrative, rather than its creators.

Far from identifying a self that insists on a personalised chronotope couched in chronological biographical time as we had sought to do in this chapter, we are instead led to investigate further narrativisation. For with the constant deferral of the self as signified, it becomes clear that the story cannot be about that which it seems mostly about. If writing or narrating for the musicians is writing against exile, then the continuing fight displayed here lies in the struggle for authority. This authority, it turns out, lies not in the interpretation of the past, or in the differing versions of history that are propounded, but in the assertion of self as important despite *and* because of this past. This duality is a strategic ambivalence, and has two related consequences. First, the musicians *as exiles* become representations of apartheid's atrocities, and, by virtue of being at apartheid's receiving end, are 'authorised' to speak about these atrocities. Second, because exile has been constructed as the

pinnacle of the dispossession, alienation and expropriation caused by apartheid, their stories are regarded as exemplary, as representative.

This representivity is supported by the way the musicians' peculiar exilic chronotopes are disregarded in *Amandla*. We may recall that, having examined the rupture effected by exiling, we argued that one characteristic of writing against exile involves absences that result in the musicians' attendant desire to connect to the national biography as 'the Struggle'. There is no consideration of this rupture and desire in *Amandla*. The musicians are made to comment on all aspects that the interviewer wishes to be elucidated as if they had remained in South Africa.

Let us examine this fusion of chronotopes. Before us there are two events – the portrayed story of South African music during its past, and the film being shown. We ourselves participate in the film as viewers. Two chronotopes are therefore in process: the chronotope of the narrated past (the national biography spanning the delimited time the film chooses to privilege), and our unresolved and evolving postapartheid chronotope (which is also the chronotope of the film's enunciative present). Within the film, a similar chronotopic division may be discerned, as for the interviewees the narrative situation occurs at the back of the completed epoch of apartheid that they are made to comment on in retrospect. They cannot, then, be taken to fit simply into the narrated chronotope of the national biography. They are, as it were, tangential to the work represented, and represent this narrated chronotope as participants therein or as its commentators. In an observation on authorship that could easily be said of the formerly exiled musicians, Bakhtin notes that though an 'author' (in the broadest sense of the word and here including the interviewees) may simulate *Vertretung*, s/he

> can represent the temporal-spatial world and its events only *as if* he [*sic*] had seen and observed them himself, only *as if* he were an omnipresent witness to

them. Even had he created an autobiography or a confession of the most astonishing truthfulness, all the same he, as its creator, remains outside the world he has represented in his work. If I relate (or write about) an event that has just happened to me, then I as the *teller* (or writer) of this event am already outside the time and space in which the event occurred.

(1981, 256 my emphases)

The fusion of the exiled musicians' chronotopes with those of the national biography can therefore only occur as a simulation, grounded by the two forms of the biographical illusion that we have examined above. The forms this simulation has taken are evident in all spheres of the observed narrative discourse: plot, the constructed chronological time, the reification and aestheticisation of space, and collusion of co-authors and collaborative voices in constructing their subjects. It is, therefore, a social contract. However, the indivisibility *and* indissolubility of the chronotopes always already implies, as put forward by Bakhtin, that any retrospective analysis and narration of an event encounters that event as narrative. Because no narrative, considered as an utterance, stands in isolation from others in the literary and/or cultural sphere, it cannot remain immune to the dialogical inflections effected by other narratives. These other narratives or utterances, we have seen, may be written by many hands – at times invidiously authorial or otherwise sympathetic – and it is in this way that the subjects considered here are always already written.

Privileging the phonocentric illusion as a window into the narrated person, against the discomposing awareness that this is not 'the voice' of the narrating subject[28], has a larger discomfiting consequence. This is because it fixes the chronotopically specific

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[28] This may seem counter to Bakhtin's argument that although any text passes through 'a lengthy series of mediating links' we always arrive, in the end, at the human voice or the human being (1981, 252-3). We need here to recall, however, that for Bakhtin, the human is situated within a 'unfinished' chronotope that is always in a process of becoming, or, as Morson and Emerson more eloquently point out, "for Bakhtin, 'humanness' is temporally extensive, biographically dispersed, historically evolving, and responsible over time" (1990, 262). Therefore, his statement regarding the encounter with the human voice need not necessarily be taken as viewing this voice as the end of significatory play, as the final cessation of dialogue.

subject as an immutable and knowable entity, prior to language, and prior to the discourses that have gone into its making. In this study, this fixing of the subject as signified generates further reifications. Because the subjects are firstly situated within the larger text that is the national biography, this reification and expectionalisation mistakenly, even dangerously, allows them to reinscribe what is essentially a personal chronotope as collective remembrance. This assumes, of course, that there is an implicit consensus regarding the chronotopic values attributed to certain historical events and occurrences in the national biography. Second, events of this same national biography are then filtered through this stable entity and become from there *the* defining events both for South Africa's popular music, and for the fabled South African musician-in-exile. This, in turn, and as we have noted throughout, leads to a complete disregard of the intricacies involved in the stories of music's liberatory potential. In a study that situates itself within discourses in popular music studies, this is perhaps the most critical of costs. It is most clearly seen in the way that the musics of the exiles considered here are reduced to their protest capital, and in the way that, echoing the amnesia Mogotsi notes in South Africa, few other musicians appear in *Amandla* (Mogotsi does not appear at all).

This fixing in narrative is accomplished through the problematic *fusion* of non-contemporaneous chronotopes. Attempts to fuse the chronotopes of the musicians to those of the everyday South African chronotope (which is in any case usually simplified as the national biography) is a synthesising process that repeats the exiling carried out, literally and figuratively, by the former apartheid state. For while it holds up these preferred subject positions, it erases their stories' complexities when they do not fit within its schema, hence the resultant simplicity of the biographical illusions. For the ones here attempting to write against exile, the forms of their memories are

essentially undermined; they may only be taken seriously when they can be verified by the irrefutable national biography. Rather than subjects constructed by other discourses that include collaborative voices, they themselves become corroborators who affirm and entrench the official strictures of remembrance proscribed with the strongest postapartheid currency by the national biography.

The easy concordance between the narratives of the exiles and that of South Africa, both written and visual, should be viewed with suspicion. The represented world, however realistic, can never be chronotopically identical with the world it represents, and can never be commented upon as if it were so. As Bakhtin has observed, chronotopes are mutually exclusive; they may coexist, disturb or contradict one another (1981, 320). They cannot, as he has also warned, replace each other; they can only interact dialogically, at times antagonistically. As readers participating in the creative chronotope that perpetuates the continual renewal of the work, and, by extension, narratives of the past, we could – indeed should – read against exile as a meta-identity, against the texts as simplistic historical sources, and against the national biography's hegemony over the past.

Writing on exiles in general, Bernth Lindfors has asked: "Will they help write a new chapter in the history of South Africa, or will they be relegated to the margins of chapters already written" (in Mihailovich-Dickman 1994, 160). The autobiographies in this study seem to suggest the latter. The musicians as writers, it must finally be said, do not challenge the narrative that has accorded more significance to their form of alienation by apartheid's national biography. They strategically use both forms of the national biography as South Africa's "ground[s] of assumptive value" (Parke 2002, 108) to construct narratives that perpetuate their seemingly marginal status. When the musicians use apartheid's national biography, they portray themselves as

victims along with other black South Africans. When using the national biography as 'the Struggle', on the other hand, their lives are exceptionalized because of their exilic status. The ethics of identification with the national biography as a narrative of the liberation Struggle may at first seem a sound, even 'natural', position for the musicians to assume. We have, however, seen that it is a constructed positionality, accomplished through plot, time and space and made to seem natural by the mode of realism deployed in its writing. Moreover, the narrative of 'the Struggle' is no less reductive, territorial or simplifying than that of apartheid. Exploring the chronotopes of exile, locating the mythologizing and symbolising of space and time: these might take us further than straight readings in the effort to theorise the relationship between musical, literary and historical discourses on and in South Africa. By trenchantly critiquing *any* type of narrative that arrogates itself, or is arrogated by others, to representative status, whether this is implicitly or overtly staged – such readings might reinscribe the diverse chronotopicity of mundane everyday South Africanness and its discursive 'truths'.

Conclusion

This dissertation has been 'writing against exile' at varying but related levels. I have argued that exile is, in part, created by a range of discourses that culminate in forced departure and prevention from return. Its representations and narration are convincing to the degree to which these discourses are sympathetically articulated – in this study, by linking departure to the national biography (Chapter 1). This linkage has been accomplished by reinterpreting the chronotopic rupture initiated by exiling. When exiling is written as a pivotal event in the national biography, it begins to operate on a chronotope of absence, which I have theorised in many ways. Firstly, I have argued against the privileging of the exiling moment as an event. This privileging makes sense of exile against the absent others who are left behind and the land that is left behind (chapter 2). Secondly, I have linked absence to the musicians by tracing the failure of the topographic imagination to re-claim 'South Africa' beyond mythologisation (chapter 3). This attempt at re-membering 'South Africa', for the musicians, is an evident symptom of writing against exile, against the chronotopic rupture; while South Africa's violent mutability has resisted the musicians' exiling or absenting into a knowable, mythologised and static past. Finally, I have discerned forms of absence in the construction of the chronotopically positioned self. For this self as *author*, it turned out, is variously defaced by the tyranny of the national biography to the level of narrator, protagonist or metonym (chapter 4). Re-incorporation into the national biography through partially self-constructed narratives, therefore, seems at first a triumphant writing against exiling. The manner of this re-insertion, however, totalises the musicians' experiences to read as 'the South African

experience'. In this way, the form and content of their texts silences the cacophony that constitutes post-apartheid narratives. By insistently maintaining the dialogical interplay of chronotopes in the texts, I have also sought to write against this form of exile.

To this extent, this dissertation has not been about exile as a state of being or as a social process. Rather, I have been concerned with the gravitas exile has acquired in South Africa's discursive sphere throughout time, how this gravitas has attributed chronotopic values to certain aspects of the past, and value to those who were exiled. I have not sought to counterpose the experiences of exile with those who were left behind to prepare another moral platform. My argument has not sought to pitch different positions or competing totalizations of the national biography, nor has it been dependent on different evaluations of past events as historically significant. Rather, it unpacks different chronotopic postures the musicians assume to articulate time, space and South Africa in politically significant ways. Where Bakhtin uses the literary figure of the chronotope towards a historical poetics, then, I counterpose a chronotopic politics. I argue that struggles between differing historical narratives are intrinsically chronotopic. What kinds of experiences do certain chronotopes privilege over others? How, in their concretisation of themes, motifs and ideologies in the autobiographies and in the national biography, do they make certain actions possible and others not? These are the questions to which a politics of chronotopes would attend, interrogating autobiographical narratives and forms of the national biography for the possibilities they encode or foreclose. In this reinterpretation, music historiography has a role to play by exposing the complexities of the subject it narrates, and thus challenging its possible essentialisation or instrumentalist appropriation by ideology. Other autobiographies may also benefit from such a

reading – one that would understand autobiographies as instances of heteroglossia that permeates, influences and inflects discourses on South Africa's past as a whole. This would initiate a powerfully open-ended dialogue that would radically relativize the national biography, and create spaces within which processes of meaning-making would be possible and probable for those whose stories remain ignored in the current biography of the nation.

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