

**POLITICS, PRODUCTION AND PROCESS :
Discourses on tradition in contemporary
maskanda.**

by

Kathryn Olsen

**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts, in the
Department of Music,
University of Natal, Durban.
May, 2000**

CONTENTS.

Contents :	i
Acknowledgements :	ii
INTRODUCTION.	1- 5
CHAPTER 1 - Theory and Methodology.	6 - 34
CHAPTER 2 - Deconstructing Maskanda..	35- 44
CHAPTER 3 - Shiyani Ngcobo - <i>Oqobo Ngoqobo</i> (The Real Thing).	45 - 83
CHAPTER 4 - Posturing Zuluness.	84 - 128
CHAPTER 5 - Contradictions and Paradoxes.	129 - 164
CHAPTER 6 - Final Reflections.	165 - 169
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	170 - 176
MUSICAL EXCERPTS ON CD	177
APPENDIX 1 : Press Releases and Internet Articles - M.E.L.T.2000	
APPENDIX 2 : Press Releases and Internet Articles - Shiyani Ngcobo	
APPENDIX 3 : Press Releases and Internet Articles - Nantes Festival	
APPENDIX 4 : Press Releases and Internet Articles - Madala Kunene	
APPENDIX 5 : Press Releases and Internet Articles - Maskanda	
APPENDIX 6 : Press Releases and Internet Articles - Phuzekhemisi	
APPENDIX 7 : Press Releases and Internet Articles - Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and King Goodwill Zwelethini	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

This project would not have been possible without a considerable amount of assistance from a number of different people. I would like to express my gratitude to Madala Kunene, Shiyani Ngcobo and Phuzekhemisi for allowing me access to their personal life-stories, and for the many opportunities they have afforded me to observe and experience different aspects of maskanda performance.

I would also like to acknowledge the assistance of the following people:

Dr. Angela Impey, my supervisor, for her invaluable guidance and encouragement; Nothando Hadebe, Sazi Dlamini, Bheki Mkwane, Nathi Kunene, Madoda Kraai and Sihawukele Ngubane for assisting me as interpreters, transcribers and translators; David Marks; Peter Rorvick; Bhodloza Nzimande; Sibusiso 'Bernard' Motaunge, and Sibongiseni Mndima.

I would also like to thank my family for their interest and support.

Finally, I acknowledge the financial assistance of the Centre for Science and Development and the School of Graduate Studies, Natal University. Any opinions expressed and conclusions drawn in this thesis are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to these institutions.

Except where specifically stated to the contrary, this thesis is entirely my own work.

INTRODUCTION.

This thesis is concerned with processes of meaning-making in contemporary maskanda. More specifically, it is about the part that is played by 'tradition', in the construction of meaning. It aims to uncover some of the ways in which tradition is interpreted and used both in academic discourse and in the general discourses of everyday life, and to relate these perceptions to its use in the making and marketing of contemporary maskanda. It seeks an explanation for how and why 'tradition' is referenced. It is equally fair to say that this thesis is about three musicians, Shiyani Ngcobo, Phuzekhemisi, and Madala Kunene. They feature not simply as the subject matter of this enquiry, but also because they offer three very different paths by which to access the material needed to answer some of the questions about the 'how' and 'wherefore' of the experience of contemporary maskanda.

Contemporary maskanda is a dynamic body of Zulu popular music which takes shape in a number of performance styles. It is the transformation of a musical style which was developed at the turn of the 20th century by migrant workers in response to the changing dynamics of Zulu society. Like early maskanda, the contemporary version of this style draws on a multitude of sources. In the broadest sense it is most commonly understood simply as Zulu guitar music, but is also at times performed on concertina and violin. The commercialisation of maskanda in the 1950's brought some of the most profound changes in the style. What was predominantly a solo musical style is currently most often experienced in a band line up, with electric lead guitar, bass, and drums. In group performances, some of the delicacy and detail in the style of playing which are associated with early maskanda has been lost to the more forceful driving sound associated with other many forms of commercial music, ranging from mbaqanga to rock. Nevertheless, local maskandi frequently aspire to the notion that their music falls within the realm of a musical practice deeply rooted in the past.

Furthermore, it is as 'traditional' music that maskanda is marketed both locally and in the world music category. Notions of 'tradition' are therefore called upon both in the making and marketing of maskanda, and in local and international contexts. These notions become active participants in the processes through which maskanda is embedded with meaning. However, as a repository of meaning, tradition is a volatile concept which appeals to the imagination rather than to empirical evidence for authenticity. The notion of 'tradition' must therefore be seen as complex and problematic. I argue that tradition is a powerful concept which conjures up images of space, place and time in an intricate web of meaning. Under the banner of 'tradition', the past is afforded an authority which is frequently engaged to establish and confirm perceptions of both individual and collective identity. It is these notions of identity which are mobilised as part of a broader strategy designed to consolidate and perpetuate the ideological constructs on which political and economic directives depend. Zulu, South African, and African identity is imaged in the discourses in and surrounding contemporary maskanda. Through various, and at times problematic, claims on tradition, the public perception of these identities is shaped in ways which create the bounded realms of difference which gives Zuluness its exotic flavour in world music, and which consolidates the affiliations necessary to incite ethnic nationalist sentiment.

Tradition and the meanings associated with tradition are referenced in complex and at times contradictory ways. While the notion of tradition is spoken about and perceived in terms of an idealised past, the positioning of this idealised past is variable. Similarly, perceptions of maskanda are fluid, and there is often a disparity between descriptions of the characteristics of the music and the use of the label, particularly in the public realm. The different perceptions of tradition and maskanda, and the meanings attached to these terms are deeply entwined with the ideological stance of various 'players' who are involved in the production and dissemination of music to which the label 'maskanda' has been attached. Through a discussion of the music and performance styles of Shiyani Ngcobo, Phuzekhemisi and Madala Kunene, this thesis critically examines the

relationship between the meanings attached to and embedded in contemporary maskanda, and ideologically constituted notions of Zulu identity, history and experience.

The question of change is in many respects fundamental to any definition of maskanda and to the concept of tradition. South African society is in the process of transformation, a process which demands the reevaluation of many of the ways in which South African identities, their past and their cultural expressions, are represented. Since the disbanding of apartheid, there have been substantial shifts in the dynamics of South African society. The 1994 National elections, a symbolic event for most South Africans, brought the African National Congress, a previously banned organisation, into government office. Nelson Mandela, who under the previous regime had been imprisoned for 27 years, became the legitimate leader of the country. Those who had been marginalised and subjected to severe discriminatory legislation on the basis of race, looked to the new government to institute substantial changes in their lives. The new constitutional structure introduced a widely admired Bill of Rights which gave credence to visions of an idealised future. However, while the words might be spoken, and the symbols might be in place, South African society remains in a state of uncertainty. The process of transformation has demanded the reevaluation of established structures, and has challenged all people to confront questions of identity, place, space. In response to this process new divisions and boundaries are being formulated, and new relationships developed as individuals situate themselves within the broader structures of society as a whole.

The shifts in the dynamics of South African society are, however, not simply the result of internal changes. Through the ever-increasing momentum of globalization, change has become part and parcel of contemporary experience. "We find ourselves in a moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion" (Bhabha, 1994:1).

The idea of existing in a “moment of transit” brings with it a sense of moving toward something new. This sense has been enhanced by developments in technology which have impacted dramatically on people throughout the world. In what has been described as the ‘age of information’, many different experiences and ideas circulate across long established national boundaries. The cross-pollination, which comes as a result of exposure to wide and diverse varieties of ideas, has led to a critical examination of how knowledge is framed and mobilised in the service of ideology. Dirlik identifies post-coloniality as “a response to a genuine need, the need to overcome a crisis of understanding produced by the inability of old categories to account for the world” (Dirlik in Chambers and Curti, 1996: 257).

Images of belonging, of history, of lived experience, and of imagined worlds are deeply embedded in contemporary maskanda. The construction of these images depends essentially on the representation of the relationship between space and time. While the notion of space speaks to our sense of belonging, that of time speaks to our sense of history and motion. While the narratives of the past inform the way identities are constructed in the present, the reconstitution of the relationship between time, space and place dramatically changes the context of these constructions. The globalization process is characteristically ambiguous as it embraces disparate and contradictory shifts between points of reference.

In acknowledgement of this moment of transit, it seems appropriate to frame this discussion within the metaphor of a journey. The anxiety inherent in this moment is reflected in my somewhat self-conscious telling of the story of this journey. This self-consciousness grows out the realisation that I am as much embedded in this moment as those whom I discuss. My experience in the field has not been as an outsider looking in but rather as a visitor or guest in different but not entirely unfamiliar spaces. I have therefore explored aspects of these spaces by working instinctively in order to avoid losing nuance to a contrived moment which would grow out of making my presence too strongly felt.

My description of this journey is preceded in chapters 1 and 2 by some preliminary investigations into the ‘territory’ to be explored and by some preparatory ‘arrangements’. Chapter 1 is concerned with the theoretical foundation upon which I have based my approach to this topic, and with a description of my methodology. In chapter 2, I discuss the origins of maskanda and some of the influences which have shaped both the music and the ideas which are associated with it. I argue for a definition of maskanda which refers both to musical procedures and aesthetics, and one which takes cognisance of the music as deeply embedded in social practice.

In chapters 3, 4 and 5, I focus on lived experience, dealing respectively with the life and music of Shiyani Ngcobo, Johnson Mnyandu (Phuzekhemisi) and Madala Kunene. These musicians have been selected in order to embrace the full ‘sound spectrum’ of contemporary maskanda, and at the same time to ground this discussion in the peculiarities of individual experience. Using ethnography as a means of maintaining transparency, it is my intention to draw the reader closer to an experience of the essence of each musician’s work, and to confront some of the dominant discourses on tradition which have influenced and shaped our perceptions of maskanda. Furthermore, by situating my study in the lived experience of these three contrasting musicians, I hope to capture the dilemma between the “micro level of individual experience” and the “macro processes of state formation, flows of financial capital, and media networks” (Erlmann, 1993 :7).

In Chapter 6, I revisit some of the main issues which arise out of my investigations in the preceding three chapters. Some of these issues have been problematic, and others have been a source of inspiration and enlightenment. While this chapter serves in some respects as a conclusion, it is merely a conclusion to my journey rather than conclusive in relation to the issues which I have brought into the realm of public debate.

CHAPTER 1.

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY.

Positioning the text.

This thesis critically examines references to of the notion of tradition in the making and marketing of contemporary maskanda. It is concerned with use of tradition as a means through which authenticity is claimed for the different versions of Zulu identity which are circulated in and through representations of maskanda in both a local and a global context. The direction of this thesis was to some extent precipitated by many uncomfortable encounters with the term “tradition”, as it is used in a variety of contexts and often in contradictory ways. This ambiguity is reflected in the frequent relegation of the term, in academic writing, to italics and parentheses.

The theoretical foundation of this thesis falls into three broad areas. The first is concerned with the way tradition is conceptualised and used. A central contradiction inherent in the notion of ‘tradition’ arises out of the disparity which exists between the concept of tradition as an immutable body of practice, and the marking as ‘tradition’ those cultural practices which reflect and respond to change. Through the interplay between “discursive consciousness” and “practical consciousness”¹, the meanings attached to and embedded in cultural practices like maskanda are formulated on the basis both of ideologically formulated constructions and lived experience (Giddens in Coplan, 1994:18). As a term used to describe a concept and practice, ‘tradition’ shapes the expressive ‘language’ and structure of maskanda, and the way it is spoken about and understood within different discursive realms. Tradition has an ambivalent

¹Giddens formulates the distinction between practices which arise out of rationalised discourse and those which are accepted as the part of everyday lived experience, as discursive and practical consciousness. (Giddens, 1976)

status as “‘the timeless in time’, obviating history, while depending on history for its images” (Scheub in Coplan,1994:1). The common or popular view of tradition as a static, prescribed body of knowledge impacts heavily on the way tradition is referenced and interpreted in maskanda. Tradition is appropriated for use as a token of authenticity and as a mark of identity, by makers and marketers of maskanda alike. Tradition is however, “not simply the reified emblems of authority, but the immanence of the past in the cultural certainties of the present” (Coplan,1994:19).

The second theoretical area of inquiry in this thesis is concerned with music as a powerful and volatile system of representation which contains images which impact, sometimes in dramatic ways, on the ways in which we make meaning of the world. Maskanda, like all music not only reflects social conditions, but is itself a form of social practice. “The meaning of a performance is seen as being embedded in the interstices between text and context, just as much as a performance becomes the context itself for human perception and action” (Erlmann,1996a:16). Music must therefore be recognised as a politically mobile social practice, participating in the construction of frames of meaning which feed into political, economic and ideological agendas. Through its potential to explain human agency, musical performance is able to express powerful images of identity and community (Erlmann,1996a). Maskanda speaks of what it means to be Zulu; it gives shape and form to Zulu identity, not only as a reflection of the reality of lived experience but also as the powerful expression of hopes and aspirations which during the moment of performance become a reality.

The third area of this theoretical discussion deals with the issue of globalization² and the rapidly changing dynamics of modern society. Maskanda has recently captured the imagination of an international audience. As musicians and producers direct their gaze towards the international market, new directives and incentives come into play. As the international community casts its ‘gaze’ on

² “Globalization refers to the multiplicity of linkages and interconnections that transcend the nation-states which make up the modern world system” (Hall, 1992:64).

cultural practices like maskanda, different meanings are attributed to the images of social life which are communicated through them. The intensification of global interconnectedness is transforming the existing world order in ways which impact heavily on the way people position themselves in relation to one another. Images of space, place and time take on new meanings when they are experienced in different contexts.

Maskanda carries the label of 'traditional music' in the international arena. The 'past', however, is not "a land to return to in a simple politics of memory" but is engaged as a repository of meaning through which various notions of identity are formulated depending essentially on the context in which they are experienced (Appadurai,1990:4). As Appadurai points out, the 'past' has become "a synchronic warehouse of cultural scenarios, a kind of temporal central casting" which is engaged as a means through which various notions of contemporary experience are formulated (ibid).

These three theoretical domains are referenced simultaneously throughout the body of this thesis. However, as an introductory discussion, I will deal with them separately.

Deconstructing the term : 'Tradition'.

The Concise Oxford dictionary definition of 'tradition' gives some clue to the ambiguity which surrounds this term, and reads as follows :

tradition :- 1 a. a custom, opinion or belief handed down to posterity esp. orally or by practice. b. this process of handing down. 2 esp. *joc.* an established practice or custom (*it is traditional to complain about the weather*) 3 artistic, literary, etc., principles based on experience and practice; any one of these (*stage tradition; traditions of the Dutch school*). 4 *Theo.* Doctrine or a particular doctrine etc. claimed to have divine authority without documentary evidence, esp.: a the oral teaching of Christ and the Apostles. b the laws held by the Pharisees to have been

delivered by God to Moses. **c** the words and deeds of Muhammad not in the Koran. **5** *Law* the formal delivery of property etc.”.

The derivation of the word ‘tradition’ is given here as Middle English via Old French *tradicion* or Latin *traditio* from *tradere* ‘hand on, betray’.

This definition of the term ‘tradition’ embraces a number of different ideas, each bearing its own implications and consequences. The first explanation of the term includes two quite different concepts : **a** refers to an event and **b** refers to a process. The second definition points to the colloquial usage of the term simply as ‘the way things are done’. In similar vein, the third definition identifies tradition as an established system which informs and regulates institutions. Tradition in a theological context is read as a form of ‘truth’. The legal definition is closest to the origin of the word “to hand on”, and it has to do with the conveyance of property, and the transfer of ownership.

There are two important observations to be made regarding this explanation of the term ‘tradition’. Firstly, all five of these definitions are engaged in varying degrees in the construction of notions of tradition and the meanings attached to the term. Secondly, any term with multiple meanings is inherently ambiguous and potentially open to multiple interpretations. The incongruent nature of the meanings attached to the term ‘tradition’ gives rise to a disparity between what is referenced, and what is experienced.

It is necessary, at this point to clarify my own approach to the concept of tradition. This discussion is directed towards understanding the intentions which motivate the description of maskanda as a ‘traditional music’, and to an examination of the role of tradition in the construction of meaning as it is both embedded in and attached to the music. I will focus on perceptions of tradition and the relationship that these perceptions bear to so-called traditional practice.

Adorno opens his essay entitled “On Tradition” with what Lazarus describes as the “conventional” view of the concept. “Tradition comes from *tradere* : to hand down. It recalls the continuity of generations, what is handed down from one

member to another. ...its medium is not the conscious but the pre-given, unreflected and binding existence of social forms - the actuality of the past” (Adorno in Lazarus, 1999:5). This description of tradition implies that traditional practice resists change, that it is static, prescribed, and accepted as the way things are done. It is this notion which informs the way people perceive tradition and how they most frequently respond to the concept in its broad and general use. It is this perception of tradition which is, however, the most actively contested by those who seek to investigate the concept in greater depth.

Hobsbawm and Ranger’s seminal work, *The Invention of Tradition* (1984) has brought to the fore some of the inconsistencies which exist between the way tradition is perceived and how it operates. The various authors of this collection set out to show how traditions are closely tied to ideological constructs and how choice and manipulation play a part in the creation and continuation of traditional practices. They show how the idea of tradition is itself essentially a construct. Much of what is believed to be an intrinsic part of traditional practice has in fact been intentionally invented in order to give credence to politically motivated versions of identity (Coplan, 1994:16). Thus, what is believed to be ancient practice is in fact often a modern ‘invention’. *The Invention of Tradition* is about “a specific historical period in which, it is asserted, traditions were peculiarly frequently invented rather than customs continuing to evolve” (Ranger, 1993:63). This distinction between ‘tradition’ and ‘custom’ is used in *The Invention of Tradition* as a way of separating the prescriptive nature of invented traditions from the more flexible type of traditional practice which evolved within indigenous communities. Hobsbawm identifies custom as what people do (an event) and distinguishes tradition as the ritualised practice which surrounds the action. While the distinction between ‘custom’ and ‘tradition’ has a lucid intention, and credible purpose within the bounds of the argument in which it is situated, it is a distinction which is problematic in a broader and more general usage. Ranger seeks to address this problem in a later essay entitled, “Revisiting the Invention of Tradition” (1993). Here Ranger acknowledges that “the cleavage that (*The Invention of Tradition*) asserts between custom and invented

tradition - between pre-industrial and industrial European societies or pre-colonial and colonial African and Indian ones - is open both to theoretical and factual criticism" (Ranger, 1993:63). He identifies three possible problematic implications of this distinction : a) that it might lead to an essentialist reading of African custom as "the authentic and other"; b) that it fails to recognise that invented traditions might themselves be rooted in older practices; and c) that it over simplifies colonialism.

Veit Erlmann questions the plausibility of the distinction between tradition and custom on the grounds that this sort of distinction between "different forms of the appropriation of the past", fails to recognise that "custom.... is as much constituted by discursive practice as the 'invented' tradition of the industrial era" (Erlmann, 1996:135).

The idea of 'invented traditions' has substantial limitations. These limitations arise out of the emphasis it places on aspects of traditions which have been artificially invoked in the service of political and ideological agendas, and the lack of attention to the actual process of invention (Hamilton, 1998:26). Carolyn Hamilton argues for a more comprehensive view of tradition, which recognises that invented traditions draw on, and grow out of a pre-existing body of material which impacts on the form which these traditions take. "The notion of 'invention' can too easily lose sight of the way in which... tradition's....own past shapes its present. It further places full control over content and form in the hands of the 'inventors' - usually political elites - and ignores the way that their versions of history are shaped by contesting and conflicting versions of the past" (Hamilton, 1998:26).

The obscurity inherent in the concept of tradition arises out of the 'push and pull' of competing notions of process and change on the one hand, and notions of a static, established body of practice on the other. "Tradition implies complex processes of acquisition, memorisation and social interaction.." (Boyer, 1990: vii). These complex processes are frequently bypassed when the focus is on reconciling the idea of change with established practice. Boyer proposes a theory

which does not render the idea of tradition incompatible with transformation. He describes tradition as a “type of social interaction which results in the repetition of certain communicative events” (Boyer, 1990: 23). These events are repeated in the sense that they recall similar events which occurred in the past. It is not so much the faithful replication of cultural material which is the issue, but rather the fact that this material is **believed** to be time-tested.

Boyer contends that as a central concept of the social sciences, the term tradition, as it is currently used, is problematic. Broadly speaking, he argues that the ambivalence of the term, and some very problematic claims about tradition, is a consequence of its somewhat indiscriminate use to describe too many aspects of a complex phenomena. It may be observed that the first dictionary definition of tradition cited earlier is riddled with the “conceptual promiscuity” of which Boyer speaks. According to this definition, tradition can be taken to refer to events (customs) and to concepts (beliefs), and furthermore to a process. Embraced in this definition are a number of ambiguities which accommodate diverging interpretations of tradition. However, the concept of tradition is most influential when it is used in a prescriptive sense, “as the way things were, are (and should be) done” (Giddens, 1979: 200).

Tradition as ‘truth’.

The dictionary definitions quoted above reveal tradition as a category of practice which is not only differentiated on the basis of the relationship that it bears to the past, but also one which is afforded privileged status. Tradition is seen as the ‘keeper’ of a “temporally valorised epic past” (Bakhtin, 1981: 16), and as such it is revered as a mark of authenticity. This authority vested in tradition has far reaching consequences which are particularly relevant to any discussion of the production and dissemination of maskanda. While the essentialist view of ‘traditional music’ (which was assumed by ethnomusicologists such as Hugh Tracey and Francis Bebey) is no longer relevant in contemporary academic discourse, the idea of an authentic African music, based on what is perceived to be traditional, continues to be referenced, appropriated and exploited especially in the marketing of so-called world music.

The idea of tradition as a mark of authenticity is by no means restricted to the field of music; it is a common perception which emerges in a variety of circumstances and for this reason may be seen as quite natural in everyday practice. Its authority extends even into the legal domain (a domain which is generally regarded as a repository of societal values). Strathern discusses some of the contradictory and conflicting consequences inherent in the contest between matters of choice and matters of prescription, citing a number of examples of legal disputes in which notions of tradition are referenced. She notes that tradition occupies a rhetorical position as a “kind of value in itself” giving rise to its use in support of some quite contradictory propositions (Strathern in Hall and du Gay, 1996:39).³ This use of tradition as a mark of authenticity can be seen as a diluted version of the religious definition of the term : “doctrine or a particular doctrine etc. claimed to have divine authority without documentary evidence” (Oxford dictionary), and as such must be viewed as a powerful and potentially potent tool when used to substantiate ideological claims.

Tradition and identity.

Tradition functions as a ‘protagonist of history’, so to speak, drawing the past into the present, and in the process, reconstituting images of time, space and place: images which are fundamental in the negotiation of identity.

There is a tension between notions of tradition and identity which emerge out of discourses of power, and those which evolve as a result of the life-experiences of individuals. This tension is reflected in the different and at times competing versions of Zulu tradition and Zulu identity which are circulated in the world of maskanda, and is fed by contradictory conceptualisations of both these notions in relation to time and change.

³ In her discussion the two judgements from the “babyM case” quoted by Dolgin, Strathern observes that while two “judicial positions more thoroughly at odds cannot be imagined”, both judges argue from the same traditionalist stance. Both upheld “that whatever the legitimate demands of the marketplace, they should retire before the sacred prerogatives of institutions and impulses hallowed by fixed, eternal nature” (Strathern in Hall and du Gay, 1996:43).

According to an essentialist view both tradition and identity are understood as being set in time and unaffected by change. It is a view which creates clearly demarcated boundaries, attributing the source of characteristic features of any particular culture to an imagined primordial essence. Cultural identity is thus seen as “a sort of ‘collective, one true self’, hiding inside the more superficial or artificially imposed ‘selves’, which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common” (Hall in Rutherford(ed),1990:223). In this sense identity is understood is something that you inherit along with tradition, precluding individual agency and choice. This conceptualisation of identity lends itself to the construction of stereotypical images which so easily feed the ideological constructions on which many of the dominant discourses of mainstream power structures depend. While mention of these constructions of identity may seem out of place in view of the post-structuralist emphasis on the shifting and transmuting nature of identities, they continue to occupy a central position in discourses intent on promoting ethnic nationalist sentiment (as may be seen in chapter 4).

The constantly changing dynamics of contemporary society has prompted greater awareness of identity as a process which is perpetually adjusting to different contexts and circumstances, rather than as something which is conclusively shaped. In keeping with this realisation Stuart Hall describes cultural identities as “the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past” (Hall in Rutherford (ed),1990:225). Identity is thus understood as a process which is experienced rather than a definitive ‘object’ which is owned.

Tradition and Ethnicity.

Ethnic identity is a way of marking difference, which frequently emerges in times of social and economic upheaval (Morrell,1996:107). While other identities, such as those which are constructed around issues of race and class, mark difference through reference to overt features which manifest themselves in the present, ethnicity is characterised by the peculiar status afforded to the past. Ethnic identity and group affiliation are defined in terms of origin and ancestry.

Ethnicity is thus very often seen as an identity which is inherited rather than assumed. Gerhard Maré summarizes ethnicity as follows :

“The concept of *ethnicity*refers to social identity formation that rests on :

- culturally specific practices and a unique set of symbols and beliefs, the combination and strength of which have, however, to be examined in each specific case, and how they are held and valued by individual agents;
- a belief in common origin and common history (‘the past’) that is broadly agreed upon, and that provides an inheritance of origin, symbols, heroes, events, values, hierarchies etc. and that confers identity;
- a sense of belonging to a group, that in some combination (to be examined in each case) confirms social identities of people in their interaction with both members and outsiders (members of other groups)” (Maré,1995:43).

Maré argues that it is necessary to make a distinction between ethnicity as a social identity experienced by individuals, and the conscious mobilisation of ethnicity as a political strategy. While the former accommodates different interpretations of what it means to belong to a particular group, the latter is inclined towards a more static definition of identity.

The concept of tradition and that of ethnicity are interlinked and equally problematic. Inherent in both these concepts is an ambiguity which arises out of the way the past is drawn into the present. The past is recalled as “part of the story with which we make sense of every day-to-day living” (Maré,1995:30). It is, however, also appropriated as a means through which a particular story is given credence. Where the exclusive versions of identity on which ethnicity depends are sought, the past frequently assumes the status of eternal truth established from the beginning of time. It is claimed as undisputed territory which provides ‘habitus’ for a life force which maintains the group through time and across generations, and is valorised as a stable and secure point of reference.

Maré identifies four reasons why a specific past, one which is unique to any specific ethnic identity, is necessary. These can be summarized as follows :

- a) it legitimates through continuity;
- b) it is needed to define the boundaries of the group - inclusion and exclusion are determined through a claim to common heritage;
- c) it enables action, providing the precedents through which present action is justified and prescribing the nature of that action;
- d) it legitimizes authority through the idea of the sanctity of tradition.

(Maré,1995:30-34)

The past thus, has a fundamental role in determining the relationship between agency and structure in groups where ethnically formulated identities dominate. It is through a claim on the past that they are constituted and through the valorisation of the past that they are called to a specific course of action.

Tradition as it is referenced in the making and marketing of maskanda feeds competing perceptions of cultural identity. At times notions of tradition are called upon as part of a strategy of 'othering', and at times it serves to establish a sense of belonging. The versions of tradition and those of identity depend essentially on the 'gaze'. It is important in the present context, where both the making and the marketing of an African expressive form is being considered, to acknowledge that at times 'tradition' is a concept which is called upon to feed stereotypical notions about the identity of those outside of the Western mainstream. So-called 'traditional societies', however, do not view themselves as such. As Strathern points out, the concept of tradition is essentially a modern construction : "It is hardly original to say that if Euro-Americans ..invented modernity, they reinvented tradition as pre-modern. Modernism consists in, among other things, the difference between the modern and the traditional, hence the ironic concept of traditional society" (Strathern in Hall and du Gay, 1996: 41).

While the dictionary definition of tradition appears as a somewhat perfunctory attempt to describe a complex notion, it provides useful insight into some of the inconsistencies which characterise the use of the term in academic discourse as well as in everyday life. Tradition speaks of the immanence of the past in the present and is as much about the way the present is experienced as it is about the way the past is remembered. It cannot be adequately understood simply as a set of practices or a series of prescriptive ideas concerned with the nature of these practices. It needs to be recognised as an emotive notion which is intertwined with the way people understand and make meaning of some of the most fundamental aspects of human experience.

Maskanda performance theorized.

One of the most important and perhaps most problematic concerns of musicology (and ethnomusicology) is the formulation of theories and concepts through which the impact of music and performance on people in their everyday lives can be explained. Many of the ideas that we have about music, how we speak about it, and the meanings that we attribute to it, are ideologically constituted. But what about music itself? In this section I will deal with some of the relevant theories which seek to explain the power of musical performance, how it operates as a form of communication, and how it relates to issues of agency and identity.

Two questions appear as central in theories on performance, particularly as it pertains to music. Is music a reflection of social, economic and political structures, operating as a symbol of something outside itself? Is music a form of action, giving and making meaning in ways which influence social events and processes? While the general focus in South African ethnomusicology in the 1970's and 1980's was on music and performance as a reflection of social practice (Blacking, 1973) (Coplan, 1985), performance theorists like Fernandez (1986) and Fabian (1990) have made a marked contribution towards current trends in

which the transformative power of performance is given greater recognition (Erlmann, 1996a; Meintjes, 1997).

In keeping with these current trends I view music both as form of expression which emerges in response to social, economic and political structures and as an event which provides the context for the production of social experience. My concern is therefore not simply with the interpretation of symbolic representations of meaning but also with music as a form of action which both shapes and gives meaning. Music is a multi-layered expressive form, which cannot be essentialised or separated as a self-contained, autonomous realm, but which needs to be seen as the complex configuration of signifying practices and social action. "Performance is considered *both* as a web of meaning to be read from its surrounding context and as a form of communicative praxis in which meaning is always emergent and relational" (Erlmann, 1996a:16).

The power of music lies in its capacity to re-structure the time-space referents which operate in everyday life. "The *present* of musical experience is not the dividing point that separates *past* and *future*" (Zuckerlandl in Shepherd and Wicke, 1997:133). Images of the past are recalled and enacted in musical performance and given an immediacy which is felt and experienced in the 'moment' of the performance. Images of an idealised future are similarly realized. The ordinarily inflexible divisions between past, present and future are thus transgressed in performance. The power of this mediation between past, present and future arises out of the "sensory, embodied configurations of an imagined social order beyond here and now" (Erlmann, 1996a:xix). These "sensory embodied configurations" are given form in the sound, movement and texts which together construct layers of meaning. Musical performance thus has the capacity to direct and shape meaning, providing alternative discourses to those which are circulated in other public spaces.

Music is an event which is experienced at different times and in different circumstances. The location of meaning shifts as music is experienced by people who bear different relationships to the context in which it was created. As the

event intersects with different cultural realities both meaning and agency are refracted. Veit Erlmann's *Nightsong* (1996) portrays *isicathamiya* performance as "a force field of conflicting and intersecting interests, aesthetics and ideologies" (Erlmann, 1996a:xxii). The meaning and power of maskanda, like *isicathamiya*, lies precariously balanced in-between these converging discourses. My concern is therefore as much with the discourses which surround maskanda as it is with those contained within the music itself. While maskanda is essentially a musical style which is locally embedded it has recently been drawn into the international arena. The meanings which are attributed to maskanda shift in accordance with the position of those who experience it. The subjective construction of meaning is made possible as a result of the intrinsic ambiguity of images and signs. "Though they materialise as concrete, compact instances, signs are inherently unstable because they exist in the context of other polysemic signs and because they are performed and improvised" (Meintjes, 1997:14). Since other discourses which circulate alongside maskanda influence the way it is experienced and interpreted, the images represented in the music of the three musicians discussed in this thesis are frequently interpreted in terms of differentially valued notions of contemporary Zulu identity.

This discussion of contemporary maskanda is grounded in the particular. By focussing on the experiences of individual musicians, and particular songs and performances of these musicians, I hope to capture the dialectic between the concrete reality of everyday lived experience and an imagined order which is referenced and enacted in musical performance (Coplan, 1985:238). By isolating frames of experience and connecting these to a broader context, I hope to provide the means through which this dialectic may be understood. Like *isicathamiya*, the songs of these maskandi are "condensates of experience, compact matter-of-fact descriptions of an amorphous "here", of a void, an in-between that does not have a space" (Erlmann, 1996:xviii). They embrace the opposition between the immediacy of lived experience and the evasive fantasy of an imagined past and future.

Globalization : the disembedding of maskanda.

In this section I examine some of the theories concerning the nature of globalization, and the impact it has on contemporary cultural practice. The globalization process is not a peculiarly contemporary phenomena, nevertheless as Erlmann points out contemporary manifestations of this process mark “a critical moment in the history of the world’s cultures that engages Westerners and non-Westerners in complex, multiply mirrored way” (Erlmann,1999:3).

While the forces of modernity, including industrialisation, imperialism and colonisation, radically reconfigured the parameters of power relations, globalization has expanded the scope of such processes with the consequence that “larger and larger numbers of people live in circumstances in which disembedded institutions, linking local practices with globalized social relations, organise major aspects of social life” (Giddens,1990:79). Giddens sees globalization as one of the most noticeable consequences of modernity since it involves the radical reorganization of the time-space referents of everyday life. While globalization has historically been associated with the expansionist drives of hegemonic powers, today globalization is more than a process of Western colonization. It is a “complex, discontinuous and contingent process which is driven by a number of distinct but intersecting logics” (McGrew in Hall, Held and McGrew, 1992:72). It is thus impossible to look at globalization as being driven exclusively from one direction, although as Wallerstein argues, the powerful and established institutions of Western capitalism play an important role in motivating current global trends. According to Wallerstein the universal economic space created by the capitalist world economy is structured in order to maintain an uneven relationship between those in positions of control at the centre and those who are positioned on the peripheries. Various shifts which present an apparent threat to this structural arrangement are consequently “subject to discreet phases of global economic restructuring which reinforces these inequalities of power and wealth” (McGrew on Wallerstein in Hall, Held and McGrew,1992:70). The global network may well be motivated by capitalist logic, nevertheless the contemporary experience of the globalization process

involves a far more complex network of intersecting directives than this explanation will allow.

The post-modern experience of globalization can be conceptualised as “having two interrelated dimensions: scope and intensity” (Hall,1992:68). While scope refers to the widespread interconnection of political, social and economic networks across the globe, intensity refers to the “deepening” of the impact of these connections (Hall,1992:68). Harvey conceptualises the essence of the globalization process as ‘time-space compression’: “Time-space compression is the concept which indicates processes that so revolutionise the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves. The word compression is used because the history of capitalism has been characterised by speed-up in the pace of life, while so overcoming spatial barriers that the world sometimes seems to collapse inwards upon us” (Harvey in Larrain,1994: 151).

As a consequence of the broad reaching systems of affiliation which go hand in hand with the globalization process, the peculiarities of individual identities, spaces and places are being moulded in increasingly significant ways by and through a wider network of influences and imperatives. As Stuart Hall points out this process is “essentially dialectical in nature and unevenly experienced across time and space” (Hall,1992:73), and therefore resists any totalising conceptualisation of a global system per se. It is a process which is full of competing contradictions which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Thus while the discourse of globalization is frequently framed in terms of binary oppositions such as universalism vs particularism, homogenization vs differentiation, integration vs fragmentation, the “contradictory nature of globalization serves to remind us of its essential contingency and complexity” (Hall,1992:76). It is this characteristic of contingency which has opened up a space for many diverse readings of the images of culture, and given impetus to the role of imagination within a global environment. For it is through the images of multiple worlds that otherness is ‘domesticised’ and through the imagination that the boundaries of reality transcend lived experience in ways which

reconfigure the world in which we live. "The imagination has become an organised field of social practices, a form of work, and a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility. The imagination is now central to all forms of agency, is itself a social fact, and is the key component of the new global order" (Appadurai, 1990: 5).

While it is true that the international gaze has been cast with greater intensity on the music of those outside the mainstream⁴, so too has the imagination of the musicians who occupy a place on the peripheries been captured by the idea of a world-wide audience. The changing possibilities that arise out of a broadening of the contexts in which music is created and experienced has opened up a 'mine field' of intersecting directives which impact significantly on our interpretation of music as a form of social practice. It is no longer possible to examine musical practice as a localised cultural system isolated from the changing configurations of interaction which prevail in an era of expanding boundaries.

"World music is a new aesthetic form of the global imagination, an emergent way of capturing the present historical moment and the total reconfiguration of space and cultural identity characterizing societies around the globe" (Erlmann, 1996:468). As maskanda has a global dimension, it is appropriate to examine how its images are circulated in both a local context and abroad, and how they are interpreted and appropriated to serve various agendas. It is my intention to work through some of the binary oppositions identified with the discourse of globalization, before reflecting on the impact of the globalization process on the production and dissemination of maskanda.

Veit Erlmann takes issue with the proposition frequently made in current debates about world music, that homogenisation and differentiation are mutually exclusive features of musical globalization on the basis that the world music market simultaneously demands the universalisation and the particularisation of

⁴ Mainstream here is refers to the metropole dominated by Western Europe, Britain and America.

its products. Music which is marketed as an exotic experience of other worlds, as a celebration of difference, is uniformly packaged to suit perceived consumer fancies, and is often compromised in the process. Erlmann regards both homogenisation and differentiation as fundamental components of musical aesthetics in the era of late capitalism. "Synchronicity, the contradictory experience of the universal market place alongside proliferating neo-traditional codes and new ethnic schisms, is the key signature of the postmodern era.... homogeneity and diversity are two symptoms of what one is tempted to call the Benetton syndrome - the more people around the globe who purchase the exact same garment, the more the commercial celebrates difference" (Erlmann, 1996:471). This contradictory experience, (what might be seen as the local-global dilemma), situates the images of world music precariously between the discourses of home and abroad. These discourses are staged in musical performances which then become the testing ground for notions of identity in an interplay between them and us, here and now, past and present. This staging of identity is of particular importance in "times and places of socio-political upheaval and reconstitution" (Meintjes, 1990:55). The transformation of contemporary South African society has led to the contestation of previously accepted notions of identity. The staging of African, South African and Zulu identity for an international audience, requires similar interrogation.

The allure of the international market is heightened by economic advantages for those musicians lucky enough to 'get a break'. The participation of local musicians in the international arena has had 'spin-off' advantages for the local music industry. "Recent support for indigenous sound (Zulu maskanda and mbube for instance) in South Africa is directly related to the demands of the international market for "ethnic" (i.e. different or other) popular music" (Meintjes, 1990:62). International recognition is highly valued, and comes with a somewhat ambiguous reward, for while it gives credence to local values and tastes, participation in the international arena also assists "in the maintenance of the status quo by providing appropriate 'ethnic' cultural material for international consumption" (ibid). The idea of "appropriate 'ethnic' material" as the source material of world music raises questions concerning the colonisation of music

outside the mainstream⁵. Images of difference are fundamental to a consumer market which relies on “new commodities and spectacle” (Appadurai,1990:13). The readings and interpretations of these images have deep ideological connections. “By seducing small groups with the fantasy of self display on some sort of global or cosmopolitan stage” the western metropole can manipulate and control difference (ibid). While the extent to which any representation is controlled may be a matter of debate, the western metropole’s long history of ‘othering’ as power play, and the fact that “culture is a sort of theatre where various political and ideological causes engage one another” invites some serious interrogation of the politics of representation within the world music market (Said,1993:xxiii).

Any consideration of the current experience of maskanda accordingly requires an examination of the space in which maskanda meets the world-music market, and the connection between the production of images of difference and the various ideological directives which they serve. The musical performances of Shiyani Ngcobo, Phuzekhemisi and Madala Kunene are received and understood not only as representations of individual experience, but also as representations both of Zulu and African experience. The idea of ‘Zuluness’ and ‘Africaness’ has historically been positioned as the antithesis of ‘Westernness’. At the core of this positioning is the construction of difference in terms of racial identity. Stuart Hall identifies three encounters of the West with Africa which have “profoundly shaped Western ideas about race and images of racial difference” (Hall, 1997:239). These were the encounters of slave traders in the 16th century, the colonisers of Africa in the 19th century, and the encounters with post-World War II migrants from the ‘Third World’ into Europe and North America. One cannot discount the influence on contemporary Western society of the historically constructed notions of African and Zulu identity which have arisen out of these encounters. “The extraordinary global reach of classical 19th century and early 20th century European imperialism still casts a considerable shadow over our own times” (Said,1993:4). While the colonial era, as far as the physical conquest of

⁵ See previous footnote

land is concerned, is something of the past, the imperialist ethic continues in a struggle over ideas, images and imaginings. "At the heart of the colonial relationship as Terrence Ranger asserted as early as 1975, stood the 'manipulation and control of symbols'... (I)t is primarily through these symbols and a wide range of strategies of adaptation, resistance, and eager appropriation that the subjects of the imperial order became implicated in its making" (Erlmann,1999:27). Colonial discourse as a 'mind-set' which is not restricted to any particular time period in history, persists not only in the way Zuluness and Africaness are represented in the West, but also in the conditions surrounding such representation, that is, not only in what is said but also by whom, where, and for whom.

The images and imaginings currently emerging out of post-colonial states like South Africa as part of the process of a reclamation of identity, are more susceptible to appropriation when they are positioned within an aesthetic cannon which situates western ideology at its centre. The hegemonic nature of colonial discourse has resulted in the infusion of colonial ideology into many layers of contemporary society. Despite any apparent rejection of colonial ideology, the commodification and display of Zuluness/Africaness, a practice which was established in the mid-19th century, lends itself to the perpetuation of colonial discourse. Bernth Lindfors writes about the imaging of African people in the minds of the average Englishman or American during the previous century. British conflicts with the Zulus, encouraged a fantasy which depicted the essence of Zulu identity through the image of Zulu people as a powerful and savage warriors. People in Europe and America developed a great deal of curiosity about Zulus, and "circus entrepreneurs tried to take advantage of this curiosity, by recruiting Zulus for their shows.... Not all the Africans who were exhibited... were physiologically abnormal. Some of them, in fact, looked quite ordinary, others even handsome, but these usually were people who were presented as culturally exotic - cannibals, blood-thirsty warriors, stone-age savages, wild men. The ethnographic tag that came to be attached to most of them was the euphonious word "Zulu" (Lindfors, in *Journal of American Culture*,6,2 (1983)).

The commodity status of world music is clothed in poetics; its dependance on an exotic 'other' is uncomfortably reminiscent of the 19th century displays of difference which Lindfors describes.

Even though globalization has to some extent dissipated the power of the nation state, national identity is marketed by the music industry as a convenient way of registering difference. The distinguishing features of any national culture however cannot be regarded as essential properties, but rather as complex constructions, "continually imagined, invented, contested and transformed by the agencies of individual persons, the state, and global flows of commodities" (Foster, 1991:252). Globalization might bring to your door the intimate experiences of people from far off lands, breaking down the physical boundaries which have previously separated people from one another, but the significance of this process depends largely on the discourses through which these experiences are understood since meaning is very often situated within the discourses rather than in the event itself. The ways in which individual, ethnic and national identity are constructed in the performance of maskanda is thus relevant to the present exercise.

There can be little doubt that the inherent contradictions in a multi-faceted realm like world music resists general theorizing. My intention therefore, is to focus on particular moments, moments which are identified as being situated "at the conjunction between the multi-levelled global economic and political systems and the local lived experience of specific creators and interpreters" (Meintjes, 1990:69).

Methodology.

“Even the best ethnographic texts - serious true fictions - are systems, or economies, of truth. Power and history work through them, in ways their authors cannot fully control. Ethnographic truths are thus inherently partial - committed and incomplete. This point is now widely asserted - and resisted at strategic points by those who fear the collapse of clear standards of verification. But once accepted and built into ethnographic art, a rigorous sense of partiality can be a source of representational tact” (Clifford, 1986,7).

The construction of this text has been both inhibited and liberated by a self-conscious awareness of the partiality of the ‘truths’ which are represented and discussed in a project of this nature. The interrogation of established systems through which knowledge is constructed, and the critical assessment of their value in relation to music and performance styles which emerge at the boundaries of mainstream society, has increased my awareness of the inconsistencies inevitable in the ‘translation’ of cultural practice from music into language, and from visual and sonic images into concepts. Furthermore, where this ‘translation’ takes place across the boundaries of culture and class, these ‘truths’ are frequently positioned in the gaps and fissures inhabited by poetics rather than in the formal realm of language and ideology.

Many of the terms used to describe the body of musical practice on which this thesis is based are interpreted and understood in different ways. The topic of this thesis is itself grounded in a fragmented, discontinuous realm, dealing mainly with perceptions and images (feelings) rather than concrete bounded areas of knowledge or ‘facts’. Both maskanda and tradition are understood as fluid concepts which are engaged in different but at times intersecting debates on contemporary Zulu identity. The dilemma which arises out of the need to present information in a coherent and comprehensible way, while at the same time allowing inconsistencies, contradictions and various interpretations to emerge, has served as an ever-present form of restraint. However, it has also motivated the exploration of unconventional methods of academic research and writing.

Throughout the course of this research I have experimented with different approaches both to the gathering and presentation of information.

This thesis is concerned with contemporary manifestations and perceptions of maskanda. It is clear that a comprehensive understanding of the nature of contemporary maskanda would be enhanced by substantiated evidence concerning its roots and how it has been shaped over time. The scarcity of documented information on early maskanda has severely limited my ability to provide any such detailed historical periodization of the development of this musical style. The task of gathering such information would be a major undertaking in itself and one which is beyond the scope of this particular project. While I am aware that this leaves something of a gap in my 'story' of contemporary maskanda, particularly in the next chapter which attempts something of a review of the circumstances which shaped early manifestations of this style, the main focus of this thesis is on the meanings embedded in and attached to music which carries the label maskanda in a contemporary context rather than on historical documentation. It is my intention to focus on the role of musical performance and the labels given to this performance (particularly maskanda as Zulu and traditional) in the construction of the identity of three contemporary musicians.

My research falls into two areas. The first involves the exploration of written texts ranging from those which deal specifically with South African musical performance (Erlmann, Coplan, Muller, Clegg, Davies, Joseph), to more general discussions on relevant aspects of South African history (Morrell, Edwards), identity (Mare, Hall, Strathern, Said, Bhabha, Mudimbe), tradition (Boyer, Hobsbawm and Ranger, Hamilton), and the globalization process (Giddens, Hall, Erlmann, Appadurai). In order to avoid the misappropriation of information sourced in these texts to suit my own argument, I have been more inclined towards the use of what might be seen as rather extended quotations. I believe that just as it is necessary to divulge the circumstances under which information is gathered in field research, so too is it important to acknowledge the context in which the ideas expressed in written text are situated. The second area of

research is concerned with field work. Since the body of this thesis is positioned in the music and performance style of Shiyani Ngcobo, Phuzekhemisi and Madala Kunene, my field research has centred around these three musicians. I look to the realm of individual experience not so much as a 'microcosm' of the whole, but rather as a way of gaining access to the world in which maskanda is embedded.

Through the stories of the three musicians selected as case studies, I focus on particular interests, aesthetics and ideologies which come into play in this multiply contested site. Working from the premise that "if the study of performance as social practice is to be of any value, the 'hopping back and forth between the whole conceived through the parts that actualise it and the parts conceived through the whole that motivates them' will remain central to the ethnographic project" (Geertz in Erlmann, 1996a:17), I focus on individual experience as an interactive process which both reflects and impacts on the discourses surrounding maskanda. This thesis is not intended to be an authoritative account of maskanda, or of particular examples of maskanda. It takes the form rather of a discursive exploration which is sensitive to the complexity of intertwining levels of meaning. It is involved simultaneously in the process of deconstruction and construction, for while I am concerned with the "objects of postmodern discussion, (gaps, ruptures, fragments, disjunctures...)" (Meintjes, 1997, 14), I am also aware of my own performance through which the reader is confronted with the filtered and formalised presentation of the music and experiences of the three musicians who occupy a central position in this thesis.

My inability to communicate fluently in Zulu has been a considerable barrier to meaningful interaction with many of my informants. All my interviews with Shiyani Ngcobo and Phuzekhemisi were conducted with the services of an interpreter. In order to compensate for any misunderstandings which can arise in communication through a third person, I engaged a number of different interpreters and conducted several interviews with each musician. In each instance I stressed the importance of accurate translation and the avoidance of any evaluation of the issues to be discussed. Some of these interviews were more

successful than others; on one occasion, in the course of an interview with Phuzekhemisi, the interpreter proved to be more of a hindrance than a help, and we managed to communicate reasonably well even though Phuzekhemisi spoke in Zulu and I spoke in English. For the most part, however, all the interpreters were extremely co-operative and attentive to detail. They have also expressed a genuine interest in my work and filled in many gaps in my knowledge, not only of the Zulu language, but also of a range of different family relationships, social structures, philosophies, values and perceptions of people with whom I share a common identity as a South African. My interviews with Madala Kunene were all conducted in English. Even though Kunene communicates very well in English, I felt inhibited and somewhat frustrated by my inability to communicate in his language rather than mine. This strengthened my resolve to avoid reducing the experience of these three musicians to the "raw materials for western-based theory"(Meintjes,1997:42).

My relationship with each of these musicians has developed over the past two years in different ways, which in many respects reflect their own personalities and circumstances, and the position they occupy in this thesis. Phuzekhemisi has remained the most distant of the three, primarily because his busy schedule takes him to Johannesburg for long periods of time. Furthermore, since the focus of my discussion is on the relationship between the images in his music and the Zulu ethnic nationalist movement, I felt that it was not essential to establish a more personal relationship with him. The analysis of Phuzekhemisi's recorded music, attendance of live performances and the observation and videoing of practice sessions has been as important to my research on Phuzekhemisi's music and performance style as information collected in interviews.

Shiyani Ngcobo's position in this thesis requires a deeper understanding of his life and personality. I therefore conducted numerous interviews with him, visited his home, met his family, and attended his concerts. Noleen Davies⁶, provided

⁶Noleen Davies is the author of a masters thesis entitled, "A Study of Guitar Styles in Zulu Maskanda Music", 1992, University of Natal. She has worked with Shiyani Ngcobo for a long time. Until the end of 1999, she was a

some valuable insight into his life and musical style. In the interviews held with Ngcobo, a number of general aspects of his life were discussed, and once I felt that I had sufficient knowledge of his life and personality, we moved on to a very detailed discussion of his music and performance style. Furthermore, I have discussed my analysis of his music with him in order to confirm his approval of my approach.

I have spent a considerable amount of time with Madala Kunene over the past two years and our relationship had developed into friendship. This has been a rewarding personal experience, and has facilitated my understanding of the circumstances of Kunene's life and of his personality. Close interaction with his family has made the everyday lived reality of his life more accessible. Furthermore, through Kunene, I have met a number of musicians and people involved in the production and promotion of contemporary Zulu music.

I experiment with different writing styles and representational techniques in the writing of a life-story for each of these musicians. In each instance the choice has been determined by the relationship that each musician bears both to me and to the topic, and is motivated by the need to find the most appropriate means of presenting the particularities of each individual's experience.

Since the focus in the chapter on Phuzekhemisi is on his public image rather than on his intimate private identity, and because my relationship with him is somewhat superficial, I elected a method of representation for his life story which would not require any substantial interference on my part. His 'story' is constructed out of information gathered in three separate interviews. In order to gain meaningful insight into his life experience and his perception both of tradition and maskanda, I avoided directing these interviews according to any preconceived notions of what these experiences and perceptions might be. I asked general questions round the main issues dealt with in this thesis and as a

lecturer in the music department at the University of Durban Westville, where Ngcobo was also employed as a teacher of maskanda.

consequence gathered extensive amounts of information. My part in the construction of this story has thus been as an editor of this information. The selection of information was determined by my perception of its relevance to this exploration of the discourses on tradition in contemporary maskanda. The 'story' is however told without any interference on my part with the interpreter's translation of Phuzekhemisi's own words or turn of phrase.

My decision to present Ngcobo's life story through his own account of the circumstances which motivated the composition of ten of his songs was prompted by my intention to reflect the disjuncture which characterises Ngcobo's life experience in the most uncontrived way possible. Shiyani Ngcobo composed these songs in response to his own experiences, and they therefore provide valuable insight into his personal perception of his world.

Through personal friendship, I have developed an empathetic sense of Madala Kunene's experience and thus felt that I was in a position to use a more imaginative and literary style of presentation for the two "true fictions" which precede each section in the chapter on Kunene. The first 'story' is the result of a truly collaborative effort. Taking inspiration from his own words and style of expression, but also making use of poetic license for dramatic effect, this 'story' is essentially my own literary version of Madala's account of life at Mkhumbane and his experience of the destruction of his home there. The decision to adopt this approach was made with Kunene's approval and he is satisfied with the end product. The second story is an account of my own experience and includes a verbatim transcription of an interview which I conducted with Chris Lewis, the sound engineer in charge of the project on which this story is focussed. The rest of the chapter is shaped around quotations taken from interviews and academic commentary on Kunene's musical style.

Through this combination of different modes of representation my authority as author of this thesis purposefully shifts in order to allow different views and perspectives, contradictions and complexities to emerge.

While most of my research has centred on these three musicians, in order to gain insight into their position within maskanda performance generally, I have also listened to a number of different recordings of music marketed as maskanda (Phuzeshukela, Ihashi Elimhlophe, Mfaz'Omnyama, Busi Mhlongo, Skeleton), attended maskanda competitions, and interviewed people who have been involved with maskanda in different ways (Peter Rorvick⁷, David Marks⁸, 'Welcome' Bhodloza Nzimande⁹). In chapter 4, I have included Bhodloza Nzimande's 'story' which is constructed out of the information selected (and rearranged) from a single interview. Nzimande is fluent in English and this story is written entirely in his own words.

Throughout this text I use italics to indicate direct quotations from interviews. In order to give each musician some degree of privilege within the chapter in which his music is discussed, I have frequently integrated his 'voice' with my own discussion. In these instances quotations by the musician who is the subject of the chapter is written in italics without any further acknowledgment; all quotes from interviews with any person who is not the subject of the chapter are, however, acknowledged and sourced.

In the appendices at the end of this thesis I have included Internet, newspaper and magazine articles as examples of the public image of maskanda, tradition, Zulu ethnic nationalism and the three musicians discussed in this thesis. While some articles are more relevant than others, I have elected to submit this range of articles bearing in mind that those outside South Africa who may possibly have an interest in this thesis would not be familiar with the general rhetoric in the

⁷ Peter Rorvick is involved in the organisation of various music festivals and concerts. He acted as Shiyani Ncogobo's manager for some time and is generally involved in the local music scene at a promotion level.

⁸David Marks runs a music publishing business and has been involved in the recording and production of local music for at least 25 years.

⁹Bhodloza Nzimande is regarded as something of a figurehead in the context of commercial maskanda. He is a radio and television presenter of music programmes which carry the label "traditional music" on Ukhosi FM and TV 2.

local media, and as a matter of convenience for the reader where these articles are quoted in this text.

This research has had a marked impact on my own perceptions and understanding of contemporary South African society. I have moved into and through different spaces and places which ordinarily remain untouched by white South African women. In order to capture this sense of movement I have framed this discussion broadly within the metaphor of a journey. Throughout this 'journey' I have tried to maintain an open-minded stance, listening, observing and absorbing the images around me. Bearing in mind that not only are the processes through which meaning is embedded in music paradigmatic, but so too is any discussion of these processes, it has been my intention to critically examine some of the ideological constructs of the past which have informed the way we speak about Zulu identity and contemporary Zulu experience. Furthermore, by confronting the construction of knowledge as ideologically constituted, I hope to achieve an appropriate degree of transparency by exposing my own 'performance' in relation to the formation of this text.

CHAPTER 2.

DECONSTRUCTING CONTEMPORARY MASKANDA.

‘Maskanda’ is a label which is currently attached to a wide body of contemporary Zulu music. It is experienced in a number of different contexts ranging from the intimate songs of solo guitarists to band performances with electric guitars, drums and dancers. The ambivalence of this label is a consequence of its positioning within different discursive realms. Within these different realms, ideologically constituted notions of maskanda are constructed and circulated both locally and abroad. As a musical style which emerged at the turn of the 20th century in response to the conditions of labour migrancy, early maskanda is characteristically marked with images of disjuncture. At the turn of the 21st century, these images are being reconstituted to take on new meanings as contemporary musicians confront the ambiguities inherent in the post-modern condition. In this chapter, I discuss some aspects of the historical background of contemporary maskanda and reflect on the way it is imaged in academic discourse, in a commercial context, by musicians, and the by the public at large.

In the early decades of this century musicologists largely disregarded new developing styles of music, particularly those associated with urbanisation, and focussed on the documentation of pre-colonial performance styles and instruments (James, 1990). It is therefore difficult to accurately trace the early manifestations of maskanda. The call of young men to migrant labour and the availability of western instruments were, however, two factors which clearly influenced its development.

The introduction of a western capitalist economy, as an accompaniment to colonization, had a marked impact on the structure of indigenous South African society. While the process of change must be regarded as the inevitable consequence of encountering new and different ways of life, the tensions

which accompanied these encounters were exacerbated by the manipulation of the process by those in power. Pulled by the prospect of development and pushed by the imposition of hut and poll taxes, people gravitated from the rural areas to the towns. These people, mainly young men, were afforded a space in colonial structures essentially as units of labour. Legal controls and other factors prevented the relocation of entire family units and communities to urban areas, and migrancy soon became a way of life for many of South Africa's people. Whilst the mobilisation of a large labour force created profits for the colonisers, it fragmented black South African society, creating disjuncture and polarisation both from within and from without. The impact of the phenomenon of controlled migrancy had a significant impact on the dynamics of South African society, and has shaped the course of history in ways which are strongly felt today.

In the early decades of the twentieth century most black South Africans had as a primary reference social structures of pre-colonial times, despite the fact that these were already considerably threatened, and in some areas perhaps already significantly diluted by the weight of colonial influences. When young men migrated to the cities they took with them a rich expressive culture which reflected social structures and activities in the rural areas. Music was an inextricable part of everyday life for the Nguni¹ people of South Africa. "There were songs for different age-groups, related to different activities and occasions. Many songs are directly functional either regulating physical actions, as in dancing or a collective task, or being educative by regulating behaviour; they may express group ideas or popular or personal opinion, they may be critical of authority (permissible in song), or they may serve as an essential constituent of a ceremony or social event" (Rycroft in Sadie (ed), 1980:201). Music-making was experienced, evaluated and understood as deeply embedded in social process.

¹"Nguni is the name applied collectively to the Zulu, Swazi and Xhosa peoples of south-eastern Africa. Their languages and cultures are closely related, and their traditional music is more vocal than instrumental, polyphonic dance-songs being particularly important" (Rycroft in Sadie (ed), 1980:197).

Even though individual music-making was essentially the intimate expression of personal experience and not intended for a formal audience, it observed, both in structure and style, the general aesthetic which reflects the social processes through which individual identity was conceptualised.² As Erlmann points out, individual identity was conceptualised in terms of social relationships; for example, a hero, in Zulu thought, is conceptualised in terms of the “bonds and affiliations” with those around him rather than in terms of his own “inner riches” (Erlmann, 1999:205).

As a cultural response to the changing dynamics of Zulu society, early maskanda emerged as a hybridized style reflecting the movement of young men between urban and rural spaces. The positioning of many young men between urban and rural worlds had a marked influence on the shape and form of maskanda. While many of these young men spent most of their time in urban areas, and indeed some of them seldom returned to their rural homes, the idea of home was firmly constituted by the life which they had left behind.³ The memory of this life provided solace from the dehumanising experience of living as a unit of labour, and was fundamental to their sense of identity. In performance musicians could indulge their nostalgia for the security imbued by community life. Musicians who gravitated to the towns, primarily to work on the mines, took familiar songs which reminded them of home, and adapted them to performance on western instruments, particularly the guitar. The essence of early maskanda is captured in

²An example of this characteristic can be found in gourd-bow music as it is described here by Rycroft : “Important formal and structural parallels between gourd-bow music and Zulu choral dance-songs, which were regarded as their highest form of musical activity. The role of the gourd bow can in fact be seen to be like that of the vocal chorus, and while playing this form of self-accompaniment on the bow, the singer assumes the position of ‘leader’, singing in antiphonal relation to her simulated ‘chorus’” (Rycroft, 1977, 225).

³The idea of ‘home’ embodies a sense of wholeness, of social cohesion and belonging. (See Erlmann, 1996:133)

Johnny Clegg's description of the circumstances of these early manifestations of maskanda :

“When these migrants left home they were locked in compounds,.... they started to play on these instruments- the guitar, which they bought from the mine shop - songs to remind them of home, songs which their sweethearts sung and slowly these songs were usurped and a male music tradition developed which was not there before” (Clegg,1981:5).

The introduction of western instruments such as guitars, concertinas, violins, mouth organs, and the jew's harp “had a profound effect on the musical horizons of rapidly urbanising South Africans, given that the great strength of their musical traditions lay in the area of vocal harmony and polyphony” (Graham in Davies,1993:12). Western instruments which were readily available at a relatively cheap price provided new opportunities for musicians, while carrying the ambiguous symbolic status value of modernisation. The guitar was not always viewed in a positive light and along with the concertina was at times regarded with suspicion as representative of the threat to established values and structures of rural, pre-colonial Zulu life (Muller,1996:53).

Elements of pre-colonial musical styles associated both with community and individual music-making were referenced in early maskanda. Song and dance were the main modes of community music-making, with instrumental music being reserved mostly for individual performance. Choral dance-songs were characterised by the antiphonal patterns of call-and-response, an integrated system of polyphonic interaction between a minimum of two voice parts, and a structural reliance on descending patterns of perfect 4ths and 5ths (Rycroft in Sadie (ed),1980 :197-202; Davies,1996).

Evidence of the importance of dance-songs as a source of inspiration to maskanda musicians can be seen in the naming of the various styles of maskanda after different dance forms which had their roots in pre-colonial dance styles, categorized in a general sense by the label “*ingoma*”. “*Indlamu* or *ingoma* dance-songs which are of a comparatively light nature ... are the most frequently

heard items of Nguni music; particularly in towns, mining compounds and the like and these as distinct from Europeanised town products, still follow tribal conventions regarding the observance of speech-tones and are basically traditional in style" (Rycroft in Davies, 1991:30). These names also designate regional location. *Isishameni* is associated with the south coast region of KwaZulu-Natal, in the vicinity Port Shepstone; *isibhaca* comes from the area even further south where there would have been greater exchange between Zulu and Xhosa people; and *isizulu* is associated with the northern regions of KwaZulu-Natal. The community from which musicians originated could thus be identified through their style of performance.

Parallels have been drawn in previous studies between *ugubhu* and *umakhweyana* bow music and maskanda (Davies, 1992:30). The form and structure of maskanda, the inclusion of *izibongo*, the structuring of tonality around juxtaposed contrasting triads either a semitone or a tone apart, and the percussive style of playing are all reminiscent of gourd-bow music.⁴

Maskanda is thus characterised by the articulation of musical procedures which are associated with pre-colonial musical styles. This characteristic is fundamental to the aesthetic perception of maskanda, for it is through these musical procedures that the music arouses a sense of community, belonging and identity. The sound that characterises maskanda, and distinguishes it from 'western'⁵ music, comes about through a combination of various musical procedures. Broadly speaking, the relationship between the basic elements of music (rhythm, melody and harmony) is motivated by a principle which is fundamentally different to that which drives 'western' music. In industrialised societies there is a fundamental acceptance of hierarchical structures, which is reflected in music based on functional tonality (Shepherd and Wicke, 1997). This hierarchy, which

⁴The descending hexatonic modes with the notes Ab -G-F-E-Db-C, based on the triads a semitone apart, C-E-G and Db-F-Ab and A-G-F# -E-D-C, based on the triads a tone apart, C-E-G- and D-F#-A, are often used in maskanda.

⁵ I use the term western music advisedly to denote music based on the principle of functional tonality, essentially music of western European lineage.

persistently gives precedence to a particular note, chord, or beat, is absent in pre-colonial Zulu musical styles and in most unmediated versions of maskanda. The principle which motivates maskanda may best be described as one of flexible integration of recurring patterns which are embraced by an over-riding rhythmic force which is not clearly articulated in the music, but which is nevertheless so strongly felt that it can be articulated in dance.

In the 1940's, in response to increasing marginalization, many black South Africans turned to pre-colonial musical styles to boost notions of African empowerment. This general shift in sentiment towards westernisation is described in the following extract from an essay by Herbert Dhlomo, poet, playwright and journalist:

“During the period the African did not only admire, but envied and aspired to European ways of life. He thought education and proven ability would solve the question.He was not content with his own [lot] as his fathers had been. He was even partly ashamed of his background, and tried to appease and win over the white man by appearing in the best light possible - according to western standards. Rejected and frustrated, despite all his efforts, his admiration of the European turned to helpless envy and even to hostility” (Cited in Ballantine, 1993:56).

It is difficult to trace the impact of these changes on maskanda in the 1940's, and perhaps due to the more introspective and personal nature of maskanda expression, the trend towards westernisation and its consequences were in any event slower to take hold and shape maskanda music.

As can be seen from the features of early maskanda discussed so far, maskanda was shaped in accordance with Zulu musical principles but performed on western instruments. Much has been made of a shift from what is referred to as the *ukuvamba* (strumming) style of guitar playing to the *ukupika* (picking), particularly with regard to the realisation of African musical principles. “Until the 1950's the technique most commonly used in playing the guitar was *ukuvamba*, a vamping style. Subsequently, the *ukupika* or picking style became

popular to the extent that it is the only technique acceptable to the maskanda guitarists” (Davies,1991:29). These claims, however, have not been conclusively substantiated, and it remains unclear whether the *ukuvamba* style was ever a dominant style of playing in maskanda. This connection could in fact have arisen out of the fact that prior to 1950 Gallo had recorded Zulu artists who played guitar and particularly concertina music in a style which had marked similarities to Afrikaans ‘Boeremusik’, and which could be described as a vamping style. When the *ukupika* style of Phuzeshukela was recorded in the 1950's, it was presumed that this shift had occurred. More detailed research is required to clarify this point.

The popularisation of maskanda by the record industry in the late 1960's and early 1970's radically altered the style and aesthetic of the music. What had previously been essentially a solo style was adapted to group performance and modified in keeping with commercial incentives. “Studio producers, many of whom would have been involved in producing *mbaqanga* music, coerced maskanda musicians into making certain changes to enhance the commercial appeal of the music” (Davies,1993:12). The standard format of band performances of maskanda included electric guitars (lead and bass), drums and a group of backing singers and dancers. The concertina and violin were also included at times. The music of the first widely acclaimed commercial maskanda musician, John Bhengu, who used the stage name Phuzeshukela, was marketed as Zulu traditional, and came to represent the sound and style to which many musicians aspired. In 1971 when Phuzeshukela joined GRC studios at Gallo, he worked with the producer Hamilton Nzimande who had experienced considerable success with *mbaqanga* groups. In Allingham's words: “He took Bhengu's [Phuzeshukela's] music and smoothed it out with modern production techniques, in many instances using an electrified backing band and vocals. He himself switched over from acoustic guitar to electric guitar. The result was a sound with vastly enhanced commercial appeal” (n.d. liner notes quoted in Davies,1993:13).

As a result of the commercialisation of his music, Phuzeshukela has been established as something of an icon for many contemporary maskanda musicians. This focus on one musician to represent the entire 'genre' is indicative of the socio-political climate of the time. It had become common practice in the industry to single out and promote individual musicians as representatives of an entire body of practice in order to satisfy a particular market. Musical categories, particularly those used to describe black South African music, were constructed according to the ethnic divisions which were promoted in the political arena at the time. Maskanda was marketed, along with other genres like *isicathamiya*, as traditional Zulu music. The marking of a particular audience was accompanied by increasingly visible promotion of ethnicity in the packaging and marketing of these musicians.

The urban/rural dichotomy which has been part and parcel of the identity dilemma of black South Africans for many generations is mirrored in the splitting of contemporary maskanda into two versions. The first can broadly be described as the solo version which is experienced primarily as live performance, very often in an intimate and informal setting. The second is the group or band version of maskanda which is disseminated primarily as recorded music, but which also involves live performance, most often in a formal concert setting. While there is some interchange between these two versions of maskanda, there is frequently a marked difference in aesthetic intention. The 'solo' versions are more deeply rooted in the principles of African music reminiscent of pre-colonial musical styles. The intimate expression of individual experience is less inclined to indulge stereotypical notions of identity. In the commercialised version, the hegemony inherent in western capitalist domination is more overtly reflected in the musical procedures⁶. Furthermore, a dominant display of ideas of ethnic identity has

⁶ A detailed explanation of this point is given in Chapter 4. For the moment suffice it to say that the introduction of certain musical procedures such as the clear articulation of the rhythmic pulse in the drums, the framing of the music in diatonic harmony and the less percussive style of playing the guitar into maskanda was motivated essentially by the economic directives of an industry which was itself implicated in the construction and maintenance of systems of domination. These procedures contribute to a uniform vision of Zulu identity

contributed to the facile and superficial classification of maskanda simply as 'Zulu music', and this association of maskanda with the ethnic category of Zuluness has resulted in the use of the label, both locally and abroad, in connection with some quite diverse musical styles.

It impossible without an extensive survey to accurately discern local perceptions of maskanda. Nevertheless, my own experiences reveal the following tendencies. Many South Africans tend towards a view of maskanda which is concomitant with commercially circulated constructions based on notions of ethnic affiliation. Maskanda is thus often perceived simply as Zulu guitar music, particularly by those who have a Euro-centric background. Zulu-speaking people tend to use the term in a generic sense to describe a body of practice which incorporates specific musical procedures, stylistic features and performance practices, with a link being made between variations of style and the dance forms mentioned earlier. In many instances perceptions of contemporary maskanda are formulated in terms of the relationship that it bears to a particular image of early maskanda, an image which has been constructed both in the public realm of commercial music and the media, and in the private realm through oral transmission.

Academic research and documentation of maskanda is relatively sparse. In her master's thesis entitled, "A Study of Guitar Styles in Zulu Maskanda Music" (1992), Nollene Davies documents the connection between maskanda and so-called "indigenous Zulu music" and provides a detailed analysis of the musical procedures used in maskanda. Davies has also published articles on maskanda, "Aspects of Zulu Maskanda Guitar Music"(1991), and "From Bows to Bands: On the Historical Development of the Maskanda Tradition"(1993). Her approach is essentially descriptive focussing primarily on the identification of musical characteristics which distinguish maskanda from other musical forms.

which was engaged by the government of the day and the Zulu ethnic nationalist movement alike.

In keeping with established western systems of documenting music, academic discourses on maskanda are generally constituted in terms of the idea of maskanda as a genre rather than of a style. The idea of style “draws its efficacy from the coherence between the musical and the social as distinct domains. The evaluation of style happens largely in terms of a discourse about its authenticity. That is expressive culture is talked about in terms of how it is experienced as good, true and natural” (Meintjes, 1997:150). ‘Genre’ is a notion which is essentially the product of the 19th century western preoccupation with structure as a defining feature both of the society and of its artistic products. Through the idea of ‘genre’, individual experience and action is recast within the context of over-riding hierarchical structures, thereby inhibiting the recognition of different and at times oppositional discourses, and repressing the significance of music as social practice.

Contemporary maskanda is composed, listened to, discussed and understood in a number of different realms. Each realm is itself a complex network of different and sometimes contradictory agendas. In the private realm maskanda can operate both as a form of individual expression and as a source of economic empowerment. In the public realm it operates as a commodity influenced by economic agendas, and as a symbol of ethnic identity which can feed political motives. In a local context maskanda can be seen as the music of ‘our’ people while in a global context it is the music of ‘others’. Within each of these realms the idea of maskanda is constructed, and notions of tradition are called upon, for different purposes. Contemporary maskanda therefore needs to be viewed as a multiple-site location where the meanings embedded in the music do not grow out of purely creative directives. Economic and political power structures influenced the formation of maskanda style. It continues today as is a fluid, transmuting body of expressive practice, which takes on different meanings as it appears in different contexts. It is out of the complex interconnection of these different contexts that maskanda emerges as a widely contested site in which a number of discourses are operative.

CHAPTER 3.

SHIYANI NGCOBO : *UQOBO NGOQOBO (The Real Thing).*

Introduction.

The idea of tradition as a mark of authenticity has been explored and exploited in discourses on identity for many centuries. It has been engaged in South Africa to serve colonial ideology as a mark of difference intended as evidence of 'primitive', 'inferior' cultures. In the apartheid era it was called upon to control and manipulate social processes in the quest to maintain minority power. To be sure, identity politics is riddled with rhetoric which often depends on the ambiguity inherent in the concept of tradition in order to feed the construction of imagined identities both of the self and of others. Through recourse to notions of tradition, groups and affiliations are made and preserved.

In contemporary South African society concepts of tradition, and the meanings attached to traditional practice, have been moulded by the peculiar circumstances of its history, where 'othering' or marking difference is inextricably tied to political and economic power structures. Time-worn perceptions of traditional practices continue to pervade contemporary discourses on identity, feeding prejudice and demarcating positions of power. The positioning of tradition and modernity as diametrically opposed concepts, experiences and ways of being, is highlighted as problematic particularly in relation to contemporary South African expressive culture. Certainly, some startling contradictions arise out of the associative connections made between 'traditional practice' and music.

"Performance, after all, is not the product of a tradition but a social process through which traditions are elaborated and made perceptible"(Coplan,1994:30).

The term tradition occupies a somewhat ambiguous position in relation to maskanda. The tendency in academia to describe maskanda as a neo-traditional style positions tradition, by implication, in the primordial past in a space which is static, closed and immutable. The idea, on the other hand, that maskanda is

modern music, glosses over the deep connection that maskanda has with musical practices of the past. Furthermore, there is a need to interrogate the connection frequently made between 'tradition' as essentially an African characteristic, and 'modern' as essentially a Western characteristic. The bounds of 'Africaness' and those of 'Westernness' embrace ways of thinking about the world which are rooted in different ideological foundations, and yet the process of modernisation has made its mark on both realms. This process was characterised by the meeting of different cultures and ways of life; a meeting which expanded the parameters of social experience in radical ways.

The colonial and apartheid period in South African history was characterised by the manipulation of the modernisation process through legislative procedures designed to control the relationships between different social groups, and to maintain western based economic and political power structures. The homeland policy of the National Party gave precedence to a pre-colonial system of lineage as the foundation of community groupings. Disregarding the emergence of new alliances between people as they engaged in a cash economy, it severely inhibited the development of meaningful black community structures within the mainstream. Contemporary South African society is still reeling from the impact of this manipulation, one of the consequences of which is a disproportionate number of displaced communities. The fragmentation of communities outside the mainstream was largely brought about by the development of a migrant labour force designed to service mainstream economic development. The condition of migrancy has been experienced by the vast majority of black South Africans albeit in different ways. While the process of modernisation and industrialisation in the West was also accompanied by mass migration from rural to urban areas, in South Africa the natural evolution of new ways of life was dramatically impaired by the permanence of a state of 'inbetween-ness' which accompanied the migrant experience. For, unlike their western counterparts, South African migrants were denied permanent residence in urban areas. Migrancy as an in-between existence can thus be pin-pointed as an overriding characteristic of the black South African experience of modernisation. This state of migrancy as the established way of being for many black South Africans has contributed to the

crisis of community which confronts post-apartheid South Africa, a crisis which could perhaps be better described as an “all-pervasive state of off-centeredness, of fractured identities, and of perpetual displacement” (Erlmann, 1996:107).

Maskanda developed at the turn of the century in response to modernisation, and the experience of migrancy marked early maskanda with strong images of a disparate existence between home-spaces and homelessness. Contemporary maskandi continue in this vein, engaging music as a means through which an imagined identity and lived experience can be reconciled within the framework of performance, where music itself becomes an enacted reality. Maskanda thus operates as a system of meaning-making which recasts the individual and individual life experience in a context which allows for some measure of understanding and interpretation of the relationship between shifting worlds.

In this chapter, I explore Shiyani Ngcobo’s life and experience as it is recast in and through his particular version of maskanda. The title *Uqobo Ngoqobo* (The Real Thing), might be seen to suggest the commonly held sentiment that maskanda as an expressive form, is defined in terms of specific musical characteristics and features. However, maskanda is a fluid musical style and cannot be accounted for simply in terms of musical procedure. It embraces a way of thinking about the world; a way which was shaped by a particular set of social circumstances. At the core of these circumstances is the disjuncture inherent in the modernisation process and more particularly, in the experience of being disconnected from the ‘home-space’. The maskanda aesthetic grows out of the need to compensate for the lack of continuity in the social body, and to establish a sense of belonging. It is as a tool set to this task, that the notion of tradition is called upon to play a crucial role in the construction of identity. The underlying principle or aesthetic behind maskanda through which authenticity is realised and through which ‘genuineness’ is recognised, is intricately interwoven with perceptions of tradition. The sensibilities of rooted-ness aroused by the notion of tradition are engaged as part and parcel of the dialectic of absence and presence which lies at the core of maskanda performance. Maskanda, like other expressive forms which have emerged out of the modernisation dilemma, constitutes a new

master narrative, "one that is rooted as much in the shifting notions of tradition as in the crisis of modernity itself" (Erlmann,1999:199).

The problems encountered in writing this chapter arise in part, out of an awareness of the bias inherent in the authoring of identity in biographies and autobiographies. The complexities involved in recounting life-stories are numerous. Our perception and understanding of ourselves and of others is limited by the models and concepts which we apply. "Ethnographic truths are thus inherently partial - committed and incomplete" (Clifford in Clifford and Marcus(eds),1986:7). Drawing a distinction between life-stories on the one hand, and biography/ autobiography on the other helps to address some of these problems.

Both autobiographical and biographical accounts are generally understood as factual accounts of lived experience, with the distinction between the two being essentially that in autobiographies "the author and the subject are one in the same person" (Langness and Frank,1981:89). As literary genres they have historically focussed on extraordinary life experiences, "mythologising the individual" as part of the over-riding narrative of dominant ideological constructs (Erlmann, 1999:35). The imaging of individuals in these accounts is part of the process of constructing personhood within the bounds of a select system of meaning-making.

I use the term, 'life-story', in contrast, as an account which is concerned with the actual systems of meaning-making and which engages both autobiographical and biographical techniques. While it is certainly unrealistic to imagine that any story is not to some extent ideologically constituted, the challenge of a life-story lies in the intention to allow various aspects of the subject's identity to emerge rather than to purposely engage in the construction of a complete identity for one's subject. The life-story is not a chronologically ordered account through which the individual is positioned geographically and genealogically, and imaged according to remarkable feats of excellence. It is about a way of being. Shiyani Ngcobo sings his life - his way of being. Through the exploration of the stories

told in his music, in the lyrics and in sound, one may gain insight to his way of being. Western notions of personhood and individual identity have dominated popular discourses on the culture, expressive forms and lives of those outside the mainstream. Life on the periphery, however, has all the while generated its own realm with “different memories as well as varying notions of self and ways of describing them”(Erlmann,1999:40). Shiyani’s music is positioned as part of this realm. By focussing on his music I hope to transcend the bounded zones of difference which have shaped popular perceptions of ‘tradition’, identity and maskanda itself.

Shiyani Ngcobo sings his life story.

“I am Shiyani Ngcobo. I come from Umzinto. Our chief is Vince Ngcobo. The river is Umtwaluma. The people who live there are called Enyavini.”

Shiyani's songs are rooted in his personal experience; each one bears a connection to a particular incident or moment in his life. His repertoire is thus a collection of memoirs which recall the places, people, events, emotions and conflicts of his own life. The images of Shiyani's life story presented here arise out of his reflection on the story behind ten of his songs. These 'snippets' of Shiyani's life highlight some of most important aspects of his experience, and provide important insight into the context of his music and performance style.



Shiyani Ngcobo outside his home in KwaMakuta.

Shiyani Ngcobo's life story is characterised by fragmentation and dislocation. His life is marked by movement between different systems without ever being firmly rooted in a material way in any of these. His experience of exclusion has taken place within the intimate realm of family and his own local community, and in a broader sense in terms of social, economic and political structures. Born in 1956, during the early years of apartheid, Ngcobo, as a black South African was categorically excluded from participation in mainstream political, economic and social systems. Thus in terms of the competing realms of Western systems on the one hand, and African systems on the other, he was positioned clearly within the latter. However, Shiyani Ngcobo's experience of this 'African system' has also been characterised by conflict and exclusion. What was imaged as his 'home-space' by outsiders (the western mainstream)¹ was in fact far from a comfort zone of belonging and community.

Ngcobo's 'home-space' is geographically positioned in Umzinto, a rural area south of Durban in what was previously known as the KwaZulu homeland. Shiyani's experience of exclusion can thus be mapped at a number of levels, each involving a different set of tensions. He lives in KwaMakuta, a black settlement about forty kilometres south of Durban, with his common law wife with whom he has had a long relationship, his daughter, and her infant son. They live in poverty stricken circumstances, without running water and proper sanitation. The community at KwaMakuta is unstable, having been fraught with political tension between supporters of the ANC and the IFP², and a high level of unemployment and poverty. While he still refers to Umzinto, the place of his birth, as "home", Shiyani's connection with this community is tenuous. His immediate family have all dispersed, and his relationship with his extended family is marked by competition and conflict.

¹ A reminder that mainstream in this thesis refers to the western metropole of Britain, western Europe and America.

² ANC - African National Congress
IFP - Inkatha Freedom Party

Let Shiyani Speak.

'Sevelina' and 'Ngimkhohlwe Kanjani' are two deeply personal songs which mark 'beginnings' in Shiyani's life. *Ngimkhohlwe Kanjani* recalls his childhood, and *Sevelina*, the beginning of his career as a *maskandi*.

Sevelina. (Track 1)

Usevelina
WeSevelina
Usevelin' uyabaleka
WeSevelin' uyangishiya
Nokungebani kuzenez' intombi

Nokungensizwa kuzenz' insizewa

Sevelina
Oh Sevelina
Sevelina ran away
Sevelina is leaving me
Every second girl is claiming
maidenhood
Mere upstarts are claiming
manhood

Transcription and translation: Sazi Dlamini.

Ngimkhohlwe Kanjani ? (How can I forget her ?) (Track 2)

Ngimkhohlwe kanjani mo
Ngimkhohlwe kanjani uMagwamanda

Ngimkhohlwe kanjani
umama wami engizala?
Ngimkhohlwe kanjani mo
Ngimkhohlwe kanjani uMagwamanda

Ngimkhohlwe kanjani uMancwande
Kodwa baba mzu kwane uxosha umama

Kodwa baba mzu kwane uxosha
umama ekhaya
Wawuthi koba njani kubantwana bakhe

Oh mina sengiyoze ngife
Oh mina sengiyoze ngife ngingakhohlwango
Oh mina sengiyoze ngife
Ngembela sengiyoze ngife ngingakhohlwango

How can I forget ?
How can I forget
uMagwamanda ?
How can I forget my mother
who begot me?
How can I forget ?
How can I forget
uMagwamanda ?
How can I forget ?
But the day you chased away
my mother
But the day you chased
my mother from our home
How did it feel to her
children ?

I am going to die
I will die not forgetting
I am going to die
Indeed I will die not
forgetting

Transcription: Nothando Hadebe
Translation: Sihawukele Ngubane

"When I was very young I was very, very sick and they could not just name me a name. They were scared that like my two other brothers I would die from that 'muthi'³ thing that our other neighbours had put in our yard. Some people do like that when there is a family of a lot of boys. They have got jealousy so they just put something on your yard so that your children can just die like that. So they took me away to my mother's sister, to protect me from that and I was left there without my mother. That is how my name started. My father called me Shiyani which means 'leave it alone, please leave him', so that I could grow up and have a family of my own.

I didn't feel good about what was happening at the time when I was young. I just used to go outside and not join in the games with my cousins. I would stay behind the house and think. I was thinking that when I became a man I would build a house and stay there with my mother. I was not thinking about some other woman. Then I was just thinking about my mother because I loved her a lot.

After the inyanga⁴ had come to heal our house, those jealous people put 'muthi' on my father and so when I came home things were again not good. Now, my father and mother were always arguing. After my father had given my mother money to buy groceries and things for the house, he would come and demand the money back so that he could buy some 'gavini'⁵, and then he would beat her when she tried to explain that she bought some things for the house. Then my mother said that she can't make it with the money and that I must go and find some work so that we could eat. I got some work at a farm. In the first month I earned three rand and then I gave it to my mother. I went back on Sunday to the farm and then somebody came and told me that my mother had left because my father tied her with the string and beat her, and so I just went to live with my older brother, Khetuwise. I learnt to play the guitar from this brother. There had always been people playing guitar when I was young, but I didn't want to

³"Muthi" is a term which is used to refer generally to medicine, however, it is used here to refer to a concoction devised for the purposes of sorcery. It would include herbs, symbolic relics and incantations.

⁴ Inyanga - faith-healer; medicine-man

⁵Gavini - home-brewed spirit

play because they all played ukuvampa⁶. That was the popular style in those days and I didn't like it. I liked dancing to different kinds of music like 'Soul Brothers' and many other groups, until one day my brother started picking the strings instead of strumming, it was called ukupika style and that was when this music started telling me something, when it started giving some kind of sound that I can identify with.

My brother used to play this song, "Sevelina" and I grew to love that song so much. I asked my brother to make a guitar for me, so he took a old oil tin, and made me a guitar and then he taught me to play "Sevelina". When I could play that song my brother gave me a real guitar and I played the songs he taught me until such time that I felt I wanted to name my own song. In fact, I had it in my heart for a long time but didn't want to say out straight away. Eventually I name the song, it was "Ngimkhohlwe Kanjani" (How can I forget).

The stories told in the next two songs, "*Nginombhede*" and "*Ikati*" stem from Shiyani's contact with 'white' South African society and the consequences of this contact. When his mother left, Shiyani had no established home-base, living at times with his older brother at 'Seventeen' hostel in KwaMashu and at times with his father in Umzinto. Like many other Zulu people he lived in a state of flux, moving from place to place in search of employment and a better lifestyle. Johannesburg or *eGoli* (place of gold) had the image of a place of opportunity and wealth.

⁶ As I have mentioned in chapter 1, there is a degree of ambiguity about the connection between *ukuvampa* style of playing the guitar and *maskanda*. Statements like this can be interpreted as meaning that *ukuvampa* was the popular style of playing amongst *maskandi*. However, I remain sceptical about this conclusion. *Ukuvampa* was until the time of Phuzeshukela the most widely recorded and broadcasted style.

Nginombhede. (Track 3)

Ngishw' eGoli madod' eThokoza
Ngishw' eGoli madod' eThokoza
Nginombhede
Ngishw' eGoli madod' eSoweto
Ngishw' eGoli madod' eThokoza
Nginombhede
Ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
Nginombhede
Ngithi ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
ESeventini nginombhede
Ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
Eseventini kwaMashu nginombhede

Ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
Angiyon' imbamba
Ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
Angiyon' imbamba
Ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
Ngeke ngikhohlwe eSeventini

Ngilal' ehlathini
Ngidlal' uMasipala
Ebuz' imali yombhede
Ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
Nginombhede wami
Ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
Nginepasi lami
Ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
Ngine ID
Ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
Nginepasi lami
Ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
Nginepassport
Ngiboshelw' ukwenzani
Ngishw' eGoli nginombhede
Eseventini KwaMashu nginombhede

Even in Thokoza (hostel)
I mean Thokoza in Johannesburg
I have a bed
I say in Johannesburg, men, in Soweto
I say in Johannesburg, men in Thokoza
I have a bed
Why am I arrested
When I own a bed ?
I say why am I arrested
At Seventini (hostel) I have a bed ?
Why am I arrested ?
At Seventini in kwaMashu I have a
bed
Why am I arrested ?
I am not a loafer
Why am I being arrested ?
I am not unemployed
Why have I been arrested ?
I will never forget the day at
Seventini
Sleeping in the bush
Hounded by the municipality
Asking for a bed-levy
What am I arrested for ?
I have my own bed
Why have I been arrested ?
I have my pass
Why have I been arrested ?
I have an identity document
Why have I been arrested ?
I have my pass
Why have I been arrested ?
I have a passport
Why have I been arrested ?
In Johannesburg I have a bed
At Seventeen in KwaMashu, I have a
bed

Izibongo (Praise Segment):

*Zasha Kumthathi wentombi
Ayinike abezizwe, bangayizeki
Ngayinika abasenyangeni
bangayizeka bangihlabekisa*

*Kwahlabeka abakwaNene
Bayithatha bayizeka
Uma ngiqhamuka banovalo*

*Ngabatshela ngath' ayancinz'
amatsheketshe
Yekan' ukulokhu nime ndawonye
Shaya wena!*

Burning from the maiden's seducer
If only you could hear
I handed her over to the medicine
man's kinfolk who shamed me and
made me lose face
The Nene clan were touched
Took her for a wife
Now when I show up they are
apprehensive
I told them the giant ground
ants bite
Stop standing in the same place
You keep on beating

Transcription and translation: Sazi Dlamini

"Nginombhede' is about the time when I used to come from the farm to visit my brother in the city where he was living at the hostel. You had to own a bed if you were in the hostel. At that time there were 'Blackjacks', a kind of security force, the police of the municipality. They would come round and check who was in the hostel. You would hear the people shouting, "If you haven't got a bed, run away because they are coming in!" So you have to hide. They would come in and check - "You have got seven people - How many beds? - okay they have each got a bed" - then they would leave. So I got a bed. But when I went to stay at Section P in Umlazi, I gave my bed in Seventeni hostel in KwaMashu to someone else to take care of. This person failed to pay the three rands for the bed every month, until they repossessed the bed. So I didn't have a bed and the police they were looking for me because I had some more money to pay, like a bribe, to get another bed. If they have my name on paper that I own a bed, I will never be called "Mbamba", someone who begs for a place to sleep. So everywhere I go, even in Soweto, I would be a man because I own a bed."

Ikathi. (Track 4)

*Amingisizeni
Amingisizeni makhu nginenkinga*

*Makhu ngidlala ikati
Lihambe litshela abantu
Ngosizilwami
Amagundane agxoba itoyitoyi
emzini wami
Namhlanje lithi ngipofu
Anginalutho
Anginamali
Ngisizeni nakhu ngidlala
ikati emhlabeni
Ngake ngabona mzuwane
eggoke amahembe
Ngomunye unyaka
Miningi imikhuba eThekwini*

*Manje lehkati lithi ngimpofu
Anginalutho, Anginamali
Oh, makhu ngidlala
ikati emhlabeni*

Please help me
Please help me I am facing a
problem
I am mocked by a cat
She goes and tells people
about my grief
Rats are 'toy toying in my
house
Today she says I am poor
I have nothing
I am pennyless
Help me, here I am being
mocked by a cat on earth
I recall a cat was wearing
a shirt
In a certain year
There are many funny things
in Durban

Now the cat says I am poor,
I have nothing, I am pennyless
Oh here I am being mocked
On earth by a cat

Transcription: Nothando Hadebe
Translation: Sihawukele Ngubane

"A Long time ago, 1972, I was going to catch a bus in Point Road and there I saw a white lady walking with a small dog on a chain and this dog was dressed all in one thing! It was the first time I saw a dog dressed in clothes. Then after that, I saw a cat that was dressed up, it had a shirt on. I just caught the bus to Umlazi and then composed this song, 'Imiqhube', which means, 'a habit'. It is about the ways of doing things in Durban I don't understand.

This song "Ikathi" comes from that. You see there are a lot of strange things that happen in town, things that you would never know if you had not been there.

Now the cat at my home, it always liked to sleep right on top of me, purring, saying its own words that I cannot say. There is this joke that if a person is snoring when he is sleeping at night, saying ...mpouf, mpouf.... which means you are poor. And this cat that sleeps with me and knows me when I sleep and then it just goes out and tells everybody that I am poor."

In the next two songs, "Asihlale Phansi" and "Uhamb' Utshel' Abantu", Shiyani addresses community issues.

Asihlale Phansi. (Track 5)

*Webanti bakithi akesihlale phansi
madoda sikhulume*

*Webantu bakithi akesihlala phansi
maZulu sikhulume*

Izolo sivote sabek' uMandela thina

Uyen' opheth' abant' ezweni

Izolo sivote sabek' uMadibe

Uyen' opheth' abantu

*Izolo benisibulala nithi nishay'
abamhlophe*

*Izolo benisidubula nithi nishay'
amaBhunu*

*Sihlale phansi madoda sikhulumeni
Sibhunge lendaba yokubulalana*

My fellow humans, let us sit
down men and talk

My fellow beings, let us sit
down Zulus and talk

Yesterday we voted and
elected Mandela

It's him who leads people in
the land

Yesterday we voted and
installed Madiba

It's him who rules the people
Yesterday you were killing us,
saying you were hitting at the
whites

Yesterday you were gunning
us down saying you were
aiming at the Boers

Let us sit down men and talk
And discuss the matter of
killing one another

Izibingo:

*Zasha Kumthathi wentombi
Ayinike abezizwe, bangayizeki
Ngayinika abasenyangeni
bangayizeka bangihlabekisa*

*Kwahlabeka abakwaNene
Bayithatha bayizeka
Uma ngiqhamuka banovalo*

*Kanti ngeke ngisayishela
phela manje*

*Uyena-ke uShiyani lo
NgowakwaNcgobo
eMzinto langizalwa khona
Umfula engiwuphuzayo
ngiphuza uMthwalume
Phezulu enhla nawo
phansi kwakhe aMaqhikizana
Intaba engiyakheleyo khona
kwesikaPhilisa
Ngabatshela ngathi mina
angizithand'izindaba kakhulu*

Burning from the maiden's seducer
If only you could hear
I handed her over to the medicine
man's kinfolk who shamed me and
made me lose face
The Nene clan were touched
Took her for a wife
Now when I show up they are
apprehensive, jealous
Yet I would not bring myself to
ever court her again

This here is Shiyani
Of the Ngcobo clans of
Umzinto where I was born
The river from which I drink
is Umtwalume
Up near its source at the
foot of Maqhikizana
The mountain where my home is
Built and where Philiso is chief
I let them know that I have
little interest in gossip

Transcription and translation: Sazi Dlamini

“Asihlale Phansi maZulu’ means let us come together, Zulus and sit down and talk about our problems, because you see in the parliament they discuss things, they come to arguments, they fight, but only with words and at the end of the day they can laugh again. We end up killing each other where we will never be able to laugh again. We will never be able to tolerate each other, because we are full of revenge. So the reason why I wrote this song was not only for the Zulu people, but for everyone. We are now free, we are a democratic South Africa, so who are we killing now. When there was the sound of guns we used to say we are killing the boers, but now we are free. I am actually preaching the gospel to every human kind, to come and sit down to talk about the facts of our lives and to stop fighting.

I might not be educated but I feel it within myself and it is so painful and so sad when I see people discriminating against one another because of their colour. It doesn't matter whether they are educated or not, whether they are in parliament or even a judge. It is a problem because you find that people who are involved in crime are policemen. They are involved with people who are promoting violence. That is why I sing this song, to try and convey the message to anyone out there - please stop violence."

Uhamb'Utshel' aBantu. (Track6)

*Usutshela lonke ilizwe
ukuthi udlala ingoma*

*Ube ungazilutho
Usutshela bonke abantu
ukuthi udlala ingoma
Ubungazi lutho
Mina ngizokushaya (ngengoma)
Mfana usemncane
We mfana ! Usemncane
Watshela bonke abantu
ukuthi udlala (ingoma)
Ubungazi lutho*

You have told the whole
nation that you play
traditional music (ingoma)
Whilst you cannot play
You have told everyone that
you can play (ingoma)
Yet you cannot play at all
I will challenge you with a song
My boy you are still young
You boy! You are still young
And yet you told everyone that
you play ingoma
And you cannot play at all

Transcription: Nothando Hadebe
Translation: Sihawukele Ngubane

"In 'Uhamb'Utshel' aBantu' I am trying to inspire musicians to play their own African music and to tell those who are trying to do it that they must aim for a higher level. So by my music also I hope to inspire people and to lift them up. You see if a person says he is playing traditional music but he is just faking it, it is not good. He is doing it for money but he must stay and think about that. He must play his own kind of music, his own way, the traditional way, the real one. You can't just call this your tradition because you want money...like kwaito. It is like robbing the person who will give you the money... it is not the real thing; but you tell him that it is the real thing because you want lots of money.

If you want to be a good musician, you must stop and think about where you come from and you must learn from your elders. Like me, I learnt from my brother, he inspired me. Not Phuzeshukela on the radio, but eye-to-eye, face-to-face."

“*Ayesaba Amagwala*”, “*Ngizofel’ Ingoma*” and “*Isambani*” all relate to a story of personal betrayal.

Ayesaba Amagwala. (The Cowards are Afraid) (Track 7)

<i>Nganele ngabanik’ ingoma yami</i>	As soon as I gave them my song
<i>Babalek’ benzan’ ababhemu</i>	These fellows flee what they are doing
<i>Banovalo bayesab’ ababhem’</i>	They have fear, they are scared these fellows
<i>Abashongani ?</i>	Why don’t they admit it ?
<i>Abalek’ amagwala</i>	The cowards ran away
<i>Anovalo ayesab’ amagwala</i>	The cowards are sacred
<i>Akashongani</i>	Why don’t they admit it
<i>Wadlal’ uShoboloz’ ingoma Shiyane</i>	Shoboloza Shiyani is playing the song/dance
<i>Dlala ngoma Shoboloza</i>	Play the song Shoboloza
<i>Banovalo bayesab’ ababhemu</i>	The fellows are fearful
<i>Dlal’ ingoma Shoboloza</i>	Play the song Shoboloza
<i>Banovalo bayesab’ ababhemu</i>	The fellows are fearful

The praise section is the same as above with the following lines added:

<i>Ngiqhamuka le eDurban lapho ngiqhamuka khona</i>	I come from Durban
<i>Ngila lapha eLe Plaza la ngikhona</i>	I am here at the Le Plaza

Transcription and translation: Sazi Dlamini

Ngizofel' Ingoma. (I am going to be killed for my song) (Track 8)

Ngizofel' ingoma yami
Naku ngizofel' isiphiwo sami
Ngizofel' ingoma zami
Naku ngizofel' isiphiwo sami

Makholwa ngithandaziseni
Naku ngizofel' umculo wami
Banomon' abanye
Ngizofel' ingoma yami
Bafun' ukungibulalel' ubala
Ngizofel' izingoma zami
Bafun' ukungibulalel' ubala

I am going to die because of my song
Here, I am going to die because of my gift
I am going to die because of my songs
Here it is, I am going to die because of my gift
Believers help me in prayer
I am going to die because of my music
Others are jealous of me
I am going to die because of my song
They want to kill me for nothing
I am going to die because of my songs
They're out to kill me for nothing

Transcription and translation: Sazi Dlamini

Isambani. (Ukubhekwa yisambane - to be very unfortunate) (Track 9)

Ngonani na Madoda,
Ngenzeni eMhlabeni?
Angilazi icala Lami,
Angisazi isono sami
Kukhona abavotela uShiyani

Kanti Siyovota nje,
Kukhona abavotela mina

Sebengakhela ivoti,
Ngipikwe isambane maye baba
Ngenzenina Madoda, ngonani emhlabeni ?
Kanti Siyovota nje,
Kukhona abavotela uShiyani

Ngenzeni na weMazulu ngonanina ?

What went wrong gentlemen,
What did I do wrong on earth ?
I do not know my offence,
I do not know my sin
There are people who vote for Shiyani
Since we have come to vote
There are people who have come to vote for me
They have voted for me
I am very unfortunate Oh my God
What wrong did I do gentlemen
what wrong did I do on this earth?
Since we have come to vote
There are people who have come to vote for Shiyani
What wrong did I do to the Zulu nation?

Transcription and translation: Sazi Dlamini

"Sometime ago I taught this guy, my brother-in-law, Maqhude Nkomo, how to play the guitar. I was his teacher and I went with him all over, to check him and to make him see what he did wrong, because I was his teacher. I took him to different events and introduced him to so many people. Then he started to move away from me, without saying what he was doing but just moving on his own, and I was confused about what was happening. Then one day he came back and asked me for a song for this competition, so that he could go on stage and compete. He didn't have a song to sing, and then I gave him a song of mine. I guaranteed to him that if you don't get position one, you will definitely get the second position. There were so many big names at the competition, like Phuzekhemisi and other people and sure enough he won. A couple of days later, I got a message from Phuzekhemisi, that he wanted to record this guy. He called us to his place in Umlazi to an audition, and we played that same song together.

Phuzekhemisi was very impressed and he asked to take this guy, Maqhude, to Johannesburg to record my song and then other songs that were his own. So I gave him this song to record. He recorded my song, and nine others, but all these others that followed my song just failed. Then they decided that no, they would not use Maqhude's own compositions because they all failed and because Maqhude knew my songs that he must just take them and record, just like that. They voted for me, for my songs, but he was to record! And after they had done that, Maqhude was supposed to come and tell me, but he just ran away. The coward ran away. But Phuzekhemisi called me and asked if Maqhude had come to see me, and I said "No". But the bass guitarist in Phuzekhemisi's band, he knew all my songs and he told me which ones they had recorded. Since then, I never hear from anyone. I just hear the song on the radio but no-one gave me money for that. Then Dave Marks was trying to find out what was going on and he went to Gallo. So now two years ago Dave Marks called me and gave me R500 for this, but I don't know if this is for one song, for all of them, or what! So as I sing in "Ngizofel' ingoma" that I am sure that guy would be relieved to see me dead. It is not that he literally wants to kill me, but that when he plays my song, or hears that record he must feel that guilt. So I sing that somebody wished that I could die, so that he could own my music - but that he will never do - even when I die, it is still my music."

The last song to be presented here was composed in France when Shiyani performed at the Festival du Fin Siecle in Nantes in 1997.⁷

Efulansi. (France) (Track 10)

Ngesikhathi thina siya eFrance Safrika

eFrance baJabula

Thina siphuma e Thekwini Safrika

eFrance beJabula

When we left for France from
South Africa

We arrived At France, people
being happy

When we came from Durban,
South Africa

We arrived in France and found
people happy

Sagibela indizamshini e France beJabula

*Safrika e france beJabula thina sixabana
sodwa*

Madoda olwani udlame ?

Sagibela indizamshini eFulansi beJabula

*Madoda olwani udlame eFulansi baJabule
nje ?*

Thina sixabana sodwa

*Safrika eFulansi beJabula, Thina sixabana
sodwa manje*

We got in an aeroplane to

France and they were happy

We arrived at France, people
being happy and we quarrelled
amongst ourselves

Why this violence, gentlemen ?

We rode an aeroplane to France
and people were happy

Gentlemen why this violence
since people from France are
happy ?

We quarrel amongst ourselves

We arrived at France and people
were happy and now we quarrel
amongst ourselves

Transcription: Nothando Hadebe

Translation: Sihawukele Ngubane

⁷ See appendix 3 A

"The people in France were so excited when I played. I was so surprised that they did not understand what I was saying but they were calling for encore after encore. The songs made them so happy that they didn't want to leave. I had this tin guitar there and Robert Trunz was so keen to record there. We did a demo in the hotel room , Sevelina and Ngimkhohlwe uMama and some other songs. Peter Rorvik was there; he helped to get me to this festival. They had auditions at Africa Jam, with the organiser from the festival. Before I went to Francie, when I told my father he just burn some imbebe⁸ to communicate with the ancestors and get their blessing. So when I come back I feel good about this thing because my father and his father and all my ancestors they have never been on a plane but by my father speaking to the ancestors it just gives me confidence to know they have got the message and I came back safe."

⁸Imbebe - incense

Singing as Action.

"The message I can give in my music is that no matter where you go, if you don't know what your culture is, nothing will ever work for you. You must know where you come from to know who you are; you must know what is behind you, then you won't get lost. The problem is, most of our people are lost. They can't find their way back home. They are far from home but they need to go back, so they can find the right channels."

Shiyani Ngcobo

Shiyani Ngcobo's songs tell the story of events in his life, and his music and performance style is undoubtedly shaped by his experience. Music is however a multi-layered discourse which not only reflects or represents experience, but which also operates as a form of action in which meaning is shaped in ways which allow for the positioning of individual identity in the context of lived experience. In this section the focus is on Ngcobo's music as a form of social practice; the analysis is directed towards an understanding of the relationship between musical process and processes of identity formation. Ngcobo's music can be examined not simply as a representation of his life experience, but as

experience itself. Musical process is thus perceived as a system of meaning-making through which individual identity is experienced in different ways. Individual identity is never conclusively constructed, but is always in a state of flux. "Music, like identity, is both performance and story, describes the social in the individual and the individual in the social, the mind in the body and the body in the mind; identity, like music is a matter of both ethics and aesthetics" (Frith in Hall and DuGay, 1996:109).

In view of the disjuncture which characterises Shiyani's life experience, 'tradition' has a particularly important function in this process of identity formation. Through references to 'tradition', Shiyani establishes authenticity not only for his music, but for his own identity. The uncertainty and insecurity of Shiyani's life, and the lack of tangible and stable points of reference call for the

imaginative construction of a 'home-space', fundamental to the sense of belonging on which individual identity depends. "Identity is concerned with permanence, cohesion and recognition. When we talk of identity we usually imply a certain continuity, an overall unity and self awareness" (Kobena in Larrain, 1994:143). Larrain goes on to say that "cultural identity issues are closely related to issues of personal identity in two senses; on the one hand culture is assumed to be one of the main determinants of personal identity but on the other hand because of the diversity of cultural practice we can only speak of its continuity, unity and self-awareness by analogy with personal identity" (Larrain, 1994:143). Ngcobo positions himself within the realm of Zulu migrant cultural practice, and through overt reference to a particular past he confronts his own personal identity dilemma.

As the lived reality of many black South Africans for more than a century the condition of migrancy can be understood as a "whole social microcosm in itself, a complete way of life with its own set of rules, symbols and meanings" (Erlmann, 1996a:106-7). Shiyani Ngcobo's music and performance style is positioned within this social microcosm. The analysis of the processes through which his music is embedded with meaning is thus an analysis of a system of

meaning-making which can only be understood on its own terms. The aesthetic principle which drives Ngcobo's music provides the key to an understanding of the "rules, symbols and meanings" within this discursive realm. "The idea that societies of the periphery (so-called traditional societies) are 'closed' places, ethnically pure, culturally traditional, undisturbed until yesterday by the ruptures of modernity, is a Western fantasy about 'otherness', a 'colonial fantasy' maintained about the periphery by the West, which tends to like its natives 'pure' and exotic places untouched" (Hall in Hall, Held and McGrew, 1992:305).

At the turn of the 20th century migrancy was experienced and understood as the movement between diametrically opposed coherent structures each with their own well defined systems of meaning-making. Early maskanda marks this movement with images of a past which are positioned in pre-colonial Africa, and images of a present which are positioned in life in the mines and factories, and in

the compounds and hostels - life as a unit of labour. Over the last century this state of 'in-betweenness' which characterises migrancy became the established way of being for many black South Africans. It can no longer be understood in terms of two separate states of being, western on the one hand and African on the other. The authenticity of contemporary maskanda is frequently sought through the connection that it bears to early maskanda. In some instances the connection is made by implication and in others, as in the music of Shiyani Ngcobo, the connection is quite overt. By marking early maskanda as 'tradition', Ngcobo positions his contemporary experience of marginalisation in the context of the experience of past generations of South Africans, challenging western constructions of African identity as fundamentally rooted in the primordial past, through the acknowledgement of the African experience of modernisation. The close connection between Ngcobo's music and early maskanda, however, does not mean that his music is embedded with the same meanings as that of early maskanda. The transference of cultural practices from generation to generation inevitably involves shifting meanings as they are experienced in different contexts over time. "The fact that there are recurrent symbols and ideas used to define cultural identity does not ensure that their meaning has always been the same or that it does not change in the context of new practices" (Larrain, 1994:163).

Shiyani Ngcobo honours a particular past in his music, thereby making a connection between his contemporary lived experience and that of past generations. "Tradition is a means of handling time and space, which inserts any particular activity or experience within the continuity of the past, present and future, these in turn being structured by recurrent social practices" (Giddens, 1990 :37-8). He identifies early maskanda as the 'tradition' on which his musical style is founded. His music contains images and references which are overtly reminiscent of early maskanda, and is deeply rooted not only stylistically but also aesthetically in this expressive practice. The connection between Ngcobo's music and performance style and the 'maskanda' tradition is made conclusively through the formal structure of the music, the tonality, the rhythm and through the inclusion of *izibongo*.

Each song begins with a short, rhythmically free introductory passage on the guitar (*izhlabo*). This section is important as it establishes the parameters of each song, setting the key or scale and preparing the listener for the sound and style of the song. The boundaries of musical discourse are thus set at the very beginning, rooting the music in a particular discursive realm. This section is most often separated from the next by a clear break. This pause signifies a shift from the impersonal to the personal, from the technical to the creative and from the social world to the individual world. The body of the songs is framed within a general pattern characterised by, an instrumental introduction consisting of at least two parts, a vocal section based on the melodic patterns of the instrumental section and interspersed with instrumental interludes, (*izibongo*)⁹, ending with a restatement of part of the vocal section. This frame sets the stage, so to speak, acting as a form of closure and establishing the boundaries of the discourse. The maskanda aesthetic goes much further however. It is important throughout the song not to breach these boundaries by introducing musical patterns which are rooted in different expressive realms.

*"Madala Kunene is not maskanda. He plays 'English' he plays reggae and at the same time it is like maskanda. Maybe the beginning will be maskanda but then he will change into something else. That means he is not a genuine maskandi."*¹⁰

A rigid adherence to a structural format which is recognised as characteristic of maskanda is thus seen as a mark of authenticity and the 'sound' of maskanda is seen as dependent on the proper observance of these principles of form. This sound is characterised by the interplay of short descending melodic patterns repeated in various permutations, by a sense of key as a series of notes rather than as a tonal centre marked by a single pitch, and by a unification of the many rhythmic patterns by implication rather than through clear articulation. Ngcobo not only uses structure to recall the music of early maskandi, but also confirms

⁹ Not all of Shiyani Ngcobo's songs include an *izibongo* section. However this is the place where *izibongo* is most often positioned when it is included.

¹⁰ Shiyani Ngcobo, personal interview, 1998

this connection through other details in the music.

While the song 'Sevelina' was in fact composed by Ngcobo's brother, it has been 'appropriated' into Shiyani's repertoire and is firmly positioned within his expressive realm.

*"Sevelina is my favourite song, I always include it everywhere. Even when I go to the university teaching people to play the guitar - I believe that when you have learnt that song you know maskanda and you can learn anything."*¹¹

'Sevelina' displays the essence of Ngcobo's musical style. There are a number of features in this song which establish a connection to the 'moment' of early maskanda. It is this song that Ngcobo selects as most suitable for performance on the *igogogo* (tin guitar)¹², rather than his standard western acoustic guitar. Through this use of the 'tin guitar' Ngcobo recalls and reconstitutes some of the dilemmas of his own life. The tin guitar is constructed out of materials which are essentially by-products of modern living - an empty five litre paraffin or oil can, bits of fishing line or thin wire, and wood. It is an instrument which is commonly associated with children, and with the unemployed. While this guitar is clearly a version of the western acoustic guitar, it is used in this song not as a poor substitute, but rather for its own innate qualities. Less resonant than the standard western guitar, this guitar produces a percussive sound which Ngcobo relishes in a style of playing in which every note is markedly articulated. It is this style of playing which is most reminiscent of Zulu gourd bow music. Zulu gourd bow music was essentially a female domain. Early maskandi, recalling mothers, sisters, sweethearts and wives left at home, re-worked these songs to express their own situation. The level of articulation of individual voice parts which is achieved in this song highlights the connection between past and present, and also marks his music with a style which is recognised as characteristically African. The accentuation of multi-vocality is a striking feature of this song, providing a strong

¹¹Shiyani Ngcobo, personal interview, 1999

¹² See Dlamini 1998: 66

contrast to 'smoothed over' versions frequently heard in commercial renditions of maskanda.

The tonal structure of *Sevelina* is shaped around three short melodic phrases which are inextricably interconnected, creating a dependance on each other which refutes any dominance by either of the three parts or by any particular note.



The notes circled, E, B, and A are emphasised as points of direction and provide a clue to the harmonic thinking behind the song. The interval of a 4th between E and B, and that of a 5th between E and A, are both intervals which dominate in Zulu choral music, past and present. The remaining intervallic relationship between A and B connects the tonal structure to pre-colonial Zulu gourd bow

music which was based on the hexatonic scale arising out of the juxtaposition of triads either a tone (as in this case) or a semitone apart. The scale on which this song is based, A B C# D E F# is a series brought about by the juxtaposition of the major triad A C# E and the minor triad B D F#. The principle on which the tonality of this song is based is closely linked to that of early Nguni music. David Rycroft writes : “ The Xhosa and also Zulu-speakers in southern Natal, most frequently use whole-tone root progressions as typified in the C and D roots of the *uhadi* bow. Descending hexatonic modes comprising notes from the C and D triads are very common” (Rycroft in Sadie (ed), 1980:200).

The lyrics in “*Sevelina*” bemoan the loss of a woman, and the disintegration of past social practices through which individuals are positioned in society. It is a story about loss - lost culture, lost relationships and lost identity. The music, however, addresses this loss through the strong connections between past and present, establishing continuity and coherence through musical form and process. ‘*Sevelina*’ is of special importance in Ngcobo’s repertoire because it marks the beginning of his life as a maskandi, but more importantly because it provides the means through which his identity can be reconstituted. Ngcobo uses the form and musical procedures of early maskanda to establish an undisputed, firm and stable ‘home-space’. Through the performance of songs which have personal significance (and which are full of the images of disjuncture which he has confronted in his own life) in a context which has a solid foundation (being firmly rooted in a set of established practices) Ngcobo imaginatively constructs a social milieu with which he can identify. While there are deviations from the particular procedures discussed here Shiyani Ngcobo’s songs are modelled on the style and musical procedures shaped in ‘*Sevelina*’.

The rhythmic aspect of Shiyani’s music bears a close relation to *ingoma* dance styles. The term *izingoma* used to describe maskanda in a general sense, reflects the close connection between music and dance in Zulu culture, as does the naming of the different styles of maskanda after the dance forms with which they are associated (Joseph, 1983 ; Davies, 1992). These different forms are named according to their region of origin, and through this connection musicians could

be positioned and associated with a particular group of people from a particular region. The fragmentation of Zulu rural society has however broken down these regional affiliations, and the extensive movement of Zulu people has broadened their experience of these different styles. The fact that Ngcobo does not play exclusively in the style connected to his region of origin, (*isishameni*), including in his repertoire examples of different styles of maskanda, is indicative of his experience of life in the hostels, in urban settlements. This life in essence bears a strong resemblance to that of the early migrant workers at the turn of the century.

However, while early migrant workers expressed a certain nostalgia for pre-colonial ways of life, Shiyani shapes his music conclusively around the condition of migrancy, no longer expressing regional affiliation, but rather expressing the state of 'in-betweeness'.

The tension between rural social structures based on lineage and urban structures founded on economic alliances is at the core of black South African experience throughout the 20th century. "By the end of the nineteenth century the peculiarity of South Africa consisted in the dominance of a highly advanced form of monopoly capital on the gold and diamond fields, with the most sophisticated capital structure and technology, based on a mass of unskilled migrant labour, still dependent on pre-capitalist social formations for its reproduction and controlled by a series of coercive devices such as the compound and pass laws" (Shula Marks in Erlmann, 1999 :26). The crisis of identity that this produced influenced and shaped the development of various expressive forms as strategies designed to confront and reconcile what was a fundamentally disparate and disjunct existence. "We can safely assume that rural dance forms continued to occupy a great deal of leisure time of newly urbanised domestic servants and dockworkers (after World War I and during the early 1920's) and that African male dances were one of the most powerful symbols of working class identity" (Erlmann, 1991:97).

During the 1920's migrant workers organised *ingoma* dance competitions as a way of addressing the conflicts which “stemmed from the mobilization of networks of kin and regional solidarity under the highly competitive conditions of the urban labour markets” (Erlmann, 1991:102). In a contemporary context *ingoma* is often associated with conflicts within black South African society. In group renditions of maskanda where the rhythmic aspect of the music is emphasised and clearly articulated by bass and drums and overtly displayed by a dance troupe, images of power and group solidarity are clearly communicated. In Ngcobo's solo version of maskanda, however, the dance-rhythm is seldom clearly articulated. Positioned between the interwoven musical paths, the rhythmic pulse is implicit rather than explicit. The connection to *ingoma* is surrounded by some measure of ambiguity, and it can only be made by those who have a comprehensive understanding of these Zulu dance styles. It is however through this ambiguity that hegemonic discourses on identity are avoided. The image of Zulu identity as innately aggressive which has dominated western discourse on Africa throughout the 20th century and before, is bypassed in Ngcobo's music. He focuses on *ingoma*, not as the expression of the consequences of fragmentation of Zulu society but as the expression of fragmentation itself. Ngcobo makes a more direct reference to the impact of western hegemony on the construction of African identity in his song, “*Uhamb' utshel' aBantu*”.

*Usutshela lonke ilizwe
ukuthi udlala ingoma*

*Ube ungazilutho
Mina ngizokushaya (ngengoma)
We mfana ! Usemncane
Watshela bonke abantu
ukuthi udlala (ingoma)
Ubungazi lutho*

You have told the whole
nation that you play
traditional music (ingoma)
Whilst you cannot play
I will challenge you by a song
You boy! You are still young
and yet you told everyone that
you play ingoma
And you cannot play at all

As he explains in the discussion of this song referred to in the previous section, Ngcobo uses the term *ingoma* as a way of positioning his music specifically as ‘traditional’. The notion of tradition is called upon to express a sense of continuity with a way of being which has at its centre an African experience of

the world. In this song Ngcobo uses the poetic style characteristic of *ingoma* competitions and the strategy of challenging through song, without marking his music with images of regional conflict.

The commercialisation of maskanda has had a marked impact on the discourse of identity presented in maskanda. Ngcobo challenges these discourses in more ways than one. One of the distinctive characteristic of his style is the way he uses different registers in pitch. Through these shifting voices he adds texture and variety to his music not only as a challenge to the commercialised version of maskanda but also as a statement of individual empowerment. He takes charge of the consequences of change as an individual, and embraces it on his own terms, just as he converts the notion of *ingoma* as an expressive form which expresses conflict into an expressive form which marks continuity, i.e. into 'traditional' practice.

The inclusion of *izibongo* (praise-poetry) in maskanda is regarded as a characteristic feature of the style.

*"It is very important to introduce yourself in maskanda. You can say who you are before you start playing, but the only time that you do a real introduction is when you say your praise names."*¹³

Izibongo is thus more than a statement of identity; it is the performance of identity, and is the means through which selfhood and all it embraces can be constructed. It is "ineluctably concerned with the **building** of identity" (Erlmann, 1999: 41) (my emphasis). The significance of *izibongo* lies not only in the imagery in the text but also in the process of self-empowerment through the act of making meaning. "Migrant performers.....are not interested in communicating fixed meanings. Rather their minds are set on communicating the ability to give meaning" (Clegg in Erlmann, 1996a :205).

¹³ Shiyani Ngcobo, personal interview, 1999

Izibongo (praise poetry) is an integral part of Zulu expressive culture and is an art which “has been acknowledged as the highest form of poetic expression in Zulu traditional society” (Joseph,1983:77). As the “quintessential traditional South African genre for the definition of personal identity”(Erlmann,1999:41), the self praises in maskanda can be understood as a “specifically spatial practice”, through which the individual shapes his identity and positions himself within the “moral and cultural topography of strangers that characterises the urban environment” (Muller,1995:123). The inclusion of *izibongo* in maskanda can be attributed to the need to address and compensate for the anonymity of the performance contexts migrant musicians encountered in an urban environment (Erlmann,1996a :208). Even though the patrilineal homestead had, in the early decades of the 20th century, become a “fractured reality” for many migrant workers, it was preserved in their imagination as the “ultimate emotional, spiritual and social centre of gravity”(Erlmann,1996a :207).

Through the identification of lineage, community or clan, and the river and mountains which mark the geographical position of the ‘home-space’, migrant workers communicated their identity to strangers and at the same time fulfilled their own need for confirmation of a place of belonging.

*“Izibongo is praises, mainly praise names. Mostly they are derived from the actions that one has done in your life; from something that you have seen and something that you foresee. Then you come up with all these images; they are really and truly images which reflect what people see of you and what you see of yourself. My praises are specifically my own; no-one else can have praise names like this. Even if you ask another maskandi to say my praise names - he will not be able to do it.”*¹⁴

Izibongo performance played an important role in the shaping of Zulu women’s bow songs of pre-colonial times. Many of the stylistic features and poetic qualities associated with ‘self- praising’ such as personification, alliteration and assonance, were used in the texts of these songs (Joseph,1983:78). In these songs which were essentially an intimate expression not intended for public

¹⁴ Shiyani Ngcobo, personal interview ,1999

performance, the performer would “intersperse the lines of their songs with rapid renderings of their praises” (Joseph, 1983:80). The style of performance used for *izibongo* was thus intertwined with other parts of the song. In Shiyani Ncgobo’s performance, and in maskanda generally, the *izibongo* section is separated from the rest of the performance. However, the “tension between musical flow and speech rhythm, is particularly crucial in establishing a performers reputation” (Clegg in Erlmann, 1996:208).

“The thing is with izibongo, you have to use the same voice that you use when you are singing and at times you find that the beat of the song doesn’t go along with it; so you have to speed up or take a breath and there is always this fight to keep with the beat of the song”

The guitar part continues throughout the *izibongo* section, keeping it within the context of the song. It does however recede into the background, and the superimposed *izibongo* assumes dominance, adding a new dimension to the performance. The audience’s attention is thus focussed on individual identity as a result both of the performance style and personal nature of the words. “Often eloquent and compelling compositions fashioned from the skilful “play of tropes” (Fernandez, 1986), praise-names objectify the subjective experiences of an individual and transform them into objects of shared knowledge. The self, even though made to stand apart, is thus inserted into the web of words that make up its social world” (Erlmann, 1996a: 207).

Shiyani’s *izibongo* can best be understood as a collection of praise names. There is some degree of flexibility in the way they are presented. In a concert performance not every song will contain *izibongo* and, furthermore, the *izibongo* are not always the same every time a song is performed.¹⁵

“You can say that my izibongo is not always the same I have different ones to the ones used in these songs we are talking about here. There is the one that

¹⁵For example in one of his performances in France at the Nantes Festival Ncgobo began the song “*Efulansi*” with an *izibongo* section as well as including it in the most usual position two-thirds into the song, whereas on my recording of this same song the *izibongo* is completely omitted.

says I am a rabbit who when you think he is there *in* one place you won't find him there; he is somewhere else. They can't chase that rabbit because if you go and look at that place, he is already gone. It is just that sometimes I only do part of them, or just add a few lines; I use different parts in different songs and in different situations."

The first example quoted below contains the praises used in some of the songs presented in the first section of this chapter. The bracketed sections indicate the additional sections included in individual songs. The second example is the *izibongo* which Shiyani refers to in the quote above.

Example 1

Zasha Kumthathi wentombi

Ayinike abezizwe, bangayizeki
Ngayinika abasenyangeni bangayizeka

Bangihlabekisa

Kwahlabeka abakwaNene
Bayithatha bayizeka
Uma ngiqhamuka banovalo

Kanti ngeke ngisayishela phela manje

Uyena-ke uShiyani lo
NgowakwaNgcobo
eMzinto langizalwa khona

Umfula engiwuphuzayo ngiphuza
uMthwalume
Phezulu enhla nawo phansi kwakhe'
aMaqhikizana
Intaba engiyakheleyo khona
kwesika Philiso
Ngabatshela ngathi mina
angizithand'izindaba kakhulu

**Ngabatshela ngath' ayancinz'*
amatsheketshe
Yekan' ukulokhu nime ndawonye
Shaya wena!

Burning from the maiden's
seducer

If only you could hear
I handed her over to the
medicine man's kinfolks
Who shamed me and made me
loose face

The Nene clan were touched
Took her for a wife
Now when I show up they are
apprehensive (jealous)
Yet I would not bring myself to
ever court her again
This here is Shiyani
Of the Ngcobo clan of
Umzinto where I was born

The river from which I drink is
Umtwalume
Up near its source at the foot of
Maqhikizana
The mountain where my home
is built, where Philiso is chief
I let them know that I have
little interest in gossip

I told them the giant ground
ants bite
Stop standing in the same place
You keep on beating *

(*....* Section added to “Nginombhede”)

<i>**Ngiqhamuka le eDurban lapho ngiqhamuka khona</i>	I come from Durban
<i>Ngila lapha eLe Plaza la ngikhona</i>	I am here at the Le Plaza**

(**...** Section added to “Ayesaba Amagwala”)

Example 2.¹⁶

<i>Khuluma nazo Jerusalema</i>	Talk to them Jerusalem
<i>Muz' okhanyayo</i>	Dwelling that is brightly lit
<i>Khoz' olushayamaphiko</i>	The eagle which flaps its wings
<i>Phezu komuz' wendoda</i>	Over a man's homestead
<i>Isiluva senkomo</i>	The <i>isiluva</i> of a cow
<i>Inkom' iyasengwa iyakhahlela</i>	A cow which is kicking while it is milked
<i>Unogwaja onkundlambili</i>	A rabbit with two burrows
<i>Ukhalulu okudala bemvimbela</i>	A rabbit they have long been trying to catch
<i>Kodwa bayehluleka</i>	But are failing
<i>Izayoni ezabiza amadlozi ngamadimoni</i>	The Zion church called ancestors the demons
<i>Yiko lokhu amabhinca</i>	That is why traditionalists do not mix with
<i>Engahambisani namkholwa</i>	The Christians
<i>Khona eMzinto langibuya khona</i>	From Mzinto where I belong
<i>Umfula engiwuphuzayo uMthwalume</i>	I drink uMthwalume river
<i>Phezulu enhla nawo</i>	At its upper end
<i>Khona phansi kwaMaqhikizana</i>	Down there at Maqhikizana
<i>Intab' engiyakhele kwesika Philiso</i>	The mountain next to me where Philiso rules
<i>Ishifu engikhuluma ngayo</i>	The chief I am talking about
<i>Eshaywa luvalo</i>	Who is nervous
<i>Isigod' engibuya kuso</i>	That is where I come from.

(The highlighted sections indicate the part which is repeated in both examples.)

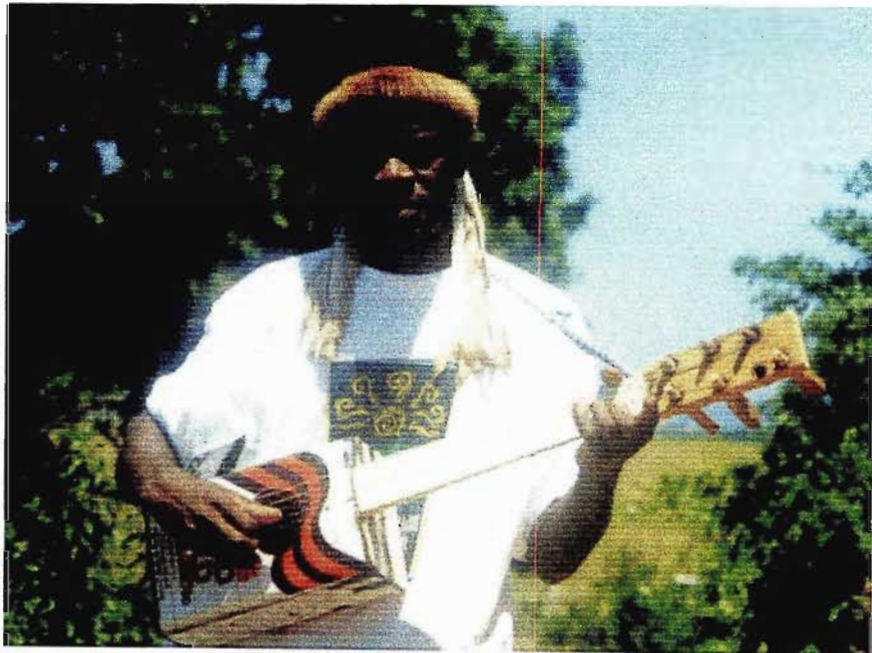
¹⁶This transcription is taken from Nollene Davies Master's thesis, “A Study of Guitar Styles in Zulu Maskanda Music”, 1992: 64-65).

The most striking characteristic of Shiyani's *izibongo*, and perhaps the most significant, is the profusion of images of dissent, conflict, and movement. Added to the tension between the recitative-like voice part and the rhythmic movement of the song, is the conflict between the images of disjuncture in the first part of both examples quoted here and those of the patrilineal homestead in the highlighted sections. Ngcobo compresses an imagined past and the reality of the present into a unitary time-frame in order to give meaning to his present circumstances. Using customary methods of identification, he engages poetics as the means through which a sense of belonging is established. What is important here is not that he is trying to reconstruct the past, but that he uses an established practice to give authenticity to his present circumstances which imply that he is a person with no place, a lost wandering individual.

As seen in chapter 1, early maskanda evolved at the turn of the 20th century, in response to the condition of migrancy. Shiyani Ngcobo's music and performance style is faithful to that of early maskandi. In fact he almost exaggerates their style. The significance of the strength of this connection lies in the status which it gives to the condition of migrancy. By marking early maskanda as 'tradition', Ngcobo positions migrancy at the centre of his musical discourse, thereby transforming what is experienced as a marginalised condition into the established reality or norm.

Like the early maskandi, Shiyani Ngcobo's life is characterised by disjuncture. The images of disjuncture embedded in early maskanda thus have special significance for Ngcobo. He empathises with their experience and their expression of this experience has relevance to his own contemporary experience. However, the maskanda tradition is not recalled in Ngcobo's music and performance style simply as an act of nostalgia for a lost moment. After all Shiyani confronts contemporary conflicts and contradictions. In his everyday life he moves through and between remarkably different realms. His work as a guitar teacher and mentor at university level stands in stark contrast to his illiteracy and lack of formal education; his acclaimed performance in the international arena contrasts with his marginalised status in the local music scene. This disjuncture is

a different sort of disjuncture to that experienced by Zulu migrant workers at the turn of the 20th century. Tradition is recalled as a strategy through which Ngcobo **gives** meaning to the present. It is the past in the present and the present in the past, and as such expresses both continuity and change. Continuity is established through the recognition of past practices in those of the present, and change is understood as the significance of these practices as the meanings attached to them transform in the face of new and different experiences. Tradition thus operates as a fundamental part of a process through which Shiyani Ngcobo builds meaning in his music. "Performers, like diviners and healers, by virtue of their ability to direct the flow of power through special channels of words, music and bodily movement, are privileged in handling power. This is why performance..... potentially transforms individuals into persons in control of their own destiny" (Erlmann,1996a: xix).



Shiyani Ngcobo playing the *igogogo* (tin guitar).



CHAPTER 4.

POSTURING ZULUNESS.

In this part of my 'journey' the focus is on Johnston Mnyandu, to whom I refer by his stage name, 'Phuzekhemisi'. Phuzekhemisi is widely recognized as an accomplished, and successful commercial maskanda musician. My first impression of Phuzekhemisi's music and performance as a powerful statement of ethnic identity directs the course of this 'visit'. The impact of this statement of identity is most strongly felt in live performance where music, dance and visual spectacle combine to transport the audience into a space which is clearly marked as 'Zulu'. The experience of musical performance thus becomes an experience of Zuluness, providing the "means by which people recognize identities and places, and the boundaries which separate them" (Stokes, 1994:5).

In contrast to Shiyani Ngcobo's "expressions of ethnic identification as internalized, inextricable constituents of the self and social reality" (Coplan in Marcus, 1993:366), the focus here is on the expression of ethnicity in Phuzekhemisi's music and performance style through images which feed a particular vision of identity; one which is mobilised through the political rhetoric of the leaders of the ethnic nationalist movement in KwaZulu-Natal, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi ¹ (leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party), and King Goodwill Zwelethini ² (the Zulu king).

Phuzekhemisi's music is exposed on a public platform in a society where issues of identity have been, and continue to be, used to legitimize positions of power. Ethnic division among black South Africans was promoted through the political strategies of the apartheid order, and was subsequently co-opted by the Zulu

¹ See appendix 6 C, D.

² See appendix 6 A, B.

nationalist movement and commercially exploited by the record industry. The public recreational space occupied by Phuzekhemisi is politicised when the images displayed through his music and performance can be read in ways which confirm political objectives. Hence the “boundaries constructed in musical contexts defining identity (become) as important as other forms of political mobilisation” (Stokes, 1994:9). Phuzekhemisi’s music and performance style is categorised as a ‘traditional Zulu’ expressive form and is publicly paraded as an authentic expression of Zulu identity.

Constructions of Zulu ethnicity in the past : some striking moments.

Different perceptions of Zulu identity have emerged as the product of various ‘stories’ which, over time, have been overlaid and intertwined. Since the emergence of the ‘Zulu nation’ at the time of Shaka (circa 1820), Zulu identity has been constructed through reference to an ‘imagined community’ with ‘invented traditions’. This ‘imagined community’ has been shaped at various points in history by the events and stories of the times and is thus a shifting ‘community’ with features and characteristics being added and discarded along the way by many agents with varying agendas. Carolyn Hamilton’s statement that “the cultural ideas, historical notions and identities that prevailed in KwaZulu- Natal (at the time of the early colonisers) were complex and powerfully articulated constructs with contested meanings and heterogeneous origins” is equally applicable today (Hamilton, 1998:6).

The notion of a Zulu ethnic group was essentially part of early colonial discourse rather than part of the consciousness of African people living in KwaZulu-Natal at the time. Shaka is generally remembered as the founder of the Zulu nation. However, during Shaka’s time the Zulu nation was made up of a collection of smaller chiefdoms, and allegiances were to these smaller communities rather than to Zulu overlords. Zulu identity was restricted to those who had primary connections with Shaka’s chiefdom, with the term ‘Zulu’ being used exclusively

to describe members of the ruling Zulu-descent group. "It was white outsiders, rather than the subjects of Shaka and Dingane, who used the term as a collective designation for the people of the kingdom" (Morrell, Wright, and S.Meintjes in Morrell (ed), 1996:55). "By the early 1820's , Zulu overlordship was recognised by most of the chiefdoms in the region between the Mkhuze and the Thukela. ... (C)ontrary to the commonly held view, acceptance of Zulu rule by these chiefdoms was not regarded by their members as acceptance of a 'Zulu' identity. Recent research³ indicates that the Zulu kingdom at the time of Shaka was not, as is usually maintained ... a cohesive and united body... it was an amalgamation of discrete, recently independent chiefdoms, each with its own established ruling house, its own body of traditions about the times before the Zulu conquest, and its own identity. Like most kingdoms in Africa before the colonial period, it was held together partly by force and partly by the judicious disbursement of patronage by its ruler to politically important notables and military commanders, and to its soldiery" (Wright and Carolyn Hamilton in Morrell (ed), 1996:24-25). Thus, while the time of Shaka is frequently recalled to express Zulu unity, this perception can be attributed to the "long established European conception of people in Africa as living in distinct and cohesive 'tribes', each with their own generic name" rather than "the complex and contested processes in which Africans built up a range of group identities for themselves" (ibid,31).

The battle at Isandlwana⁴ in 1879 is an event which consolidated this perception of the Zulu nation, and which has captured the imagination of subsequent generations, feeding 'inside' and 'outside' notions of Zuluness as a symbol of Zulu identity. The colonizers' perception of a Zulu threat was realised in the Zulu

³ The authors cite :

Hamilton, C. 1986. "Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power in the Early Zulu Kingdom", unpublished MA thesis, University of the Witwatersrand.

Wright, J. 1990. "The Dynamics of Power and Conflict in the Thukela-Mzimkhulu Region in the late 18th and early 19th centuries" in Duminay A & Guest B (eds) *Natal and Zululand from Earliest Times to 1910: A New History*, University of natal Press, Pietermaritzburg.

⁴ See Morrell , R (ed) (1996) Pg 50 -51

defeat of the British in this battle. It is a battle which has been remembered as evidence of the innate power of the Zulu people as a nation of warriors. It has fed the fantasies of British imperialists, and has been used in the call for Zulu unity by Mangosuthu Buthelezi and King Goodwill Zwelethini. It has found its way into the music of popular, Zulu musicians like Joseph Shabalala and Ladysmith Black Mambazo⁵, and Phuzekhemisi. The context of the battle at Isandlawana and the part played by the British in instigating aggression against the Zulu king, Cetshwayo, and the subsequent diminution of the power of the Zulu monarchy, is seldom recalled to feed anyone's fantasy.

It was not until much later that this idea of Zulu identity began to emerge as a concept which was referenced in the everyday lives of African people in KwaZulu-Natal. The early decades of the 20th century saw some shifts towards a growing sense of unity amongst the people of the region. "The concept of all Africans in the region being Zulu was taken up by the *amakholwa* and the concept of a united nation within it began to gain acceptance" (Lambert and Morrell in Morrell (ed), 1996:91). As Lambert and Morrell point out, it is somewhat ironic that the ideology of Zulu ethnicity was promoted by the *amakholwa*, African elites who, having been educated in the missions, had accepted their position as British subjects. As landowners and entrepreneurs they had historically opposed customary law. This growing call for unity among Africans can be seen as a response to the need to protect African interests in the face of white domination. Furthermore, as migrant labourers moved further afield, they experienced new and different people. In this wider context, the people of KwaZulu-Natal were identified as Zulu. At the same time, the Union government's decision to "co-opt the (Zulu) royal house as an agent of control" by instigating the restoration of Solomon⁶, "to the position held by Dinizulu

⁵ See Erlmann, 1996a :173

⁶The Union government's decision to support Solomon as the Zulu paramount chief was a tactical move designed to strengthen the states "hold over the chiefs and its rural network of controlthrough the Zulu royal family. By supporting the systems of allegiance which were already established as part of Zulu social structure they hoped to channel dissent into an area which they felt

before 1908", provided a symbol for this growing sense of unity (ibid). At this point in history, because of the power structures in place at the time, there was a growing need amongst the African people from KwaZulu-Natal to define themselves both in relation to the white colonizers and in relation to their co-workers.

The political climate of the 1950's and 1960's contributed significantly to the rise of Zulu ethnicity. In May 1948, the National party came into power, and while the economic boom experienced at this time provided increased opportunity for black people, the intensification of racial segregation increased oppression. By systematically discriminating against people on the basis of race, the apartheid regime encouraged the development of a culture of exclusion. As the 1949⁷ riots demonstrate, growing unity amongst the African population was motivated by the general sense of common exclusion from the opportunity to advance in the cash economy, and to establish a place in the urban centres. The exclusion of black South Africans from participation in all areas of society was further entrenched by Verwoerd's⁸ notorious 'Bantustans Policy' which only allowed temporary residence for blacks in the "European" areas of the country, for as long as they were employed. Zulu ethnicity began to emerge as a form of resistance to the status quo, while at the same time espousing an ideology which resonated with it. The denial of national citizenship to black South Africans resulted in firmly constructed visions of ethnic identity ripe for political mobilisation.

was controllable, thus detracting from the revolutionary stance of the Industrial Worker's Union. *"There are more evil combinations under way which Chieftendom [sic] would assist us to fight against.... Because of his birth and the position in which we have placed him Solomon is regarded as the natural head of the Zulu race.* (Marks, 1986: 88-89)

⁷ Riots took place around Durban between 'Zulus' and Indians see Morrell, 1996, 121 The cause of these riots has been attributed to the competition between Africans and Indians for economic resources within the township of Mkhumbane on the outskirts of Durban.

⁸ The Prime Minister and leader of the Nationalist party (1958-1966)

For the purposes of this discussion, a final 'landmark' in the construction of Zulu ethnicity is marked by the formation of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) in 1975. "Inkatha was formed as an exclusively Zulu organisation - Inkatha kaZulu - and its leader could only be a chief and a Zulu" (Bonnin, G. Hamilton, Morrell and Sitas in Morrell (ed), 1996:164). All Zulus were called to allegiance to Inkatha. "(A)ll members of the Zulu nation are automatically member of Inkatha if they are Zulus....no one escapes being a member as long as he or she is a member of the Zulu nation" (Buthelezi cited in KLAD, 1975, 5, 134 in Morrell (ed), 1996: 164). Just as the National Party was deeply interconnected with Afrikaner ethnic- nationalism, so the Inkatha Freedom Party came to be seen as synonymous with Zulu ethnic-nationalism. While the position held by the IFP did not go uncontested, it certainly occupied, or was seen to occupy, a dominant position in the area and presented itself as the rightful authority on Zulu identity. It clearly defined the boundaries of Zuluness and "wove into definitions of 'Zuluness' loyalty to Inkatha and its leader, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi" (Morrell, in Morrell(ed), 1996 :2).

With the formation of Inkatha came the public parade of Zulu ethnicity which was shaped by political rhetoric which depended heavily on a suitably constructed notion of what it meant to be Zulu. Inkatha used the growing sense of solidarity among black South Africans, and the paralysing effects of apartheid, to construct an image of Zulu identity which would provide a haven both for aspirant entrepreneurs and displaced migrant workers. It came with the promise of empowerment and a sense of worth which had been denied by the apartheid regime. "(R)eified constructions of Zulu identity and "tradition", is the rhetorical stock-in-trade of prophets and princes, proletarians and politicians *because* it is the symbolic embodiment of an internalized, self-defining moral imagination" (Coplan in Marcus, 1993:306).

While "the mobilization of ethnicity can only be successful to the extent that it resonated with an existing social identity" (Maré, 1995:239), it has been responsible for a the popularisation of certain images of Zuluness which have found their way into the general discourses of everyday life. These discourses are

reflected in cultural products which, when popularised through commercialisation, in turn participate in the construction process. Maskanda has not escaped such attentions.

The Rhetoric of Ethnic Nationalism.

As leaders in the political and social arena in KwaZulu-Natal, both the leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party and the Zulu king rely on the ethnic nationalist sentiment to promote and secure their positions of power. While ethnic nationalism suits their respective agendas, they do not always agree on the position assumed by Inkatha as the 'inherited' political representative of the Zulu people. For so long as there is a 'nation' of people ethnically defined as Zulu, King Goodwill Zwelethini has a claim to a position of power⁹. Buthelezi has, however, consciously chosen to position himself as a Zulu nationalist where other political directions were an option. He chose to forward his career in politics through the route of chief rather than through the ANC Youth League or through a legal career. While the relationship between Buthelezi and King Zwelethini may have soured in recent years, together they have presented a vision of Zulu identity which could provide a suitable haven for a broad sector of the African community in KwaZulu-Natal, in the face of a common threat of general dis-empowerment in the political, economic and social spheres. The claim to this haven has not only been represented as the right of Zulu people, but also has been identified as an obligatory pursuit. The images used to call people to exercise this claim are suitably powerful and confrontational, but not without ambiguity and contradiction.

Shaka occupies a central position in the ideological construction of Zulu ethnicity, with Shaka Day celebrations providing a platform for the public display of Zuluness. As Carolyn Hamilton points out, the image of Shaka functions

⁹ See Maré, 1992 : 96

metaphorically to embody the relationship between order and chaos. This dichotomy gives the image of Shaka a timeless resonance, and the impact of this image is dramatically magnified in times of political and social upheaval. While Shaka epitomises the Zulus as a nation at war, he also represents a time of order, discipline and security. He embraces both images of resistance and images of power from above. The image of Shaka is used to give legitimacy to the call for a unified Zulu nation and provides justification for the castigation of those Zulus who err from this path. It also functions as a metaphor of empowerment which appeals to people who have been kept on the peripheries of mainstream political, economic and social structures. "The irony that the ability of the Shakan system to guarantee order was based on military despotism, which was as much the cause of upheaval as an answer to it, is echoed in the IFP's own mobilization of violent authoritarianism" (Hamilton, 1998:213). In many of his public addresses Buthelezi calls on the idea of Shaka to legitimate his authority:

I do not owe my political power to the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly or to Pretoria. King Shaka never owed his political eminence to any political power. The solidarity of the Zulu people was not dependent on white-created institutions when they defeated the might of the British Army. (Sunday Times) (Maré, 1992:75)

Both Buthelezi and King Goodwill Zwelithini promote the warrior image of Zulu identity as one of the primary attributes of Zuluness. Through this image, Zulu identity acquires the characteristic of innate aggression. In 1980, Buthelezi "justified the presence of regiments and the sticks they carried as '*part and parcel of the Zulu national grouping, and the formation of regiments (It) is part and parcel of Zulu tradition*' (KLAD, 19, 1980:662)" (Maré, 1992:88). The public display of the warrior image of Zulu identity was directed as much to those Zulus who presented a threat to Inkatha power structures as to the power-structures of white domination on which the Zulu ethnic nationalists had come to depend.

The identification of Zulu identity in the terms mentioned above reflects an emphasis on male dominance. "The idea of manhood permeates the vision of what the essence of Zuluness is. That essence is tied to men, and then to men as warriors, men as leaders, men as primary bearers of the dominant aspects of what constitutes this ethnic identity, as carriers of the lineage from Shaka to Buthelezi. In this lineage woman are acknowledged only as bearers of men.... they are placed within the warrior tradition, but only as the bearers of warriors" (Maré,1992:68). The following quote from Irene Buthelezi's speech at the 'Mother's Day' celebration in Ulundi in 1990 reflects this perception:

*We the mothers of this part of South Africa have in our inner beings, in our deep wisdom and in our very blood, the lessons that history has taught us. We are the mothers of a great warrior nation....*¹⁰

Buthelezi positions himself as living testimony to the role of woman as mothers of the nation. His connection with Shaka is made matrilineally, and he presents his inner wisdom as the product of maternal influence.

*.....I am not adding interpretation to historic events. I am telling you it as it was. I trace my own ancestry back to the very founders of KwaZulu. From my mother's knee onwards I grew up being seeped (sic) in what it meant to be Zulu and what Zuluness meant to a man and a woman. (BS, 18.01.92)*¹¹

The intention of these explorations into the construction and mobilization of Zulu ethnicity by the ethnic nationalist movement, has been to establish some of the predominant images through which Zulu identity represented to the public by the promoters of ethnic nationalist movement. It is evident that the domain of Zuluness is a strongly contested area in which the threads of history have intermingled with contemporary experience to produce a series of contradictions which are submerged beneath the overt display of a particular version of Zuluness on the public platform. This version focusses on the idea of tradition as

¹⁰ Quoted in Maré,1992: 68

¹¹ Quoted in Maré,1992: 66

the foundation both of individual Zulu identity and a unified Zulu nation. It draws people together through the construction of a Zulu 'space' which is defined by various signifiers which are **perceived as** belonging essentially and exclusively to people of Zulu descent. The signifiers which are most frequently referenced by promoters of the ethnic nationalist movement are those of the warrior and maleness, of a rural environment, and of moments in history which are seen as the epitome of strength and empowerment through unity. This particular version of Zulu identity has been so rigorously pursued by the various agents of power since colonial times that it has infiltrated the thoughts and feelings of all South Africans and of the world at large. 'Zuluness' has become the most self-consciously marked black South African ethnic identity (Maré,1992:68; Meintjes,1997:230). While it is a version which has certainly not gone unchallenged, its power resides in its resonance with the experience of those who have been dispossessed, dispersed and denied access to other domains of belonging.

Maskanda is layered with many versions of tradition, and in many respects embraces the contradictions and ambiguities inherent in the notion of tradition. It has accumulated a history which speaks not only of the empowering discourse of the identification of the self and a community through 'ownership' of an exclusive past, but also enacts the contradictions on which hegemony thrives. Like mbaqanga, it "plays into and participates in the production of the heightened ethnic conscious evident in South Africa of the 1980's and especially the 1990's" (Meintjes,1997: 227). The launch of Phuzekhemisi's career as a recording artist and performer of maskanda coincides with a moment in South African history when the mobilisation of Zulu ethnicity was most dramatically displayed in the political arena.

Phuzekhemisi.

"Me, I am a maskandi musician, the music I play is maskanda. The way I play my guitar, my way of playing is traditional maskanda - guitar picking - this is what makes me a maskandi - the way I play my guitar.

I was born and raised at Mkhomazi. I still live there and not in Durban because I am a farmer. My cows are there so I can't come to Durban. I have another house in town away from the farm, in KwaMashu. Another small family lives there but it not my base. That is in Mkhomazi. Mkhomazi is where I have my biggest family and where I live on the land run by the chief. I had other brothers who passed away, they left their families behind, so I am taking care of those. I can't move away and leave them alone. They all live down there, my mother and family is together there, everybody. That is where my great-grand parents lived. I believe in my ancestors and that is how I am touched by that place.

The people at home have no water, no electric. They don't lead a life like those in the town - they still lead a kind of "old life". I go home to Mkhomazi when I need to relax and to get peace of mind. It is good living at the farm. Everything has to be done at the farms - rituals, traditions and customs, as you can see by the skins that I am wearing around my wrist. I feel a strong sense of my traditions and I believe very strongly that tradition is important to my life. Even if I have to buy another place in the town, I am still committed to the farm and the way of life that we have there. Where I come from will always be my home.

I want my children to know the way that I grew up, playing stick fighting, taking the cows to the dip and milking them. I believe that my children must learn all that. They must know that way of life so that it becomes part of them, so that they love it so much that they wouldn't part with it to lead another kind of life. They must go to school and learn other things, but first they must learn the ways of their forefathers.

Tradition in the farms is still the same. It doesn't change for us. It is what makes us to be what we are. Tradition is tradition. To me it is the way a child is groomed, the way we teach the child to be a person. A skin is put on the wrist before a child gets to six months. That is for the child to be welcomed and accepted by the ancestors, and when he is old enough, like above twenty, we put

another skin. Yes, when the person is an adult going to look for employment or going to mix another life we put that other skin. When the person starts working, the first earnings are sent home, and those earnings take care of the family.

The children must learn these ways and how to behave amongst their people. There comes a time when a young girl is told not to come home after five o'clock, and boys can do whatever they want. And why? Because she is about to become a woman and she must learn to do all the stuff that women get to do, the home chores, cooking, taking care of the family and not to move around with boys, bad boys especially. She must be able to take care of herself. If children had to lose the sense of tradition, it would be because their parents had lost it. So if parents want to follow a particular trend of tradition, or a particular manner and routine, the children will grow up knowing that and understanding that. If they don't know where they come from it is because their parents don't teach them.

If you have tradition, you follow the customs, the practice of tradition and when it is rooted and strong you will be okay. If half way you decide to leave out some of the things that you have to do, then you will have a problem wherever you go because your roots won't be as firm as they are supposed to be - if you shake and go with the change. But if you are rooted in the tradition and customs then everything stays with you wherever you go and you won't have a problem. The way you express yourself or present yourself will be who you are.

It is very important that everyone must first know who they are, where they come from, before they get to know all the different societies in South Africa. South Africa has people who are Shangane, Sotho, Zulu's. If each and every of those is taken care of with their tradition, where they come from, then it would be easy to understand each other.

One thing that fascinates me a lot is the way things are in the city, like Jo'burg, you see white people who are married to blacks. Whose tradition do they follow? These children don't know where they come from if their parents don't tell them.

It is different in the city, as with the izangoma¹². The sangoma sometimes are professional especially in the city where some people get to be isangoma when they are not meant to be, as opposed to the farm where it is known who is

¹² isangoma - diviner (plural - izangoma)

supposed to be a sangoma. In the city anybody can tell you he is supposed to be a sangoma

People who don't know about tradition - it is up to them if they want to learn especially when there are people like Welcome Nzimande. He took on the commitment that this music, maskanda, had to be spread across the country, because anyone across the world needs to know where they come from and who they are. So tradition is there and there are people who are making sure that it is there all the time and that it is followed. It is their duty to introduce that to people who don't know where they come from, so that they understand where they come from. The traditional musician is telling people where they come from, telling them about their roots.

When I perform I dress in Zulu traditional - "Vunula" (is to take on all your traditional attire) and then people can see that this is me and I am not faking, this is me. Just as much as I sing in the language, in Zulu, people understand what I am saying through the language and through the way that I express myself and present myself to them. I project the music through the attire. How I dress, how I sing, how I move, all this is Zulu. On my head is ngwasi; iZimbatho, covers the chest and the upper body and mine is made from a leopards skin, the real thing, I bought it for R1800 in December. Isineni - buck skin (tail) round the waist; ivolo, the skin on the legs, and imbatata, the hand made shoes, tyre sandals¹³ on the feet.

Maskanda is the 'Number One' music at home. Whatever way people can move, from one place to the next, they come from the rural areas and when they hear that music they identify with that music. Especially because there are parts where I am singing about where I come from as a singer, izibongo. And then a person from that kind of place, he starts saying 'See - this is my home-boy that is how he identify himself.'

We learn maskanda from each other, but the most popular thing is ingoma dance, that is what the people at home know best. All the Zulu people know and understand ingoma dance. It is just the same all across the Zulu nation. The only thing is when it has to be named, like I say there is isiChumu, isiShameni, isiKhuze, isiBhaca. The dance from Umkomasi is mainly isiKhuze; but there is

¹³ The car-tyre sandals which Phuzekhemisi wears are similar to those worn by ingoma dancers of the 1920's and 1930's.

some isiBhaca which is from near Port Shepstone by the Umzimkulu.¹⁴ But all those styles are ingoma. What I know best is ingoma, so my music reflects all that. As I do it, I can do all that. Not like say mbaqanga which is about disco life, you know urban jive. I come from the farm and maskanda fits with the music and dance I know, ingoma. The sound of maskanda allows me to express my own way of life. Maskanda allows you to dance the ingoma dance, the Zulu dance, as opposed to mbaqanga where you have to dance the modern dance. Because music is an entertaining kind of thing so people need to listen as well as watching. They correspond the message that is expressed though dance as well as singing. I would never do a performance without dancers.

The music I play is traditional, it is the same as before. I keep the whole set up, the whole form. I keep the same flavour of maskanda, what only changes is the dance routines in the music that I am doing because you can't do the same as whoever else is doing maskanda. It is my own when it comes to dance otherwise the rest is maskanda as it was. I was born under a maskanda family, I have got it in my family. My father played the guitar, all my brothers have played the guitar. We listened to Phuzeshukela on the radio and then we took tins to make guitars, putting strings and we started playing. The main influence was Phuzeshukela. That is how I got the flair for guitar playing. It was very much from the radio, the style I play, not from live performance. I actually met Phuzeshukela in 1979, when I went to Johannesburg, but two years after that he passed away. The things that Phuzeshukela sang about are very different to what I sing about. I am mostly about politics. I comment on chieftain politics, urban politics, but the music is the same, there is the same style or taste of maskanda.

It is the old style, there is an ingoma dance with the drumming, a traditional kind of dancing which is very separate from the maskandi dancing but they take that into maskanda - they take the traditional dance into maskanda because it is similar. The only influence is the western instruments but they play it and still dance in the traditional way. Everybody can see that, that is ingoma. It is in the music, so much so, that if you put a cassette and whoever knows how to, can do the Zulu dance with that music. All the people in the band are maskandi because they play the same music that I am playing. I call them maskandi and they call themselves maskandi musicians too because they only play maskanda music with me, and the dancers are also called maskandi.

¹⁴ Umzimkulu River

Originally maskanda it is connected to the farms. People in the farms identify with the maskandi, they say, "This is traditional music, because it comes from the farms; it has a tradition from the farms." So if they are in town or wherever and maskanda is playing, they identify that with their farm.

I never play another kind of music. I picked up a guitar and maskanda came to be for me. I like to play maskanda, and I feel that the young ones should also play maskanda. They shouldn't lose direction into playing disco, kwaito and whatever else. They should know maskanda as the basis of what they must learn to do when it comes to music.

What gives me courage into playing maskanda is when I travel overseas. The people out there they like maskanda so much so I started believing in what I am doing. It is the right thing to do; to give it to the people who need it. I worked with a lot of groups in Canada, and I recorded in Canada with many different groups playing maskanda. They were singing and backing me up and doing everything a maskanda way.

When I started in the music business I started working with the mbaqanga groups in Johannesburg. I was not a performer. I was helping them with choreography, dancing; and 'Special Five' was one of the groups. During breaks we would take on these guitars and play our own maskanda music. Until one promoter heard us play and he said "No, you need to take this into a recording studio", and he talked to the business men from 'Umkonto Records' in Johannesburg. That was when everything started to come together. We formed 'Phuzekhemisi No Khetani'¹⁵ and we recorded. Sales came to 15000, the second 10000 - the best seller was Imbizo that sold over 100 000 copies. The recent Inkunzi Ka Bejana¹⁶ - Rhinos horn - has not been released yet. There is a song on there where I ask is there a rhino, and the producers when they heard it, they said this is the Rhino's Bull! I said no there is no Rhino Bull in Zulu you can rather call it the rhino's horn, then it became the rhino's horn. A rhino is a much powerful animal compared to any other animal that I like, or came to my mind and I use it to make it sound strong.

¹⁵ Khetani -Phuzekhemisi's late brother

¹⁶ See appendix 6 A

My songs are political commentary, I sing about things that are happening in politics. I had a problem with the minister Sibusiso Ndebele¹⁷, who told me not to carry on singing about the situation in politics in the country. But I still say okay, I can get away with it and there are songs in the CD that is about politics. I am not mentioning parties; the only problem that became confrontational was when I called an MP's name in one of the songs. That caused Ndebele to come and tell me to stop doing that. My political commentary is about telling people stuff like, "Now that we have elected you all to power, and you are having all the food and the money there is, and you are thinking all the people down there is okay, which is not the case. You also need to come down and look at the people and see how they are struggling!" What I have tried to highlight in my songs is that politicians must be made aware of the people on the ground, saying that, "Now that we have voted for you - you promised us heaven and earth - but now you are in a strong position you no longer come down back to us and to tell us what you are doing." These problems that I am singing about, they are real. I am living on the farm, where people go and fetch water kilometres away from where they live and sometimes they have to hire cars to do that; and if there is no car to go there, they have to struggle to get down there to fetch the water. And this becomes worse when I witness an elderly person living by herself, not having anyone to get her water and to assist her with the basic necessities of life. You only notice her by the white cloth that she will be waving around. Then you realise that this person needs help, and sometimes you will never know until you see them. That's when you go to her. That is a major problem that we are experiencing. The young people have to leave their families and come to the cities to get employment. Sometimes you find now that the very same young people that are going to the cities, they will have children and they come and dump these children with the elder person back home. And now these children go to school and it is a problem still for the older person to do things for themselves. At the same time when the children are back from school, if they are too young, they can't go to the river and fetch the water and by the time they get back from school the water is finished at their home. The traditional way of living is broken now, because now if people are to be that destitute - children coming from school needing food - and there is no way that they can get it because there are no necessities like water in the houses, then that means she must go wherever she can get food because she can't manage by herself.

¹⁷ The African National Congress Provincial leader in KwaZulu-Natal.

It is a big problem, like for me, we buy in bulk because now there is no rain and there is no way to grow something on the farm. Sometimes there is nobody to bring the money. Some people have to go and work to earn money to buy food for those at home, and then there is no-one there to take care of the young and the old. That is what it all about and since now there is no employment it has become much heavier."



Phuzekhemisi in concert at the Durban city hall (1999).

In this 'story' Phuzekhemisi constructs various 'spaces', as allegories which draw partly on the reality of his lived experience and partly on the constructions of an imagined world. Within these 'spaces', and through them, he appropriates dialectically positioned notions of rural and urban, tradition and modernity, and hegemony and resistance, and uses them as the key paradigms through which a sense of individual identity and a sense of community are constructed. These notions occupy a central position in the formulation of identity on an ethnic basis (Erlmann,1991:5 ; Erlmann,1996a:97-99).

The main focus in this chapter is on the connection between the images of Zuluness referenced in the ethnic nationalist movement, and the images of Zuluness which are displayed in Phuzekhemisi's music. It must, however, be noted that Phuzekhemisi's music and performance, like most popular cultural performance styles, is full of contradictory images which contest different issues at different levels. As Erlmann states, "Popular performance in South Africa has enabled migrant workers, teachers and shopkeepers to express **at the same time**, pan ethnic African nationalist ideology and Zulu nationalism, and pride in status as permanent urban citizens as well as rural nostalgia and horror at the evils of the city" (Erlmann,1991:4) (my emphasis).

Both King Goodwill Zwelethini and Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi rely heavily on the reconstruction of history and on the notion of 'tradition' in order to construct an image of contemporary Zulu identity. The past is referenced and claimed to provide authenticity for this image, and to provide justification for their particular course of action. Without imputing an intention to Phuzekhemisi and his fellow performers to serve the political ideals of ethnic nationalism, I do however assert that the images displayed in the performance of their music and dance are open to appropriation by such outside forces. Nevertheless, it must be said that the images of Zulu identity which are promoted by the ethnic nationalist movement have been visibly displayed in a very public realm, and it is hard to imagine that the performers are unaware of these public presentations of Zulu identity.

Phuzekhemisi's music can be 'unpacked' by beginning with the most visible layers. The music aside, the most obvious displays of Zulu identity in his live performance occur in the visual spectacle of dress, dance and movement, and in the 'recitative like' rapid speech of the *izibongo*. Phuzekhemisi performs fully adorned in traditional attire¹⁸ in a display which borders on the regal; the genuine leopard skin which he wears around his shoulders gives him an elevated status and is reminiscent of the leopard skin worn by Buthelezi.

Ingoma dancing plays a dominant role in Phuzekhemisi's music and performance style. *Ingoma* dancing is historically positioned as a performance practice which correlates with the "political economy of tribal animosity among migrant workers" (Erlmann, 1991:102). While the particular style of *ingoma* performed here, a mixture of *isikhuze* and *isiBhaca*, positions Phuzekhemisi in the southern region of KwaZulu Natal, *ingoma* dancing is marked generically as Zulu.

In "*Nightsong*", Veit Erlmann draws attention to the close association between *ingoma* and images of war and rural life. He says of *ingoma* dance:

"Their significance in *isicathamiya* is perhaps best assessed by a comparison with the terms for related positions and roles in *ingoma* dance troupes. As J. Clegg has observed, *ingoma* dance teams are compared to oxen plough spans (*isipani*) or war regiments (*impi*); team leaders are often referred to as *igoso* (war-leader) or *ifolosi* (lead oxen).In a similar mix of pastoral and military symbolism, intermediate positions are called *iphini* (inferior officer), and *isikhulu* (elder), while the rank and file dancers are given titles such as *isosha* (soldier) or *inkabi* (ox). Quite clearly, these titles recall the pre-colonial Zulu kingdom and its foundation of cattle and military organization" (Erlmann, 1996:152).

The emphasis that Phuzekhemisi places on *ingoma* dancing as a mark of Zulu identity is significant. "Long after the destruction of the Zulu kingdom and when independent African power had become a distant memory, these dances

¹⁸ 'Vumula' is the term used to describe dressing in 'traditional' attire.

continued to resonate in the minds of dockworkers, domestic servants and farmhands with the glory of the Zulu heritage" (Erlmann, 1991:103). Through *ingoma* dancing the audience is thus drawn into a realm marked by a rural space and by the 'warrior' image of Zulu identity which is reflected in the performance of male prowess and discipline in the dance. The dances are physically demanding and the dance troupe sings and dances in unison showcasing cohesion within the group.

However, the connection between *ingoma* dance and a performance of Phuzekhemisi's music runs much deeper than visual display. The rhythmic structure of Phuzekhemisi's music not only evokes *ingoma* dancing, but emphasises it through the explicit articulation of the beat. While in solo performances of maskanda (like those of Shiyani Ngcobo) the connection with *ingoma* is made through an implicit rhythm, in Phuzekhemisi's band performance the rhythm which motivates the dance is clearly articulated in the drums and bass. The visual display is reinforced by music which 'captures' the audience in a powerful sonic experience of military prowess, strength and unity. Furthermore, the amplified sound adds impetus to the music, driving the experience of his performance on to a level which resonates with the experience of an advancing troupe of Zulu warriors.

Ingoma elicits a strong response from the Zulu community, and in concerts the dancing is frequently punctuated by effusive gestures from the audience, ululating from the women and strong applause from the men¹⁹. It articulates and emphasises some of the most powerful aspects of Phuzekhemisi's music.

The song '*Amagama Akho*' on the album, '*Imbizo*', epitomises the relationship between Phuzekhemisi's music and performance style and *ingoma* dance. In this song, he not only uses a strategy associated with *ingoma* dancing, namely,

¹⁹ At one of Phuzekhemisi's concert in the Durban city hall, I was standing with the security guard who following the *ingoma* routine, could not contain his pleasure - "It makes me strong inside!" - was his response.

contestation of identity through performance, but he also asserts the image of his identity as powerful and 'authentic' by claiming ownership of *ingoma*. *Ingoma* is thus recalled here as a mark of Zulu identity.

AMAGAMA AKHO (Track 11)

Solo: *Wokhuluma uwabale nsizwa amagama akho
sinyabase Mkhomazi
Wenzani wathinto amaBhel'amnyama
Wenzani wathinto amangabaseMkhomazi
Wenzani wathinto amasibuyeMkhomazi*

Chorus: *Thin' ingoma asiyithathi amachansi
Thin' ingoma eyakithi eMkhomazi*

Solo: *Eyakithi eMkhomazi
Eyakithi eMkhomazi*

Chorus: *Thin' ingoma asiyithathi amachansi
Thin' ingoma eyakithi eMkhomazi*

Solo: *Eyakithi eMkhomazi
sayincela komama
Sayothola kobaba*

Man you need to be careful of what you say - we are from Mkhomazi.
What are you doing demeaning and defaming us as the chief's subjects
(the chief is referred to as a Black bear)
We are from Mkhomazi
We come from Mkhomazi
We don't take any chances with ingoma
Ingoma comes from Mkhomazi - its ours
Our mothers' breast-fed it to us
Our father's gave it to us

Translation: Madoda Kraai

The challenge expressed in this song can be read as being directed both to those from within the Zulu 'space' and to those from without. The message could be read as a rebuke to those who have turned their backs on their ethnic identity and who no longer observe the hierarchies and structures based on the concept of an inherited 'tradition'. It could also be read as giving a strong base to ethnic sentiments and contesting any threat from outside the ranks of Zuluness. Like Buthelezi and King Zwelethini, in this song, Phuzekhemisi challenges those who disregard or threaten Zulu ethnicity. The image of *ingoma* as having been "breast-fed" to the people of Mkhomazi, assures the audience of the

'traditional' status of Phuzekhemisi's performance style and is reminiscent of Buthelezi's own performance style where he claims authenticity for his role as leader, and an innate knowledge of the 'facts of history', through the notion of tradition as practice past down from generation to generation. It is worth repeating the extract from Buthelezi's speech quoted earlier :

.....I am not adding interpretation to historic events. I am telling you it as it was. I trace my own ancestry back to the very founders of KwaZulu. From my mother's knee onwards I grew up being seeped (sic) in what it meant to be Zulu and what Zuluness meant to a man and a woman (BS, 18.01.92)¹ (my emphasis).

The inclusion of *izibongo* in maskanda is generally regarded as an one of the defining features of the style, and it is through *izibongo* that maskanda is characterised as Zulu. The *izibongo* sections in all of Phuzekhemisi's songs are similar. He observes what has come to be regarded as standard procedure, identifying where he comes, the chief of his area, and the river he drinks from, and in so doing positions the 'home space' in a rural environment confirming "the patrilineal homestead as the ultimate emotional, spiritual, and social centre of gravity" (Erlmann,1996a:207).

In reference to Homi Bhabha's use of the term 'unhomely', Veit Erlmann states that, "(U)nhomeliness is a condition in which the border between home and world become confused, in which private and public become part of each other" (Erlmann,1996:103). Applying the corollary to the notion of home, one sees the idea of home operating on two levels reflected in Phuzekhemisi's story. 'Home' is a concept which is used here not only to describe the domain of domesticity. It also alludes to a private realm where Phuzekhemisi takes hold of the inconsistencies in lived experience and re-orders them according to his own system of meaning. He finds solace in the 'home' space through a sense of belonging to, and being part of, a history which is understood as being part of

¹ Quoted in Maré, 1992: 66

the present. Thus while the domestic realm may be in turmoil, 'home' is still be seen as a coherent, stable space.

In his narrative, Phuzekhemisi also clearly situates 'home' within a rural space. While he speaks of his obligation to his family and to his cattle, the real connection with this rural space is made through his relationship to the past. It is the images of the past, his ancestors and 'tradition' which mark a rural space both as the locus of his individual identity, and of his perception of 'fundamental Zuluness'. By positioning himself as a farmer with cattle, Phuzekhemisi asserts a sense of belonging which defies the experience of a fragmented society and contests the authority of westernisation. Phuzekhemisi is, however, a part-time farmer, and would perhaps be better described as a musician who owns cattle. He acknowledges the dysfunctional status of rural living and yet it is glorified in his imagination.

While one may read this shaping of identity within the boundaries of rurality as an empowering claim to 'territory', it can also be read as being part of a western ideological construction of 'otherness'. According to a stereotypical image, Africans have been defined as essentially rural people. It is common knowledge that the ideological underpinnings of apartheid relied on the notion of 'tribal' identity as fundamental to the existence of African people, and on the idea that this could be best realised in a rural society. Through this notion, justification was sought for a policy of separate development where 'Africans' were kept outside the hub of economic activity in the cities. From this we can see that the meanings attached to the rural space are paradoxically positioned and the allegory operates simultaneously as an image of empowerment and as one of submission to hegemonic domination.

The following two examples of Phuzekhemisi's *izibongo* are from the songs *Sidlal'uNPA* on the album *Ngo'49* and *Imbizo* on the album *Imbizo*.

respectively. The recurring image of the mamba² 'flavours' his *izibongo* with a political slant, and marks Phuzekhemisi's claim to excellence as a force to be reckoned with in the political arena. The mamba serves as a metaphor for a powerful and dangerous opponent and is often understood to refer to politicians.

Example 1.

*Zasha mfana Phuzekhemisi madoda
Wayihlaba ngempela umajazi amnyama
Khona phansi lapho izalwa khona
Emfuleni engiwuphuzayo, ngiphuza
umaKhwawato khona Emkhomazi
Ngangilokhu ngibatshola kancane, bethi
bayayibamba imamba isemgodini
Ngathi musani ukuyidlokodla, bafana, imamba ngobo
izihilimaza. Ha! Kuphuka-ke lapho mfana
kaMgwazi lapho emabhesini. Thintitha lapho ke Mfana kaMkhize, uthule
uthi nya. Emkhomazi kaNyama Ha!*

Here we go men, Phuzekhemisi
He really hit it with his heavy black coat
Down there where he comes from.
The river that he drinks from, umaKwawata there at Mkhomazi
I have been telling them little by little, when they were trying to catch the
mamba while in its hole.
I told them, stop pestering it boys, because it will hurt you badly. Ha!
Come up Maywazi's son with your bass
Brush it quiet now Mkhize's son, at Mkomazi by Nyama's.

(*Sidlal'uNPA* : translation by Madoda Kraai)

² The mamba is a highly venomous snake, generally regarded as aggressive. Although it is found in the far north of South Africa, it is commonly associated with the coastal areas of KwaZulu-Natal where it is widely feared.

Example 2.

*Awu wayihlaba ngempela
Phuzekhemisi no Khetani
Khona phansi eMkonazi
Khona phansi kwaDumisa*

*Ngabatshela mfokababa Khethani
Ngathi bazoyithinta imamba isemgodini
Ngathi khayi bafana iyonilimaza uma ike yaphuma
Wo bhasobha nsizwa ungami ngezansi
Isigayane lesi esizayo sibuyisa amatshe*

Oh you stabbed it
Phuzekhemisi and Khethani
Down at Mkomaas where you come from
Down at Dumisa

I told them, my brother, Khethani
That they will touch the mamba inside its hole
I told them, and said, look boys, you will get hurt if the snake comes out
Watch out! Young man, don't stand below (the hole)
It is a dangerous object which comes from the rocks

(*Imbizo* : translation by Madoda Kraai)

In dealing with the problems facing contemporary Zulu society, Phuzekhemisi frequently recalls in his lyrics, images of the past, and particularly a time which is revered as the epitome of Zulu unity and strength. This, together with his critical stance in opposition to national politics, draws Phuzekhemisi into the ethnic nationalist camp. The title track of the album released in 1996, *Ngo '49*, is a representative example. The song promotes the idea of a unified Zulu nation as a solution to the economic and social problems which dominate Zulu people's lives.

NGO '49 (Track 12)

ssh usu!!

Singalwa sodwa kanjena yini wemaAfrica

Yini indaba ngiyanibuza wemaAfrica

Nanikuphi namadoda mhla sishaywa eSandlwana

Sisaywa abelungu heyi wemadoda?

Ngo '49, amaNdiya asishaya, sindawonye

kwakungekho lezinhlangano lezi

Nyanyibatshela kancane kancane

Ngithi muscani ukuyidlokodla bafana

Kwathi ngo 49, sashaywa amaNdiya

We sithwele kanzima heyi wemaAfrica

Can we really fight each other this way, why Africans,
I am asking what's the problem, Africans.

Where were you guys when we fought the whites at Isandlwana?
In '49 we confronted the Indians with our solidarity,
there were no organisations

I keep telling them little by little to stop pestering

(Translation: Madoda Kraai)

The ideas in this song are presented in couplets, with each couplet changing time frame. The song begins in the present with a question, "Why are we fighting each other Africans?" This reference to 'Africans' touches on both inter-ethnic conflict and the idea of disunity amongst Zulu people. At this point the direction of the address is ambiguous.

The second couplet is, however, directed more explicitly to Zulus through the reference to Isandlwana. This battle, where the Zulus defeated the British, has

been marked, both locally and abroad, and for many generations, as a moment which epitomizes the very essence of Zuluness. The removal of this battle from its overall context facilitates the use of Isandlwana as historical evidence for a particular focus on Zulu identity. (It would not be unjustified to adopt a contrary view of Isandlwana, and see it as the battle which determined British resolve to destroy the Zulu empire. However, this has not been the case, and Isandlwana continues to be remembered with pride by Zulus and with reverence and awe by others.) Here it is used to give momentum and authority to a call for unity, which at this stage of the song we must now read as Zulu unity.

The next couplet recalls the 1949 riots where Africans, who were mainly Zulus, and Indians clashed in a weekend of rioting. Indians residents, as landlords, bus owners and shopkeepers in black squatter settlements outside Durban were targeted as exploiters of their black, African neighbours. Africans perceived the riots as a victory against oppression believing that they had liberated Mkhumbane.

“Iain Edwards has tried to make sense of the (Mkhumbane) riots as a key moment in the development of what he calls ‘proletarian populism... a growing belief in ethnic unity, chauvinism, and indeed “Zuluism”’. (Edwards, 1989: 7/ 12)..For Edwards, the people of Mkhumbane were able to come together effectively as blacks first and foremost, systematically thrown up into the urban arena by their need for entering the cash economy as never before and forced to make their way in an environment of exclusion and racist competition” (Morrell, 1996:121).

It is this very sentiment that Phuzekhemisi expresses here. Furthermore, the circumstances surrounding these riots are mirrored in the lives of many people today, and thus the power of the historical moment is reinforced by the lived experience of exploitation and marginalisation. The extensive squatter settlements surrounding all of Durban are familiar territory to Phuzekhemisi’s audience, and are a monument to a social structure which has discounted a large proportion of the population. The power of Phuzekhemisi’s social commentary

therefore lies in his ability to identify issues which are part and parcel of the lived experience of the working class, black South African.

In the song Sidlal' uNPA, Phuzekhemisi touches on an issue which is close to the hearts of many individuals who have experienced a sense of powerlessness in the face of authority. Although he focusses on corruption within the traffic authorities (NPA), there is an underlying suggestion that he is being intimidated by those in power. Whilst this song was published in 1996, when the ANC had taken over governance of the country, the anti-police sentiments are reminiscent of police corruption during the apartheid era. Many of Phuzekhemisi's fans are older people who would empathise fully with the words "*uyasigebenga amapoyisa*" (the police are thugs).

SIDLAL'UNPA (Track 13)

Nginezimoto kodwa ngithwele kanzima 2X
Ayangikhathaza amaphoyisa lena emgwageni 2X
Ukuhamba ukubona imoto yami boyibusecal eceleni
Bathi handbrake indicator awushaya amahazard
Sidlal' u NPA, uyasigebenya uNPA 2X
izigebengu uNPA
nguyobhadala kuze kubenini amaphoyisa
isigebenga mapoyisa
isigebenga maNPA

I've got cars but I am struggling
The police are bugging me on the road
You learn as you go, my car was pulled off on the side
They say handbrake, indicators and hazard
NPA is making fools of us they are thugs NPA
Until when will I be paying a bribe
They are thugs, the police
They are thugs, the NPA

(Translation: Madoda Kraai)

Phuzekhemisi describes tradition as a way of life which is protected within a rural setting. It is passed on through the generations and is the way it has always been. Through tradition, relationships between individuals and society are structured and defined, and people learn acceptable and appropriate codes of behaviour. Tradition and custom are thus seen as instrumental in the construction of identity and function as a source of security.

It is somewhat ironic, however, that while tradition is understood as a static, and self-contained body of practice, the practices which are marked as 'traditional' emerged at different moments in history and are themselves a combination of old and new. This is particularly evident in the way Phuzekhemisi marks maskanda as traditional. Maskanda is connected to the idea of tradition in some very contradictory ways and Phuzekhemisi articulates some of the most striking of these contradictions in his narrative.

Maskanda has never been a static style of musical performance and does not comply with Phuzekhemisi's idea of tradition as prescribed rather than transmuting practice. Furthermore, he marks traditional maskanda at a moment when the style was radically transformed at the initiative of a music industry. Phuzekhemisi's career as a maskanda musician was motivated to a great extent by the music industry. His role model, Phuzeshukela, was ear-marked by the industry to 're-invent' maskanda in order to suit the perceived demands of an emerging consumer market. Under the direction of the record industry, maskanda performance was transformed from what had been primarily a solo style, to a group performance, with drums, bass guitar, backing singers, and often the concertina. Phuzekhemisi thus marks 'tradition' at a moment which is characterised by change. Furthermore he identifies the source of his own inspiration with a product that marks the process of industrialisation - the radio - rather than with the experience of musical performances by members of his rural community.

The relationship between Phuzekhemizi's music, the commercial objectives of the record industry, and the image of Zulu identity represented by the Zulu ethnic nationalist movement is clearly expressed in Phuzekhemisi's hit "*Imbizo*".

IMBIZO. (Track 4)

Solo: *Lo mhlaba uyathengwa ungaboni sihleli kuwona*

Chorus: *Lo mhlaba uyathengwa ungaboni sihleli kuwona
Njalo nyonyako sikhokha imali yamasimu endunene
Njalo nyonyako sikhokha imali yamasimu endunene
Lo mhlaba uyathengwa ungaboni sihleli kuwona*

Solo: *Njalo njena kukhon' imbizo
Sihlala sibizwa emakhosini
Sihlala sibizwa phezulu
Sihlala sifunda esiskoleni
Bathi kukhona imbizo*

Chorus: *Ungaboni ila kulo mhlaba siyawukhokhela*

Solo : *Njalo nje--ni kukhon' imbizo*

* Chorus: *Ungaboni ila kulo mhlaba siyawukhokhela*

Solo : *Njalo nje--ni kukhon' imbizo*

Chorus: *Ungaboni ila kulo mhlaba siyawukhokhela*

Solo: *Sihlale sibizwa emakhosini*

Chorus: *Ungaboni ila kulo mhlaba siyawukhokhela*

Solo : *Sihlale sibizwa phezulu*

Sihlale sifunda esikoleni

Chorus: *Ungaboni ila kulo mhlaba siyawukhokhela*

Solo : *Bathi kukhona imbizo*

Chorus: *Ungaboni ila kulo mhlaba siyawukhokhela*

SPIA/LA

Translation:

We pay for this earth
Do you not see us living on it
Every year we pay money for the fields to the chief
We pay for this earth
Do you not see us living on it

There are always gatherings
We are always being called by the chiefs
We are always being called from above
We read notices at the school
They tell us there is a gathering

Do you not see us living here - we pay for this earth

(Translation: Madoda Kraai)

The title of the song, "*Imbizo*", situates this song in rural Zulu practice. An '*imbizo*' (calling the people together) is recognised in Zulu culture as a 'traditional' way of resolving problems. However, this song also parades a number of features which mark it as 'Zulu' in a superficially plausible way.

'*Imbizo*' is positioned as maskanda through the observance of a structural formula which is associated with maskanda style. Formal recognition is given to the outward and most obvious defining features of maskanda. However, a closer examination of the musical procedures which take place within this framework reveals that many of the rich and intricate details through which the maskanda aesthetic is realised have been simplified or omitted.

Analysis of the structure of “*Imbizo*” :

INSTRUMENTAL INTRODUCTION	guitar + concertina (B major)	
VOCAL INTRODUCTION	Solo	A
	Chorus	A
	Chorus	B
	Chorus	B
	Chorus	A
INSTRUMENTAL INTERLUDE	guitar joined by concertina and drum machine	
SOLO SECTION	C	
	C	
	D	
	D	
	D	
	C (varied)	
CHORUS	Chorus and solo part interact and overlap	
IZIBONGO	instrumental backing with bass clearly articulating the melody sung by the chorus	
SOLO SECTION	as above with variation to lyrics in the last two phrases	
CHORUS	as above with variation to the solo lyrics at the end	
SHORT INSTRUMENTAL INTERLUDE	confirming the melody sung by the chorus	
CHORUS	as above - fade out at the end	

Instrumental introduction:

Maskanda characteristically begins with a short, rhythmically free, virtuosic passage which is intended to prepare the audience for what is to come. The scale is established through the articulation of a melodic pattern which characterises the song. In this song, Phuzekhemisi begins with a short, simple, descending, melodic phrase on the guitar which begins on E, moves down to B (which is repeated a number of times), and then descends to F#. He thus establishes the key as B major, through the tonic, and fourth and fifth degree of the scale. The guitar is then joined by the concertina with a slightly ornamented version of this phrase. Thus while he uses the principle associated with maskanda, the diatonic harmony, and the 'metred' melodic pattern gives his introduction a western flavour.

Vocal Introduction:

Phuzekhemisi deviates from the standard structural format of maskanda with the inclusion of this section in the song. It is important to note, however, that the dominance of the choral part in this section is indicative of what is to follow. While this section begins in the 'call and response' style associated with Zulu work songs, the chorus completes the section on its own. The relationship between the voice parts, and the descending melodic lines are characteristic of Zulu vocal music, giving this section a decidedly Zulu sound.

Instrumental Interlude:



This section not only serves as an introduction to the main body of the song, but also provides the foundation for the rest of the song, continuing unrelentingly from this point until the end. It begins with an ornamented version of the part which is sung by the chorus, played on guitar. The guitar is then joined by the concertina and drums. (On the recorded version a drum machine is used.)

Solo Section.

In this section Phuzekhemisi mirrors the invocation in the words with a melody which rises to the word '*imbizo*', falling only on the second syllable. This phrase is repeated and then answered with three statements of the next melodic idea. The symmetry is maintained by a final statement (slightly varied) of the first melodic phrase.

Chorus.

This section is best explicated diagrammatically :

Chorus																								
Solo																								
Pulse	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx

In this section there is tension between the solo part and the chorus. The chorus is supported by a clearly articulated rhythmic pulse in the drum part. Thus strengthened, it contains and controls the solo part. As is clear from the diagram both the chorus and the solo part make six statements. The section begins with a balanced alternation between chorus and solo. However the last four statements in the solo part are much shorter, and are heard as interjections which make no impression on the regularity of the chorus part.

Izibongo.

In the light of the preceding section the *izibongo* can be seen as something of a contradiction. The brevity of this section is, however, an indication that it serves primarily to give the song the mark of maskanda.

As the diagram indicates the rest of the song is simply a repeat of previously heard material.

This song articulates a strong call for Zulu unity at various levels. It is common practice for maskandi to clothe their public commentary with ambiguity, and in keeping with this practice the message in this song is multi-layered. While there is an element of dissent in the words : "We pay for this earth. Do you not see us living on it? Every year we pay money for the fields to the chief", these words also present a challenge to those who contest the tribal affiliations on which Zulu ethnic nationalism depends.

While there might be some measure of ambiguity in the lyrics of this song, this is dissipated through musical procedure. Furthermore, the musical procedures associated with the commercialization of maskanda provide the means through which strong sentiments of Zulu unity are evoked. Both the chorus section, and a clearly articulated rhythm in the drums were introduced as part of the commercialisation process. The chorus occupies a central position in the song. The melodic pattern sung by the chorus is heard from the first instrumental section right through to the end of the song. It provides an inflexible and uncompromising foundation for the song. Together with the support of the drums it dominates and controls the musical ideas which are presented by the solo voice. Furthermore, the drums and the *ingoma* dancing which is associated with the rhythm, work in cooperation with the chorus section, and together they perform unity within the social body, marked here as Zulu.

The detailed and interactive multi-vocality of solo maskanda has been simplified in "*Imbizo*". Consequently, the expression of individual experience has been replaced by broader, stereotypical statements of Zulu identity which are frequently used to incite ethnic nationalist sentiment. Furthermore, "*Imbizo*" is given the appearance of maskanda through the formal structure, and it thus falls easily into a category used by the record industry to mark it as 'Zulu', and as 'traditional'.

Phuzekhemisi's music reflects a process of negotiation in which identity is constructed and asserted through the 'management' of an available history. "(T)he re-interpretation of tradition, of selected master metaphors, is the

fundamental strategy the displaced, marginalised and powerless of Africa's neo-colonial societies mobilize in the service of the creation of a positive self-identity" (Erlmann, 1996a:135). The process of re-interpretation is shaped in ways which inevitably reflect a hegemony which was very much part of the colonial ethic. What is more, this colonial ethic was firmly entrenched in South African power structures when the Afrikaner nationalist government came into power, and in turn informed many of the ideological paradigms which have motivated the course taken by the Inkatha Freedom Party.

The audience to which Phuzekhemisi's music is primarily directed is Zulu. The direction of commercial music towards specific ethnic groups is one of the many legacies of apartheid which remain within contemporary South African society. The music industry and the SABC³ are both burdened with a history in which the construction of ethnically defined groups played a decisive role in shaping their policy of categorising music according to the social groupings of the apartheid era. Phuzekhemisi traces his musical lineage back to Phuzeshukela, and in so doing, he marks his music and performance style with a formula for success which takes full advantage of ethnic divisions in society. The signifiers of difference within his music, serve not only as symbols of Zulu identity. They have and continue to be co-opted by the music industry and the SABC to feed a place in the market which grew out of the divisions in society imposed by the apartheid regime. As a public site of cultural symbols, the music industry and the SABC, were carefully monitored and controlled within the boundaries of apartheid ideology. Music was marketed and aired with a particular ethnic group in mind : "You must appreciate different tastes - a Zulu can't groove on Shangaan music.....similarly I couldn't hear too much of what is played on Radio Zulu being right for playlisting in Springbok" (Billy Forrest in Andersson, 1981:56).

³SABC - South African Broadcasting Corporation

“Radio Bantu, as the collective services (in the major African languages) were called, started operating on 1 January 1962, and within less than a decade it had grown into one of the most powerful radio stations on the African continent” (Erlmann, 1996a:252). Radio Bantu had two main objectives: to attract as many listeners as possible, and to confirm apartheid ideology by “emphasising the alleged communal nature of black society” (Erlmann, 1996a:258). Commercial maskanda, was suitably manipulated to serve both these objectives. The success of Phuzekhemisi’s musical career can in many respects be attributed to the fact that his music fulfilled the objectives both of the record industry and the SABC. Phuzekhemisi has had considerable support from the influential SABC radio and television announcer, Bhodloza (Welcome) Nzimande.

“Five years ago, in 1993, a softly spoken Maskandi musician called Phuzekhemisi, whose real name is Johnson Zibikwakhe Mnyandu, entered the local music scene after much encouragement from Welcome Bhodloza Nzimande, the station manager of Ukhosi FM (formerly known as Radio Zulu)” (Gallo official biography of Phuzekhemisi).

Nzimande is widely recognised in the Zulu community as a promoter of ‘traditional Zulu’ music, and particularly maskanda. He presents programmes on television (Ezoduma) and radio. Through his tributes to Nzimande in song⁴, Phuzekhemisi acknowledges Nzimande’s status as one who not only reflects public opinion but who also has a considerable amount of influence over it.

Bhodloza’s story :

“I was born near Richmond in a very small rural place. My father was a concertina player as were other members of my family. Some of our friends were also concertina or guitar players. I also played a bit when I was very young, still at school. I pursued my education even though some wanted to go and work

⁴“WeBhodloza” on the album Ngo’49 (Track 15), and “Sidedele” on the album Imbizo are both addressed to Bhodloza Nzimande.

in the garden to earn some money and buy nice shirts and stuff. But we did not forget our styles when we moved around to the other neighbouring places; we would compete, playing our instruments in the traditional styles. We grew up like that, singing the traditional styles but going to school as well, getting the western side as well as the traditional side.

When I was working as a teacher I was introduced to the urban type of music, but I had this background of the traditional as well. And when I came to the SABC in 1978 on the first of August, I eventually came across a traditional type of program and I said, "I think I can do something better here, because this is the type of music that I knew from when I was very young." I felt that I understood the music better than most of the guys at the radio station. The managers of the SABC at that time were white people and the announcers were black guys who were mostly born in the urban areas. These guys didn't know the traditional music and so I had an advantage of having a rural background. I knew that the people who were in love with this music were so many, but they didn't have any exposure. I said, "Let me be the person, like the messiah to this type of music." I did it and it was a great success. In 1982 I declared the year of the traditional music where for the first time we had some artists reaching the gold status with sales over 25000. Those other announcers couldn't believe it!

Maskanda is very close to me. When I opened my eyes, when I started hearing, I heard maskanda. The most striking feature for me is the message in maskanda. If somebody is talking or is doing something before a person who is maskandi, the maskandi is able to just compose a song which describes exactly the action of that person. Sometimes I even say, "Don't do something which is bad in front of a maskandi, something that you would regret. Because if it was done in front of a maskandi guy, he will compose a song and he will perform it and you might hear it on the air. When people say, "Oh so and so, is that you!" It is just like that. Like Phuzeshukela, one of the maskandi, he talked about something that happened in a certain family where the woman became in love with two guys of the same mother. And he was advising that this is a wrong thing that you are

doing, so and so - calling the name of the girl. "You are making these people quarrel. They are coming from the same mother; this is wrong". And the names, they are mentioned.

Even political things. Of late they sing of things they are not happy with, or things that are happening in politics. But previously, in the apartheid times, it was difficult for the black person to talk. They were scared of saying things that might mean they would be put into jail. They were scared of mentioning anything in the music in case the government heard that and know that *you* said it. It would only be very secretly done, in a way that is hidden. Today they still sing about the political things but.... there is a guy who says, "My uncle, come back, lets talk. It doesn't mean that if we are in different denominations that we should quarrel." In essence they are not referring to denominations they are referring to political parties.

During the time when we were about to be free from apartheid there were many maskandi people that sang about politics. It was not very hard at that time, because everyone was talking about getting rid of apartheid, "We want freedom, everybody wants freedom." So the maskandi, they started singing about freedom saying that there is no way that we can keep quiet about this when other sections of the community are already talking about it.

Maskanda is very much Zulu music, although it just depends on the developments that have taken place, because maybe previously I told you that it got worked out very extensively on the mines. When we got these guitars now, because they are not of the origin of the people, the concertina as well, it depends because in the mines you can't say it is only Zulu that is there. You find that Swazi and Xhosa is also there. Xhosa's also play the concertina, but in the tune of the Xhosa people and they do their own thing in their own way, but perhaps it has not been exposed as we have exposed it here. As I am doing the program, with the television as well, I call upon these guys on the side of the Xhosa's and the Swazi's, "Come guys, come and do the work". Because I

started it here and I made it big, and I think that perhaps on television because I reach a bigger audience than in the radio. I call and they come, some of them also appear and they participate in the traditional trends.

*I think the Zulu people feel a great satisfaction when they hear maskanda on the radio because it is their own music, even though there are parts of it that are borrowed from western culture. Zulu people are very creative. Although this guitar doesn't belong to them, they tune it and sometimes they made their own guitars with tins, imitating what they see, imitating this guitar which originated from overseas. Being creative, they make their own tunes to suit their styles. They do it that way and when it plays, they know this is **our** thing, its just our thing. Although the origin is from somewhere else we have modified it to be our own thing.*

The type of guitar playing and the izibongo, they can be identified as being from Zulu history before. It is important for maskandi to say who they are and where they come from and who their father is and the chief of that place, because they want to popularise their place and themselves; to compete and have that sense of belonging : I am doing it for my people. I am doing it for my father, and to show off even to the girls, that we are the right people. If I court a girl, or propose love to a girl, I am the right person. Don' t chose there, chose here. And also to be proud of where you come from, this is who I am. A sense of competition and belonging, that is what masakndu is.

Maskanda must have izibongo and the guitar as well. There are those that do not have izibongo, like Sipho Mchunu of Juluka. He doesn't have izibongo, but it is still maskanda because of the guitar and the way he plays. But there are very few of those who do not have izibongo.

The instrumentation sometimes differs, sometimes they have got guitar, concertina, violin. The others, that are not modern enough, isithontolo⁵ and all

⁵ isithontolo - mouth resonated musical bow

those, most of the maskanda's don't use them anymore. Because this type of music that we play on the air now, it's a bit on the side of the sales now, on the commercial side. These guys would like to live by playing this. As I said to them in the beginning that if they are unemployed and they play this music they can live by just playing this music. I had a vision that if unemployment is growing up, those people who are good at that, let them live by just having that there, their music.

Maskanda makes you feel good. It is not simply for the individual; it is also for the whole community. When people see me they recognize me because I present this program on television and they say "Yes this is Bhodloza. We see you on television; we don't miss that programme; it is our programme." They identify with that.

Because of our history it is important to encourage this, especially when it comes to the economy. It is important that we don't order everything that we have from overseas. We need to have some things that are home grown; things that we are going to be proud of and sell to other countries. During the time of the apartheid most of the music that we used to love, came from overseas and you would find that on the radio station they would mostly play the overseas artists. Our people would say, "No! why you playing this local thing, this traditional? This means that we are not yet civilised. You must play this English type of music from overseas." It is really not viable for our country's economy. It is good that we develop most of the things that we can do for ourselves. Like the Americans, they promoted their own products and you find the money that is got when you sell these things, is coming to America. There are people who are still holding on to the things from overseas; we have not won the battle. We need a proper awareness campaign, where people should be educated. Not an imposition type of thing, but in order that in a long term we live by the things that have been grown here in this country. We must make culture acceptable and develop it in such a way that it becomes a good thing to know and people want it all the time. Re-engineering is the way to go.

Our own thing is very valuable out there and if we don't take the initiative of leadership in our own thing you find the other people will come and take it and sell it outside and then they bring it back to us and they sell us our thing!

*Traditional music is not only maskanda. You have that mbube; Solomon Linda in the early fifties, he had a song which was called mbube. It went overseas and they re-invented it, they called it "Wimowe", and they sold it in SA. We **bought** it, and it was our own making!*

We play all different music at this station because we feel that people must know what is happening all over the world. And our artists can gain some ideas from this for composing; they can learn from these artists. Like kwaito, they borrowed some of the trends from overseas, this rap, and they had their kwaito. There is a way of learning something as an artist. If you don't hear anything from other countries we will remain what we are and we won't learn from other things that are happening all over and we are talking global village now.

As you know I am a man of the African renaissance. I am an Africanist and I have a belief that in order that you be competitive world wide, you better start at home and show your competitiveness and power at home first, and then you can go and compete elsewhere. I still believe that renaissance is uniting the people in this country so that whenever they go out they go out realising that they belong to South Africa; they belong at home. I don't think that it would be forgotten that I belong to the Zulu. We have to have our own common focus as a nation of South Africans, but we know our roots are not the same. Anybody must keep their roots. It very difficult when you don't know who your father and who your mother is. But we must go forward in diversity. We are united in diversity, it is no problem. Now that there is this coalition government, you see now when you go to any function of this coalition government, you find that the leaders of the ANC are there and the leaders of the IFP are there, together. They are strategizing together and therefore the issue of having the followers of those people who are coming for the ANC and the IFP planning to beat

Inkatha or beat ANC is diminishing. In fact it is really moving out of style. If there are those people who still believe in that, it means they are gaining something out of it.

I am Zulu, but it should not be taken for a political party. You can be ANC, a Zulu; you can be IFP, a Zulu. It should not be that there are Zulus for this party, that's out. You are Zulu and it ends there; it doesn't have a tag of a political party. They would love to have it that way. My choice of political party is according to my choice as a person, not because I am a Zulu.

Tradition brings the people together. That we used to do these things in this way, we respect this way from long ago, from our forefathers who brought us up. This is the trend that we've got to follow as the type of people who we are. We also believe, some of us, in the ancestors; that they are still looking at us although they are dead. So these are the traditions which they left for us.

Traditions and customs, you have to abide with those traditions and customs because we are those clans and we belong to a particular tribe and the like. So they unite people, giving them a sense of belonging to the same tradition and these things are practised when people gather together. You see in some areas, you find that the people come to urban areas but they still slaughter and the people who have been living in these areas for a long time are startled. This is something which goes with tradition and custom and there is nothing we can do about it. Tradition follows you wherever you are, although there are those people who never tasted it because they stay in the urban area from day one and they are not used to traditions anyway. You find that those people are different from us then.

Phuzekhemisi comes from the region where I was born. He comes from sort of South Coast. I am from Richmond but on the Umkomazi side and he comes from Umkomazi this side; so the styles are more or less the same. I grew up in the midst of the maskandi people, so when Phuzekhemisi approached me, I encouraged him. I also advised him on an ongoing basis, that if you want to compose a song that is going to have an impact, you need a striking message - a

message that is going to get through to the minds and hearts of the people. I advised him in this way, and that is why he became so successful. In the end he came up with 'Imbizo', and he sang about politics but in a very hidden way. It went into the hearts of the people, and they started talking about it. The lyrics themselves were moving with the rhythm of the song in a proper way and that is why it got into the townships. Everywhere people started singing about it. People from the Sotho speaking stations told me that there was some requests for that song even from the Sotho people who could not understand the language. I have advised many maskandi, like mixing the guitar and the concertina, that was my idea. When I started it, usually we had guys who were just playing guitar and they did not mix these to have an ensemble of that type. Some were trying the violin and the guitar and I said, "No, this doesn't click. Drop this violin one. A good mix would be the concertina, guitar and bass guitar." And they went on and they did that, and right up to now they still do it. I also went out my way to encourage the girls. "Take your place, girls. There are songs that need you." That took about three years to catch on. That is how it happened, my involvement in music became so great.

(Personal Interview, 1999)

The complex interaction between the political, social and economic imperatives which motivate the production and dissemination of commercial maskanda are revealed similarly in Nzimande's story and Phuzekhemisi's music. In each instance 'tradition' emerges as an emotive concept through which the authenticity of a particular notion of contemporary Zulu identity is sought. Nzimande's statement, "*A sense of competition and belonging, that is what maskanda is*", is a succinct description of the tension which is inherent in the commercial production of music which carries the label of 'tradition'. Nzimande characterises maskanda through a discourse on tradition which is dependant on the polarization of the concepts of tradition and modernity, of urban and rural experience, and African and western practices. Maskanda has, however, always been characterised by a combination of practices which can be sourced both in

the past and in the present. It is, and has always been, a musical style which is shaped by transition and change, and which therefore resists being bound within a static time, space or place.

While Nzimande's statements regarding the current relationship between the ANC and the IFP suggests that he believes that a more tolerant political environment than that which has been experienced in the past is developing, he clearly recognises the appropriation of ethnic identity as a political strategy.

The marginalised status of Zulu people over the past century intensified the need for identity markers through which a sense of belonging could be established. Tradition effectively fulfills this need, by engaging the imagination in the construction of a 'home-space'. The power of Phuzekhemisi's music and performance style lies in its capacity to evoke the experience of belonging. When this experience is given definition in terms which coincide with the rhetoric of Zulu nationalism, Phuzekhemisi's music becomes a potential agent in a political power struggle.

CHAPTER 5.

CONTRADICTIONS AND PARADOXES.

"Ex-Mkhumbane inhabitants often reminisce fondly about the place of their youth, to which they refer nostalgically as 'Ezintabeni', literally 'on the hills' (Dlamini,1998:27).

"The new global cultural economy has to be seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order" (Appadurai,1990:6).

In this chapter I explore two areas which can be broadly described as Madala Kunene's world and music, and Madala Kunene in 'world music'. Each 'area' is shaped around a 'story' constructed out of interviews and my own research encounters. Through these stories I hope to draw the reader closer to Madala Kunene's own experience and to illuminate some of the processes through which meanings are attached to his music.

Madala Kunene's public image is that of a maskandi who had recently 'broken' into the international market. According to reports in the press¹ and on the Internet, his music appears to be indisputably positioned within the 'genre'. However, his music is clearly a mixture of styles and his connection with maskanda occurs outside the framework of commonly understood boundaries of maskanda performance.

Madala Kunene reveals a different view of 'tradition' to that expressed in the life stories and music of the other two musicians discussed so far. Both Shiyani Ngcobo and Phuzekhemisi connect the notion of tradition to an idea of

¹ See appendix 4 A and B

Zuluness as rooted in a rural 'space', albeit for different reasons. Madala's version of tradition is deeply entwined with his experience of urban life.

Much of the discourse on South Africa and its peoples reflects an historical obsession with the notion of racial, and more specifically, ethnic identity as fundamental to people's perceptions of themselves and of others. Nevertheless, the development of a diverse black urban South African culture bears testimony to the growth of a proletarian community which defies the fundamentalist notion of ethnicity as the basis of social structures. Through his music, Kunene confronts the construction of his identity by outside forces, and in the process presents a challenge to the idea that tradition is a static body of practice which connects all people of Zulu descent.

Madala's World and Music:

"It was one day when I was a small boy, I will never forget it. No-one can ever forget something like that !

We were living at Mkhumbane at a place called Jibhakhoti, there outside Durban, not so far, you could take a long walk to the centre of Durban. That is the place where I was born. We were all sorts living there at Mkhumbane; some were teachers, like my father, Themba Kunene. He was a teacher but he left us when I was still young and moved to Johannesburg to open a school in Randfontein. Others were casual workers, all sorts and Indians and Coloureds too, but mostly Africans.

Those were different times. I would play in the streets, marbles and those kind of games and we would make wire cars. We had no money so we made our own things. I never went to school - I used to just go some other place and play with the boys instead of going to school. Sometimes when we were sitting and people were drinking, my father would play his guitar for us, my grandmother and my brother, and then I would just sit still and listen and then fall asleep. My father

he brought music into our home because he was a guitarist. He was not playing maskanda. No, his was township blues and jazz, his style was like those from Sophiatown. When he sang it was African music, but blues - like the American music of the time. There was a guy staying near our house, he was called Brush. That guy, he was from Zululand. He was playing maskanda.....but me I was always hearing the friends of my father when they came to visit and sit down and rehearse and sing very nice.....that music he played was very popular in the 50's.

Then one day I say "Ay- I must play this guitar!" So I made my own guitar. I take a tin, the one the oil come in, and open it up, and then shine up a plank and then put four strings, not three, just four one time. We used a kind of wire for the strings, you know the one they use for fishing. And then I play, and my father was happy he just said, "Oh ya". I had grown up now, I could play nikabheni like my older brother. We would go around now and earn money playing on the street and people would throw some coins to us. There was a place known as EmaKhaladini, down there near Abrahams, where we used to perform....we would come back with mounds of coins and then walk home to Jibhakhoti and share the pickings.

Ay, things changed for us on that day.... they came, not just one ... maybe sixteen of them, with guns. The white guys carrying the big gun with a knife in front ...something like you have never seen before. I was scared. And then came the Saracen, like a big caterpillar and they put the chains this side and that side and the house is moving..and all the furniture it is inside.....you move and the house is moving too. They pulled the house down and we cried. I just watched it... that was where I was born... but today your house must fall down...I can't do anything, I just watch it. And then you just sleep here on the ground and when it rain.....now you just can't forget that, no its not easy to forget."

Mkhumbane developed on the outskirts of Durban in the years preceding World War II. Positioned on the peripheries of Durban, but in relatively close proximity to the hub of economic activity, it offered a home space to many people from the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal who converged on the city in search of work. The reconstitution of South African society through urbanisation was a natural consequence of a rapidly developing cash-based economy which depended on a large labour force. Despite legislation which severely restricted the movement of members of this labour force, communities had begun to emerge on the outskirts of major cities. These marginalised people who had previously lived in communities which could easily be defined in terms of ethnic identity, began to emerge as a constituted whole, united through common experience. In Madala Kunene's early years, Mkhumbane was home with all the connotation of belonging. He expresses no sense of Mkhumbane as a temporary place between the city and the farm. Instead he sees himself as deeply and fundamentally rooted in the space embraced by Mkhumbane. Even though Madala was very young on that fateful day described in his 'story', his experience and memory of Mkhumbane have played an important role in shaping his musical style.

Along with the different people who came to live in Mkhumbane, came many contrasting experiences of musical performance. Existing scholarship on urban township music in South Africa has identified the inter-relationship between music brought into the country from outside by touring musicians and in the form of recordings, and the pre-industrial musical forms which were part of the lives of people already living in the country (Coplan, 1985; Erlmann, 1991, 1996a; Ballantine, 1993). The integration of various imported musical resources, such as American Jazz, Ragtime and Blues with the song and dance forms of pre-colonial times produced a rich and diverse urban cultural heritage for musicians like Madala Kunene. The community at Mkhumbane were drawn together through and around this heritage in a moment which is captured in Madala's memory and referred to as 'tradition'. Madala's sense of 'tradition' and his claim to it, rests

within the memory of belonging to and being part of a structure which defied the marginalised status afforded to people on racial and ethnic grounds. This 'tradition' incorporated practices which accommodated, and gave expression to, primary conceptual categories on which modern urban life depended. The customs and rituals, such as the rite of passage, which had previously served to position people within a community held together by a common history, were replaced by practices which marked individual status in terms which were relevant to an urban landscape. *Nikabheni*, loosely translated as 'busking', was one such practice. While it provided a source of income vital for many adults who were unemployed, it was also a mark of status for young boys who were now in a position to contribute to the family coffers. "In the absence of traditional institutions and rites of passage marking the transition from boyhood to adolescence, the *nikabheni* social performance practice had come to play an important role in the lives of Mkhumbane children" (Dlamini, 1998:47).

The name *nikabheni* reflects the process of transformation which was taking place within African society : it combines the isiZulu word, *nika* meaning, 'to give', with the English, 'a penny' - and thus bears the literal translation, 'give a penny'. This busking tradition, and his father's performances, are at the core of Madala Kunene's musical style. However the events which followed the destruction of the Mkhumbane settlement in October of 1959, also had a marked impact on the development of his style.

Not only were homes and belongings shattered and crushed in this act of destruction, but so too was the spirit and soul of the community. Fragmented and compacted into inadequate housing structures with strangers, people were resettled in various demarcated areas away from the city centre. Madala's family was relocated to KwaMashu three months after the destruction of their home.

"After three months they came with a big truck and they take two families here and two families there and just drive there all the way past Durban North to KwaMashu. Some families were in G Section others in L section.... for me I no longer knew where my neighbours from Mkhumbane were staying. For the government it was time to break the black people up. It was their plan because they saw that we were getting strong and clever. They gave four families, four rooms.. and we were five in one family! Before that time my mother was selling fruit and now she can't do that... you can't sell on the road, the police take you.....Apartheid! It was the main killer, the main killer!"

"The legislation of the 1950's, and the official violence that implemented it, put some of the final touches to the consolidation of the apartheid state"

(Ballantine,1993:7). People like Madala and his family, were pushed into a vacuum in a dehumanising process which was inevitably to take its toll on performance practice. In the sixties Madala devoted most of his time to his other passion, soccer, playing guitar only on a casual basis at wedding celebrations and parties.

"I was not thinking of music as a job, for full-time so I can have money. I was selling fruit and playing soccer and only sometime play my guitar and rehearse a bit. For music I was thinking very late ...it was only after I got shot in the leg by the police.....we were playing cards on the street in town and they came we ran... we were always scared of the police..and I got shot in the leg. Now I was lucky the bullet just went straight through... but I could not play soccer anymore. In 1979 I met a guy called Duzé Mahlobo and we just do music straight. In 1981 I was in a band, "Songamasu" , with 'Doc' Mthlane and Muntu Mkhize and some other guys playing brass. The music we played was not like I am doing now - we played kwela, mbaqanga and sometimes we imitate the Beatles... 'Its Been a Hard Days Night'. That time, we also imitated a band called "Osibisa" and sometimes people from America, and Earl Klug. Then after only one year 'Doc' went back to Jo'burg and the band was finished. From this time I just started to compose my own songs. Then in 1985 I played with sister Busi Mhlongo at Hotel California there in Florida Road...I was there with my guitar doing one session in Busi's group, "Twasa", and the introduction for

her song on Jewish harp. After that show I just do one solo set by myself. It was the first time for me to play on stage like this, and people put money right there, a donation for me. From here I got a show at the Hermit restaurant and that is when I thought of the name, "Isanusi"². You know I am a sangoma; I have done the training for that; I know how to heal. For some songs the spirits drive my music, like 'Abangoma' and 'Vumela baPhansi'. I used to open my set with this song, calling the ancestors to be with us and let the performance happen properly. 'Abangoma' just came to me in my sleep, I woke up and I had this song."

Abangoma: (Track 16)

Weangoma	Sangoma (calling the attention of the sangoma)
<i>Itwasa lenumaligula</i>	Your student is sick
<i>Kufanele lihlatshelwe</i>	We need to slaughter the cub of lion
<i>Izinyane lengonyama</i>	(the sangoma would refer to a goat as the 'cub of a lion'.)
<i>Siyolithathaphi bo ?</i>	Where are we to get it from?
<i>Zinyane lengonyama</i>	The ancestors must provide

Bheki Mkawayne³ and Nathi Kunene⁴ expanded on the meaning of this song as follows:

"What is being said here is this: You, our ancestors if you really want us to slaughter a goat, you must provide. We are prepared to do it for you. We will offer its life to you for you to take.

You see when we slaughter a goat, it is not us killing it; it is the ancestors, they take the life of the animal away. That is why we feel good when we do this

²Isanusi is alternative to the isiZulu term sangoma meaning, 'diviner'

³ Bheki Mkawayne is a close friend of Madlala Kunene. He is a successful actor and playwright who performs locally and abroad.

⁴ Nathi Kunene is related to Madala Kumene. He is a local actor and playwright.

thing, because it means that the ancestors are with us. If it happens that you slaughter a goat and it does not make a sound, it means the ancestors did not accept it. We get excited if the animal screams because then it means the ancestors are here..... even in my family when they slaughter a goat they say, "Did it scream? Yes... there you are; good, it was well done" (Personal Interview, September, 1999).

'*Abangoma*' is shaped as an intonation emulating the experience of a ritual ceremony. Both the rhythm and the melody are almost static. The melody moves by close intervals in a descending pattern which is incessantly repeated through most of the song, being punctuated only by improvisatory outbursts from the backing singers. By positioning himself, not as a commentator of the event, but within it, Madala enacts the ceremony, breaking down the borderlines between the imagination and reality, so that in the moment of performance the music becomes the event.

"Dreams ...play a significant role in the lives of individuals whose loyalty to the ancestor religion remains strong..... as Bengt Sundkler has asserted, it is at the 'dream level of life' that a great many black South Africans of varying religious orientations 'experience their deepest conflicts and somehow try to come to terms with them'"(Erlmann, 1996a:301).

In the context of Madala's life experience and 'world view', '*Abangoma*' must be read not only as the reconstruction of an event but also as part of a process through which Madala makes meaning of his life and constitutes a sense of self. Through the dream experience, and its realisation in the song, Madala integrates "the self in the overarching entity of the ancestral lineage" (Erlmann, 1996a:302). '*Abangoma*' does not simply reflect Madala's perception of reality, it also shapes it. Through the idea of continuity with the past, he is able to claim an identity which lived experience has denied him. It is in this sense that the notion of tradition is employed as an underlying strategy of identification in the face of

social fragmentation. Madala connects himself to the past through his belief in the ancestors, since kinship relationships and his sense of community have been severely disrupted by the apartheid policy of 'divide and rule'. It is through music that Madala is able to create and experience his life in a way other than that which is prescribed by outside forces.

His belief in 'the ancestors' is a very important part of the way Madala sees his life and his music. Before each concert he burns incense and calls on his ancestors for approval. He associates the role of a musician with that of a healer and prophet. Bheki Mkawayne remembers hearing the story which reflects the belief that musicians transmit messages from the ancestors. According to the myth, people who had learnt to play the guitar had acquired the skill by sitting for twenty four hours on the grave of a musician. "And that is why it is believed that if you are a musician, you are a prophet who has been sent by the ancestors to help heal the people through music" (Bheki Mkawayne, Personal Interview, September, 1999). The mood and 'spirit' of each performance is thus not seen as being entirely in Madala's hands.

The sounds of Madala's childhood are in his memory, as a subconscious musical resource. These sounds inhabit a space which is nostalgically remembered as a haven from the outside world.

"Life was different in those times...and the music was different...I can only say.. It was nice."

Madala associates a sense of belonging with his early childhood at Mkhumbane, and he marks the practices of that time as 'tradition'. It is these memories that find expression in his music, and these memories which he regards as tradition. Through this idea of tradition, he connects himself to an ethic and a history which is not defined in terms of Zuluness, but rather in terms of Africaness.

"It is right to call my music 'traditional' because this is my tradition. It is not the tradition of the Zulu nation. No, its the African nation. I am a Zulu, because I am born here. But this name Zulu, I don't know where it comes from, because a long time ago all the people here were called 'abaNguni'. It is Zulu music for people abroad, and may be for people here, because they call me amaZulu... I sing in Zulu, I am not singing in another language because I don't know what another language is."

In formulating his idea of tradition, Madala by-passes some of the most dominant discourses on identity which have had a marked impact on his life. Through his music he marks his own space in terms which confront, and in fact negate, the ideological stance of his oppressors, simply by disregarding the categories on which their ideology depends.

Furthermore, even though Madala began his musical career imitating a broad spectrum of musical styles, he appears to have made a conscious decision to develop his own musical style from resources within himself, rather than from those which are publicly displayed through channels which are associated with dominant discourses of power. His sources are predominantly found within his own belief system, and within the oral traditions which he learnt as a young child. The originality of Madala's music arises out of his own personal interpretation of practices in the past and out of his refusal to assimilate or conform to any particular stylistic trend. The idea therefore that his music can be described with a 'style-defining' label like maskanda seems to contradict the essence of his music.

The source of Madala's music, its lineage, so to speak, is different to that of Shiyani Ngcobo and Phuzekhemisi. The lyrics of many of his songs can be traced to a category of Zulu oral poetry called *imilolozelo*, a broad category of children's songs, lullabies, games and nursery rhymes. Oral tradition is by nature constantly changing in response to the circumstances in which it is transmitted. It is a fluid practice which often embraces many versions of the same basic idea.

The versions of children's rhymes which are incorporated in Madala's music are layered with multiple meanings. He presents a series of images rather than a sequential account of events. Through this, one gets the sense that he has positioned himself as an agent of the ancestors and that these free flowing thoughts are the expression of his spiritual encounters. The format which he has adopted in these songs confirms the aesthetic intention of the music. This aesthetic intention is not to reflect reality but rather to ritualise reality through musical performance. The lyrics in these songs are characteristically idiosyncratic, with the juxtaposition of images which appear like sporadic free flowing thoughts rather than constructed argument.

Mata Gota Free (Track17) Translation and interpretation by Bheki Mkawayne.

This song has three parts :

The first part begins with a rhyme derived from a children's casting game :

<i>One, two, three</i>	One, two, three
<i>Mata gota free</i>	Martha got me free
<i>Free dayimani</i>	Free diamond
<i>Agoshin</i>	Out goes she
<i>Phutin</i>	Pudding (a substantial reward)
<i>No-ink</i>	No ink (No school-work)
<i>Ujege</i>	Dumpling (reward)

This rhyme has a similar turn of phrase and rhythmic lilt to a rhyme which I sang as a child growing up in a 'white' suburb of Durban in the 1960's. The intermingling of children from the 'black' areas with those in the 'white' areas was not uncommon since many Zulu children accompanied their mothers who were employed as domestic servants, into the white suburbs.

In the second section 'the set' changes. We are now in the home, probably in the evening, when the child is busy with schoolwork.

<i>Sabela bayakhubiza bo</i>	Respond because they are calling you
<i>Ubaba no mama</i>	Your father and mother
<i>Wen ulibele imetamorphosis</i>	You who are busy with biology

In these few lines Madala captures the atmosphere of family life. Education was not always revered and children were often called away from their schoolwork to see to chores which were an essential part of the running of the household. When parents called, children were expected to respond immediately. The reference to biology as "metamorphosis" is also symbolic of the impact that education had on these children. They learnt about things which were entirely foreign to their parents and in many respects were changed in ways which their parents could never anticipate.

The third section presents yet another picture.

<i>Isispoki saphuka amathambo</i>	The skeleton has broken its bones
<i>Bathi imelika bayikhomba ekhishini</i>	They say the American is in the kitchen
<i>Bathi hayi umuntu amnyama</i>	They say not a black man in the kitchen
<i>Bathi hayi umuntu onsundu</i>	They say not a black man in the kitchen
<i>Bathi hayi umuntu African</i>	They say not an African in the kitchen

Here Madala comments on the position of African men who worked in the homes of the white people. Many of these men who were employed in the white suburbs took on some of the affectations of their employees, and were seen as imitators of what was broadly termed an 'American' identity. They wore smart hats and suits and parted their hair in a style similar to that of the American dandies who toured the country in the 1950's with 'song and dance' troupes.

These people were called “*amazinti deskatasin*” (those who are exempt from native laws). They had special permits which allowed them to walk the streets of the town, even after hours, and they could buy liquor for their employees. These people postured a status which set them apart from other Africans, and the children saw them as superior.

“If your father was one of those people, you would be famous and all the kids would say...his father is exempted. But you didn't know what exempted meant... you would just see him with the English paper and that kind of groove on the hair... not anybody could part their hair. It was a sign of those exempted people.” (Personal Interview, Nathi Kunene, 1999)

‘*Mata Gota Free*’ reflects the fragmentation experienced by black South Africans through the juxtaposition of three frames imaging three separate events. These frames, however, are connected by a common ‘story’ - the story of a society in transformation, where old and new (past and present) interact in a process of reconstruction. Simon Frith argues that identity is “mobile, a process not a thing, a becoming and not a being” (Frith in Hall and DuGay, 1996:109). This perception of identity is most evident when there are marked shifts in the fundamental structures of social groups. This song expresses the experience of identity in process. It speaks of the development of an urban African identity, shaped by changing circumstances - employment, pass-laws and movement between ‘white’ and ‘black’ areas.

Madala has forged a musical style which resists categorisation in terms which have been constructed by dominant political, social and economic discourses. He presents an alternative image of reality which confronts the urban/rural dichotomy which has informed much of these discourses, and imaginatively constructs a place for the urban African which refutes the stereotypical images of identity which are so often used to justify the actions and agendas of mainstream power constructs.

In 1994, Madala's career took a different turn.

"I was performing at a club in Durban, called 'Africa Jam'. One night, just when I was finishing the set, playing the last song, 'Mata Gota Free', these guys from London came in. That was when I was introduced to Robert Trunz and Airto Moreira and Jose Neto. Robert liked my music, and later Sipho Gumede came to me and said, "Robert wants to listen to your music." So I went to the SABC and just record three tracks to send to London."

Robert Trunz is the founder of a British based recording company, M.E.L.T. 2000 - Music, Energy and Loud Truth⁵. He has been involved in the music industry for a number of decades. Trunz played a considerable role in building the British speaker company, B&W, which he expanded to include B&W Music. M.E.L.T 2000 is the label which has emerged out of B&W Music, being created by Trunz when he decided to branch out on his own. M.E.L.T. 2000 focusses on the production of music for the 'world music' category. As its name suggests, this company's main focus is on collaborative projects: "MELT 2000 is all about melting styles and talents". (Robert Trunz, Internet Article⁶)

Madala Kunene's first recording on an international label was motivated by his meeting with Robert Trunz. This CD was a compilation of South African music called Freedom Countdown, recorded under the B&W label. Madala has subsequently been involved in a number of recording projects for M.E.L.T.2000, most of which involve collaboration with artists from all over the world.

It is at this point that I come to my own 'story'.

⁵See appendix 1 A, B, C.

⁶ See Appendix 4 E.

At the beginning of April this year (1999) I had the opportunity to add some rather different pictures to my portfolio of Madala Kunene. A group of South African musicians had been gathered together to work on some tracks for a new M.E.L.T. 2000 release. Each day for nearly three weeks musicians from the greater Durban area embarked on a journey of approximately 150 kilometres into the KwaZulu-Natal midlands to a farm just outside Fort Nottingham. Mabi Thobejane, a percussionist most often associated with the band Amampondo, had come down from Gauteng for the project and was staying with Madala for its duration. In order to offer some relief from their rather tedious travel arrangements I agreed to fetch Madala and Mabi from Madala's home in Hillary, just outside Durban. Our stop over at the small farming town called Nottingham Road, for some chilli relish and fruit for lunch, seemed to cause something of a stir. In retrospect we must have been quite an unusual party, particularly Mabi, who is clearly no Zulu! With his Cossack-style pseudo fur hat, T-shirt, sarong and seed pods tied around his ankles, Mabi was propelled around the shop either by an excess of energy or the idea of chilli-relish.

The farm, tucked in valley blanketed with crisp clean air and graced with thoroughbred horses, provided a glaring contrast to the smog and refuse which are the by-products of high density living in the city. Despite the long journey, the musicians, eager for progress, settled down to work soon after their arrival. A studio, equipped with sophisticated, and no doubt extremely expensive recording equipment had been set up in a barn which I was told was the original site of Fort Nottingham. True or not, it certainly had the air of a colonial relic.

The recording was in the hands of Chris Lewis, an experienced sound engineer from the UK who, although a freelance engineer, works almost exclusively for M.E.L.T. In a very relaxed and friendly atmosphere (good for creativity), the days work began with a discussion of the tracks which had been recorded in the previous session. Chris spoke about some problems that he had with the rhythm on one of the cuts. He tried to explain how he saw the end product - the possibility of adding in a saxophone. He needed them to 'make space' for the possibility of a riff. This was not an easy song to work with and they practised it over and over again, eventually breaking for a few moments relief. The drummer burst out of the barn - "I can't get it! The parts don't mix". In the

transition between sections of the song the drummer had to execute a complete change of rhythmic pulse without interrupting the flow of the music.

After the breather they managed to get it down on tape, although 'Sibu' was still muttering to himself as they played the track back. They continued working on two other numbers. Each take consisted of an entire run through of each song with discussion in-between, except of course on the odd occasion, when someone froze in response to an obvious mistake.

Work continued until about 2 o'clock by which time everyone was desperate both for food and a smoke! Time for the chilli- relish Mabi!!

The farm hands were preparing to inoculate some of the horses, and lunch was sporadically punctuated with a parade of screeching stallions and anxious mares. Some of the farm hands took the opportunity to chat with the musicians and share some lunch.....

"The problem with that song is that it says that the government must sort out the crime."

"Ya I am not sure if we want to make it a political thing - and things are changing - everybody is fed up. I mean before - you see someone doing something - you just turn away. Now we are sick of it. No-one is just going to just watch anymore. If people see you coming with trouble they'll say - 'Hey what you doing ?'"

Mabi called to me across the courtyard, "Kathryn did you get a picture of me when we were playing inside? You must take one here in the sunshine, me and Madala."

Chris and I sat down on the grass with my recorder and his cell-phone to discuss the project, the music industry and MELT 2000.

Kathryn: What is your experience of South African music?

Chris: My first encounter with South African music was in 1996. I came down to do an intensive two week recording session at Downtown Studio in Johannesburg, just throwing everyone together to see

what would happen. There were some Cubans there as well. What we do is give the raw tracks to young people to re-mix, so that it gets into a whole new market. We want to spread the word really because then, hopefully, people buy that and then get interested in the original thing and buy that as well. We have got loads of recordings of traditional stuff, like the Transkei stuff... its totally traditional, totally pure. I am going to be mixing some time this year, here in Durban, this Transkei stuff and some other bits with a few over-dubs done by the guys themselves.

Kathryn : What is the idea behind your projects here in South Africa?

Chris : The whole point of being here is, not to exploit the musicians, that is for sure. It is to spread the word and to get the music out there. We are very conscious of trying to sell, not just in South Africa, but world- wide. It is important for these musicians like Busi (Mhlongo) and Madala to have their profile raised so that they can, for a start, make a living, but also get known, get out there and perform, pull in good audiences.

Kathryn : Do you feel that these collaborations are worthwhile?

Chris : These collaborations work well because most music has African roots anyway. Africa is known for certain types of guitar sounds, and a lot of people are familiar with it because of Paul Simon. He opened up the world's ears to South African music.

Kathryn: What are your feelings about Madala's title "King of Zulu Guitar"?

Chris: Madala is the king of Zulu guitar playing. He is probably the best, or one of the best guitar players.... best is hard to say, but he is a renowned guitar player from Zululand, and he also comes from quite a high family as well. So does Busi. They are both closely connected to the upper echelons of Zulu society. Busi is connected to royalty. Tribal things have been a problem in South Africa in the past because obviously the whites tried to divide the

tribes, to get them to fight. But it is important to keep your identity.

Kathryn: *How do you market Madala's music and these collaboration albums?*

Chris: *Well, you find channels of people who are interested in music from around the world. It is quite a big effort when you release a CD. You have to have a whole campaign. You have got to have a good publicity company... one that is good with music. You have to contact the TV and the radio and keep the pressure up. Radio producers and DJ's are very powerful people ... they hold the door to the public. So they can make or break you to a certain extent, so you have to be nice to them! There is a lot of compromising in trying to sell music.*

Kathryn: *Do you think the label 'maskanda' which has been attached to Madala's music is one such compromise?*

Chris: *Musicians are suspicious about labels. You don't want to be restricted by the style because if you say you are a maskanda musician and you play in a way that is not traditionally acceptable, people are going to criticise you for playing maskanda badly, or wrongly. Labels are sort of set in stone so if you play differently you are wrong. Musicians who earn their money by music, as opposed to traditional musicians... have to be free of categories in a way.. To draw from sounds from all over to get closer to what they hear in their head.*

Kathryn: *Can you explain what happens between this process here and the final release?*

Chris: *Well, here I am a sort of part producer as well as engineer, so my job is to make sure that its... well the musicians look to me to say yes or no, because it is hard when you are playing music to be detached. I will be doing the final mix on my own in England...*

there will be more work in England. As the engineer, I am concerned with the whole picture, unifying the sound. It is like painting a picture. Presumably the musicians wouldn't work with you if they didn't trust you. Madala is very keen that I use some keyboard and other things .. he is very much open to the idea of me recording over-dubs because he has heard what people do there and he likes it. And that is in the budget. There are a lot of people involved at every level of a project like this. It is insane what we are doing here, but it has worked out very well.

The final song recorded that day had a mixture of Zulu and English lyrics. Two singers had joined the project to sing the chorus; although they were hoping to get Busi Mhlongo to sing in the final version. They put this song down with a short introductory section on acoustic guitar, reminiscent of Madala's solo style with its short descending melody enriched by a poly-vocal accompaniment with close harmonies. The subtle alterations to the shape of the melody restrained the melody within well defined boundaries which were maintained throughout the piece, even when the other instruments joined in. This song seemed to work well and it did not take too long to complete the days work.

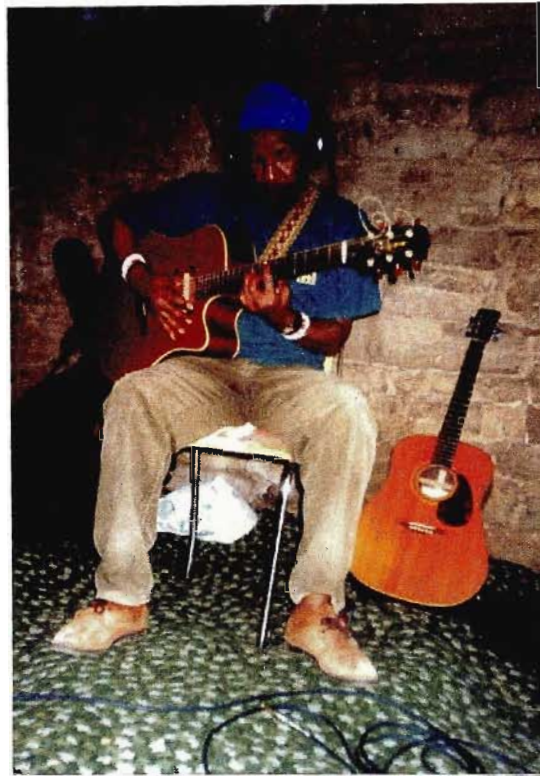
At about 5.30, with a sharp chill falling in the mist, we gathered ourselves together for the journey home. Mabi and Madala were relieved that on this occasion they could go straight home, rather than catch a lift in the combi with the other musicians who all had to be dropped off at different points around Durban. Madala lay back in his seat and was asleep before too long, but Mabi, only slightly subdued by the day's work, disappeared into his 'rhythm-world', tapping on the back of my seat as we drove home.



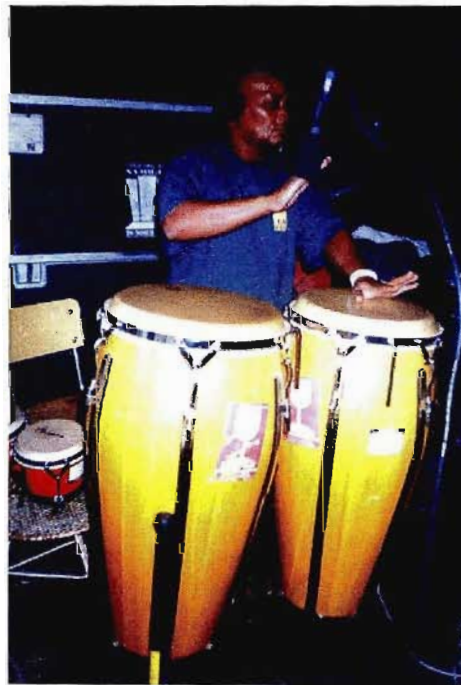
The barn which was converted into a studio on the farm at Fort Nottingham.



Chris Lewis behind the computer monitoring the recording process.



Madala Kunene during the recording session.



Mabi Thobejane during the recording session.



Madala and Mabi relaxing during the lunch break.



Sibú' (the drummer) getting some advice from Baba and Mabi

Embedded within the process of 'world music' production are a number of conflicting and paradoxically positioned ideas and motives. Much of the academic discourse on world music has focussed on the exploitative nature of such ventures, and indeed many of Chris Lewis's comments jar one's sensibility with the realisation that colonial ideology remains deeply entrenched and intertwined with the language of identity formation and systems of meaning-making, even within the most well-intentioned and 'liberal' of thinkers.

There is an inherent disjuncture between the aesthetic which drives the production of world music and the aesthetic which is behind the creative expression of musicians like Madala Kunene. The production of 'world' music involves a series of processes, and the musicians are only one part of this process.

During the recording sessions at Nottingham Road, Sibusiso Motaunge (bass), Sibongiseni Mndima (drums), Mabi Thobejane, (percussion), Baba Mokeona (guitar) and Madala Kunene (guitar and vocals), and two backing singers came together to work on ten cuts for an album, consisting of five numbers composed by Madala and five by Baba. It was clear, however, that the original musical ideas of each of these musicians were simply a starting point for this part of the process. The music was worked on and transformed throughout the recording process, with a number of 'takes' at various points along the way. The D.A.T. recordings, the material product of this venture, were the result of collaboration between all the musicians, and the engineer/producer, Chris Lewis. Chris's input was concerned primarily with the 'shape' of the music, while the musicians worked the musical ideas. Chris's unimposing manner gave the musicians the opportunity to work through their ideas without being pressurized to produce any particular sound or style.

"If I had to work with someone else, it may have been different. But I knew to work there at Nottingham Road with Chris the professional engineer would be good. I was happy for that."

However, all of the musicians were aware of the intention to produce a commercial album, and the musical ideas were modified to suit this overall objective.

The next step in this process involves the complete dislocation of the music from its source, as the mixing process and further over-dubs were to take place in the UK, with Chris Lewis providing the link between the stages. His role, and indeed the role of any engineer in projects of this nature, is extremely important. In many respects he 're-composes' the music as he puts the various tracks together. The music now takes on a new identity.

A further disjuncture occurs at the level of meaning making. The idea that projects of this nature are motivated by the desire to broaden people's experience may be in substantial conflict with the desire to create a product which will generate profit. The intention expressed by Lewis, to 'spread the word', reminiscent of the religious rhetoric of missionaries who also shaped a large portion of South Africa's music, invites the question: "Whose word is M.E.L.T. 2000 spreading here and why?" There can be no doubt that collaborative projects have boosted the careers of many South African artists. Certainly, as Lewis points out, Paul Simon's Graceland gave Ladysmith Black Mambazo unprecedented international exposure and can thus be seen as having boosted international interest in South African music generally. "Numerous international releases of South African music not mediated by Simon, or any other Western artists have followed Graceland" (Meintjes, 1990: 62). In this sense, collaborations can be viewed as a means to an end rather than an end in themselves. They provide an opportunity for musicians who are positioned outside the mainstream to gain entry to mainstream markets in the hope that they

will eventually be in a position to make a firm claim to their 'space' in more assertive and substantial ways. However, for so long as these projects are marketed as representative of the creative expression of musicians there exists a gross disjuncture between the aesthetic ideas of the musicians, and that of the industry. "Keil has argued for a dialectical relation in the appropriation of Black music by the dominant market" (Meintjes, 1990:67). While it has contributed to the "revitalisation of Black music" it has also been motivated by the need to maintain the relationship between dominant and oppressed, through stereotypical representations of Black identity which emerge as a "discourse of consensus and (imagined) consolidation, containing its identity in stereotypes" (ibid).

The essence of Madala Kunene's music is one of resistance. His challenge takes shape in the form of a complete denial of the imposed forms of dominant power structures, and yet here in collaborative projects such as these, his music is drawn into and becomes part of the dominant discourse. His individual identity is subsumed as a result of the inevitable compromise that arises out of the need to 'educate' potential consumers on their own terms. This process bears an uncanny resemblance to the process of colonisation which marked and shaped the social, economic and political history of South Africa. "What is crucial here is a view of world music industrialisation that views power relations as shaping forces in the production of musical styles and icons of cultural identity" (Feld, 1994:260).

Madala Kunene has been involved in various 'world music' projects under the M.E.L.T. 2000 label. Two CD's which are peculiarly his are the solo album King of Zulu Guitar Vol 1, and Kon'Ko Man, in which Madala Kunene is backed by musicians from South Africa, Brazil and England.

The King of Zulu Guitar Vol 1 was recorded at a farm near Ndwedwe approximately fifty kilometres north of Durban, and was released in 1995. It is reasonable to assume that the sleeve notes accompanying this CD are intended

to establish the authenticity both of Madala's music and of the recording. In the sleeve notes⁷ the authenticity of Madala's music is sought, not through an explanation of the music, but through positioning him as an authentic Zulu according to the stereotypical image of Zulus as warriors:

"Madala is self taught and lives in one of the many South African townships on the periphery of Durban, Natal - once the homeland of one of the most feared and proud warriors, the Zulus. Those who read or watch the news will have noticed the on-going violent clashes between the still-fighting factions of different political views" (Liner notes, *King of Zulu Guitar*, Vol. 1).

Through the words "still fighting", the reader is invited to make a bizarre connection between the Zulu warriors of old and contemporary township violence. This connection feeds directly into the long- indulged notion that Zulu people are inherently war-like.

The authenticity of the recording is sought by renouncing apartheid and oppression, by alluding to notions of Black empowerment, and by situating the recording process, not in a studio, but on a "farm in the KwaZulu-Natal hinterland" (ibid). The appropriation of a rural space completely by-passes Madala's lived experience in an urban environment, and positions him within the realm of Zulu 'tradition' as it is most commonly perceived. The denial of a black urban proletariat associated with colonial and apartheid ideology surfaces in this sort of representation of Madala's musical style.

The juxtaposition of fact and fantasy is used in this representation of Madala's music to persuade the audience by allusion, rather than assertion, that this

⁷ These liner notes are published on the Internet - see appendix 4 D.

recording captures a rare moment and offers an exotic and intimate experience of the world of a musician who is the supreme master of a style identified here as 'Zulu guitar'. It is as a Zulu guitarist that Madala finds himself associated with maskanda.

In an article entitled "*Chakide* - The Teller of Secrets : Space, Song and Story in Zulu Maskanda Performance", Carol Muller says, "'Zulu guitar' refers to a particular kind of guitar tuning and performance style that is practised by traditional musicians in KwaZulu Natal. It has been discussed in detail by Nollene Davies in.... *A Study of Guitar Styles in Zulu Maskanda Music* (1992)" (Muller,1995:129). Madala's music, however, does not follow the musical procedures referred to here by Muller. MELT 2000's use of the description 'Zulu guitar' must therefore be understood as referring to Madala's ethnic identity rather than his musical style. In the international arena the notion of Zuluness is closely linked to the idea of tradition, where tradition is diametrically opposed to that which is modern. This is substantiated by the contrived positioning of the music in the heart of rural KwaZulu-Natal.

Kon'ko Man⁸ is marketed as Madala's first solo project with MELT 2000; he composed all but two of the songs on this album. The songs are presented in a form which is the result of collaborative work between all the participating musicians and the producers - Robert Trunz , Pops Mohammed (South African musician), and Airtio Moreira - a Brazilian percussionist also signed to MELT. Once again the focus is on Madala's Zulu identity, albeit in 'diluted' form. The re-working of the original title "Qom-Qomane" to the westernised Kon'Ko Man reflects the ethos of this production. The song "Qom-Qomane" (Track 18), is essentially a play on the sound of Zulu words with very little importance attached to their meaning. In this sense this song feeds into the international market with a strong rhythmic drive accentuated by the articulation of words

⁸ See appendix 4 C

which sound exotic to an international audience. It is somewhat ironic that the clicks in the Zulu language (a well recognized point of fascination) which are frequently heard throughout this song are purposefully omitted from the title.

A direct connection is made between Madala's music and maskanda in an article entitled 'The Roots of Maskanda' published on the M.E.L.T. 2000 Internet site.

"Several M.E.L.T. 2000 artists - Madala Kunene, Skeleton, Shiyani Ngcobo and most unusually, a woman, Busi Mhlongo - are masterful exponents of maskanda."

On the Internet site the description of Madala as an "exponent of maskanda" is superimposed (over-dubbed) on an article entitled "The Roots of this Zulu Folk Music" by Sazi Dlamini⁹. Dlamini says, "As a social class, maskanda musicians have not embraced western values, have always sought to uphold traditional customs, and have constantly viewed their existence within the urban centres as temporary. They sang of their maidens and wives, the hills and rivers, and their cattle"(Internet, Melt 2000 site). Dlamini positions maskanda musicians as migrants who move into urban spaces in body rather than in soul, and whose connection with rural life is fundamental to their perception of identity.

Madala Kunene's connection with maskanda is tenuous, and it not without some reticence that I position him on the 'sound spectrum' of maskanda. Madala does not see himself as a maskanda musician. The other musicians selected for this study do not consider his music to be maskanda since it is not structured according to the procedures recognised as characteristic of the style.

Nevertheless his music has been connected with the label particularly in the international arena. "Madala himself does not like to be called a maskanda player although I do not fully agree with him. To me Madala is a top trance and African rock guitarist with deep folkloric roots" (Personal Correspondence with Robert Trunz).

⁹ See appendix 5 A

Taking my cue from Appadurai, I reflect on these representations of Madala Kunene's music as the constructed narratives of an imagined world which says as much, if not more, about those formulating the images as it does about those who are being imaged (Appadurai, 1990:9).

Appadurai identifies the problem with the construction of such narratives as being both "of a semantic and a pragmatic nature" (Appadurai, 1990:10); semantic in that descriptive terminology is understood in different ways within different contexts; pragmatic to the extent that the use of words, "may be subject to very different sets of contextual conventions that mediate their translation into public politics" (ibid).

In the context of 'world music', the interpretation both of representations of the music, and of the music itself, fluctuate as they are processed in a variety of circumstances. The meanings attached to the music do not arise out of an esoteric value system, but emerge rather as subjective reflections of the ideals, attitudes and experiences of the audience. The story told by the word 'maskanda' feeds different fantasies; the positioning of people in relation to the source of the music determines the way it is interpreted. Since 'world music', as a cultural commodity, is as much about products as it is about music, the imaging of maskanda by the industry must be seen as being motivated as much by economic directives as it is by artistic integrity. What is presented as information may in fact be a metaphoric reflection of the fantasies of those who are seen as potential consumers. What might be seen by some as an idiosyncratic juxtaposition of different individual musical styles (as in the Internet article mentioned above), may go unnoticed in an environment where the music is understood at a very superficial level.

"We are in the throes of a major trend where claims of 'truth', 'tradition', 'roots' and authenticity', under the cover terms 'world music'... are contrasted with practices of mixing, syncretic hybridisation, blending, fusion, creolisation,

collaborations across gulfs, all under the cover term 'world beat'" (Feld in Keil and Feld, 1994:264). In the case of the 'world music' projects of which Madala Kunene has been a part, the distinction between 'world music' as music of non-western origin, and 'world beat' as the best known and popular varieties of world musical styles (like reggae), is obscure. "This discursive merger of 'world music' and 'world beat' draws out senses of commodified otherness and of blurred boundaries between the exotic and the familiar, the local and global in transnational popular culture" (Feld in Keil and Feld, 1994:266).

Chris Lewis's comments on tradition fall in line with a popular perception of the notion of tradition. Lewis's notion of 'traditional' as "totally pure", implies that tradition is the expression of a primordial essence. The relationship between so-called traditional music and world music is riddled with contradiction. The sounds recorded in projects like the one witnessed at Nottingham Road, are ultimately released in the global arena, disconnected from their source and re-contextualised, so that meaning is positioned at various points between the act of music making and listening. The point here is not so much the idea that these encounters result in the 'contamination' of South African music, but that the labels attached to South African music by 'outside' forces, influence global perceptions of Zulu identity. Tradition is a complex and contingent concept which is frequently called upon to establish and confirm perceptions of identity and difference. The images of the past, which are embedded in the notion of tradition are referenced in ever increasing and diverse ways, in a world where established boundaries are perpetually being challenged. Appeals to the notion of tradition are made in a variety of contexts ranging from the political rhetoric of ethnic nationalists (as discussed in Chapter 4) to the consumer jargon of entrepreneurs. The idea of tradition is underwritten with meanings which are motivated as much by fantasy as they are by the reality of lived experience. This is reflected in the disparity between the content of so-called traditional practice and the meanings attached to these practices.

As a site which is characteristically transnational, 'world music' epitomizes many of the dilemmas which arise out of the increased flow of people, money, technology and ideology. McGrew's description of globalization as a "complex, discontinuous process which is driven by a number of distinct but intersecting logics" (McGrew in Hall, Held and McGrew, 1992:72), has particular significance in relation to the production and dissemination of 'world music'. The changing possibilities that arise out of a broadening of the contexts in which music is created and experienced has opened up a 'mine field' of intersecting directives which impact not only on our interpretation of music as social practice, but also on the way we understand and position ourselves in a rapidly changing world. As a result of the globalization process, time, space and place are referenced and experienced in new and complex ways which have radically altered the scope and interpretation of the established identity markers of history, community and locality. Events, actions and ideas in one part of the world impact in increasingly significant ways on the lives of individuals and communities in different and distant parts.

The 'world music' category embraces music of wide and diverse origin and style. It is characterised by a focus on music outside the mainstream, where the mainstream is understood as the metropole dominated by Europe, Britain and America. While the products of 'world music' are drawn from outside the mainstream, the industry itself is essentially driven by mainstream directives. In the 1980's, in response to the music industry's flagging growth rate, the term 'world music' was invented by the industry as a marketing strategy designed to alleviate the uncertainties within its own market base. "The term displays a peculiar, self-congratulatory pathos: a mesmerizing formula for a new business venture, a kind of shorthand figure for a new - albeit fragmented - global economic reality with alluring commercial prospects" (Erlmann, 1996b: 474). The tendency to 'romanticize' world music as evidence of the disintegration of boundaries established by imperial conquest, is firmly restrained by the recognition of the ubiquitous nature of global economic structures and the

commodification of musical performance. Economic directives 'set the stage', from which music is launched. Furthermore, they are connected with ideological constructs in a symbiotic relationship resulting in a network of agendas which must ultimately be read as part of a general contestation over positions of power. In the contemporary global context, this contestation takes shape in the radical re-structuring of the time, space and place. From a 'top-down' perspective 'world music' simultaneously satisfies economic and ideological intentions.

The re-structuring of the market can be seen as a strategy employed by the industry to maintain a disparate distribution of wealth, while at the same time re-defining difference on its own terms. In order to regulate the market, the music industry has, through necessity, reformulated itself. In the process it has assumed some of the characteristics of those who operate outside the mainstream. "World music represents an attempt by the West to remold its image by localizing and diversifying itself through an association with otherness" (Erlmann, 1996b:470).

The other side of the coin, so to speak, is that 'world music' offers both an opportunity for economic empowerment and a platform on which identity markers can be substantiated. It can therefore be seen as a site in which the relationship between centre and periphery is constantly being redefined, and where the division between the two is not always clearly demarcated. "The new global cultural economy has to be seen as a complex, overlapping disjunctive order, which cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing centre-periphery models" (Appadurai, 1990:6). The blurring of the division between centre and periphery is manifest in the peculiar presence of contradiction as a feature of world music.

This contradiction is reflected in the disparity between the imaging of Madala Kunene in world music and the reality of his lived experience. Madala has lived

his entire life in an urban environment. He recalls Mkhumbane as a vibrant urban community built on alliances which developed out of a common need to engage with western cash-based economic structures, and the shared experience of marginalization. His image of a 'home-space' arises out of his sense of belonging to this community. His early musical experience ranged from township jazz to the Beatles, and he began his musical career imitating this music.

In his formative years Madala's exposure to maskanda was limited. His experience of maskanda was primarily as the music of rural-based Zulu people who came to Mkhumbane in search of work.¹⁰ There are, however, some interesting, and perhaps unexpected, parallels which can be drawn between Madala's music and performance style and that of early maskanda. The forced removal of his family from Mkhumbane epitomises Madala's experience, as one of displacement and dehumanisation. His music and the relationship that it bears to early maskanda can best be understood in terms of this experience.

Like the early maskandi, Madala constructs a sense of belonging through reference to music and performance practices which are remembered in association with a cohesive social environment. He frequently begins each song in a 'maskanda style', with a short rhythmically free passage. His use of various guitar tunings is also typical of maskanda. However, his music does not follow the standard path which is generally understood as fundamental to the realisation of maskanda style. He diverges from the structural format, and does not include *izibongo* in his performance. While his connection with early maskanda is less tangible than that of Phuzekhemisi one needs to question whether this isn't a consequence of a general preoccupation with the structural features of music rather than aesthetics.

¹⁰ "Yes there were some Zulu people who came from the farms to Mkhumbane who used to play maskanda. I remember one guy, he used to sit by the store and play his guitar. The music that he played was maskanda."

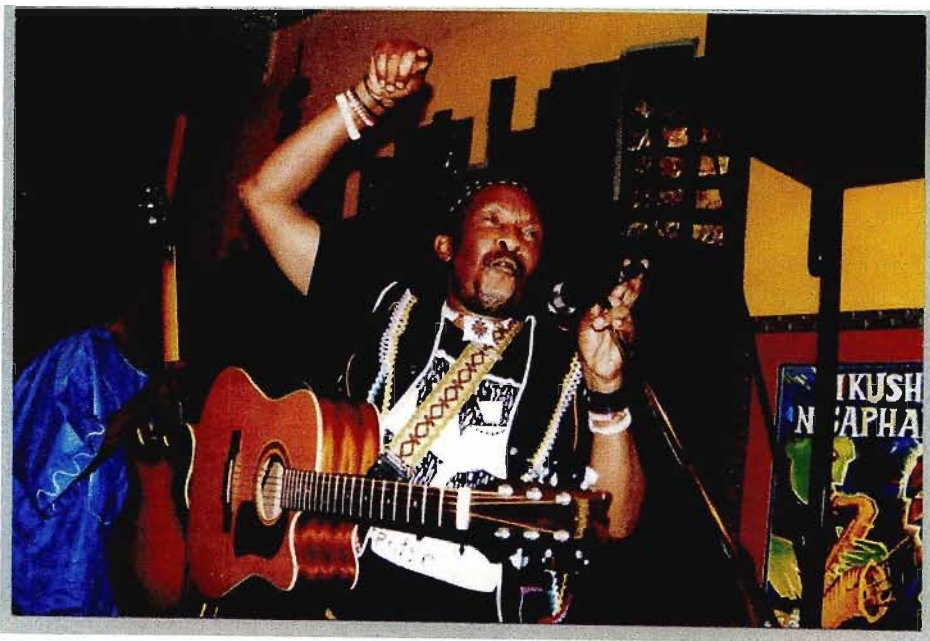
Madala negates any form of outside construction of his identity through a musical style which resists categorisation either as maskanda, mbaqanga or any other conventional labelling. Using this act of denial as a form of empowerment, he shapes his identity on his own terms in an individual style, which he calls, 'Madala-line'. His music is characterised by the use of simple chord patterns which have a unique sound due to the unusual tuning of the guitar and the extensive use of harmonics.

Through the trance-like quality of his expressive style, Madala engages musical performance as a vehicle through which a transformed state of being can be experienced. His music thus has a similar role to that which is performed in African ritual ceremonies. "The metaphoric forging of correspondences between musical and social order.....is often more a matter of expressive "qualities" (timbre, texture and rhythmic flow) than of the abstracted musical structures so privileged in Western analytical thought" (Erlmann, 1996a:236/7). Through musical style, Kunene makes a connection with an imagined moment idealised as an Africanness and completely devoid of ethnic division and western hegemonic control.

There is no doubt that Madala Kunene perceives his forays into the 'world music' market as an unprecedented opportunity to achieve economic success. The significance of this perception cannot be underestimated, in view of the fact that Madala has no formal education, and would find it difficult to find any source of income in the current depressed economic environment in South Africa. He is therefore in a very vulnerable position. Whether he is exploited or empowered depends largely on the discretion of the industry. It would be naive to imagine that a record company could function primarily as a philanthropic proponent of the cause of those who have been marginalised both economically and socially.

The overt focus of 'world music' is on difference. It could be described as an industry which depends on the commodification of difference. The concept of tradition is commonly used to delineate the boundaries which define and demarcate difference.

I refer once again to a quote from by Homi Bhabha , "...we find ourselves in a moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion" (Bhabha,1994:1). Through the fantasies of tradition however, space and time may be refracted to reveal an image which says very little about the life and artistic expression of people like Madala Kunene. Instead they are "crossed" to serve constructions of identity through which contestations over positions of power are played out. ¹¹



Madala in concert at 'Africa Jam' in Johannesburg

¹¹The photograph on this page and those on following page were not taken by the author. They come from Madala Kunene's private collection; unfortunately he has no record of the photographer's identity.



Mabi in concert with Madala at Y2K in Durban.



Madala, Luisiingwa Plaatjies, Max Lasser and Christoph Stiefel.

CHAPTER 6.

CLOSING REFLECTIONS.

"... this marginal space has been a great problem since the beginning of the colonialising experience it has been the locus of paradoxes that called into question the modalities and implications of modernisation in Africa"
(Mudimbe, 1988:5).

The music and performance style of Shiyani Ngcobo, Phuzekhemisi and Madala Kunene is markedly different. As a body of contemporary practice, their music embraces a range of experiences offering a broad perspective of some of the most salient discourses on Zulu identity. As a repository of meaning, tradition plays an important role in the construction of these discourses in their music. Through the sensibilities of 'rootedness' evoked by the notion of tradition each musician establishes a stable point of reference against which the complexities of the present can be matched. In each instance, however, a different moment is marked as tradition. This moment is not arbitrarily selected, but can be seen as the consequence of the particularities of each musician's life-experience. Tradition is referenced, not simply out of nostalgia, but because of its relevance in the present.

In Shiyani Ngcobo's music and performance style tradition is located in early maskanda. Like the early maskandi, Shiyani's life experience is characterised by disjuncture. The nature of this disjuncture and the context in which it is experienced is, however, no longer the same.

Early maskandi had access to different memories and different experiences to those of Shiyani. The references to the past which are made in early maskanda thus take on new meanings as they occur in a contemporary context. The significance of the connection between Shiyani's music and early maskanda lies in the status which early maskanda is afforded as tradition. Tradition serves as a

trope for a 'home-space', and gives authenticity to early maskanda as an established body of practice. In this sense, through Shiyani's discourse on tradition, marginalization is 'de-marginalized'; it is recognised as part of contemporary Zulu experience.

Phuzekhemisi's point of reference is the music and performance style of Phuzeshukela, and as a consequence he presents a discourse on tradition which is motivated primarily by economic and political directives. The record industry capitalised on the culture of exclusion which was promoted by the apartheid policy of separate development. Commercialisation transformed what was essentially the intimate expression of individual experience into the expression of a generalised and more stereotypical version of Zulu identity; one which suited commercial marketing categories and the political aspirations of both the apartheid order and Zulu nationalism. The commercialisation process re-shaped maskanda in ways which significantly altered the way Zulu experience was represented. The rise of Zulu ethnic nationalism is one of the most significant consequences of the marginalization of black South Africans both under colonial rule and under the apartheid government. The launch of Phuzekhemisi's career as a commercial musician coincided with a surge in ethnic nationalism in the 1980's and early 1990's, and his music is stamped with a version of tradition which correlates with that which is visibly espoused by the ethnic nationalist movement. Furthermore many of the procedures in his music which can be attributed to the demands of commercialisation give rise to a display of Zulu identity which is compatible with this version of Zulu experience.

The reference to tradition in Madala Kunene's music presents something of a dichotomy. He marks tradition paradoxically in an imagined distant past, which he identifies as essentially pan-African, and also in the urban practices which he recalls from his childhood. He thus engages tradition both as practice which is handed down from generation to generation, and as an imagined and temporally distant past. In so doing, he presents a discourse on contemporary Zulu identity which contests the constructed versions of Zuluness which were used to

legitimate the destruction of his home at Mkhumbane, and at the same time claims authenticity for the Zulu experience of urbanisation. While Madala's musical style reflects an eclecticism characteristic of urban popular culture, it is shaped in accordance with an aesthetic principle which is deeply rooted in an African past. It is in this regard that I make a connection between Madala Kunene's music and early maskanda; for in marking a distant pre-colonial moment as tradition, he, like early maskandi, moulds the multi-dimensional images of his everyday life into a discourse which is fundamentally African. Early maskandi valorised pre-colonial ways of life as stable and secure, and established a sense of coherence and belonging through reference in their music to musical procedures associated with that time. The over-riding aesthetic principle of early maskanda gives precedence to an African, and more specifically a Zulu perception of what is good and true and valuable. The difference between Madala Kunene's music and that of early maskandi lies in his strategy of bypassing any specific or substantial reference to structures and procedures which can be identified as essentially Zulu. He would like to think that he is African, but happens to be Zulu.

The representation of Madala in the world music market as 'King of Zulu Guitar', and the contrived positioning of his music in a rural environment associated with pre-colonial ways of life, is made possible by a globalization process which is motivated by mainstream economic, political and ideological directives. Burdened with preconceived notions of African/Zulu identity, the industry by-passes the implication of Madala's own strategy and replaces it with their own. The superficial focus on the connection between Madala's music, his ethnic identity and the pre-colonial past, without any accurate representation of how this connection comes about, arises essentially out of the intention to find, in the expressive forms of those outside the mainstream, the raw materials for the products of mainstream consumer market. Through the manipulation of cultural identity under the direction of consumer jargon and ideologically constructed notions of difference, the relevance of contemporary African experience in a

global context is trivialised, to the detriment both of musicians and of the industry itself; for ultimately the world music industry must seek mainstream status for expressive forms like these in order to fulfill their intention to maximize the economic viability of their products.

Shiyani Ngcobo, Phuzekhemisi and Madala Kunene are associated with the label 'maskanda' in different ways. As can be seen from the previous chapters, contemporary maskanda is experienced in a variety of situations and the term maskanda is interpreted and understood in different ways, depending essentially on the context in which it is used. The identification of the defining features of maskanda thus ranges from a focus on the finer details of musical procedure and aesthetics, to widely circulated and historically constructed symbols of Zulu identity. The notion of tradition occupies a central position in the formulation of these different perceptions of maskanda. Like 'tradition', 'maskanda' is a term which is frequently used as a mark of identity. As a marketing category used both locally and abroad, maskanda is referred to as 'traditional Zulu music'. The meanings attached to the idea of tradition in this context arise generally out of an ideologically constituted perception of Zulu experience as rural, and tribal. (The record sleeve of Madala Kunene's albums provide a typical example of this type of representation of Zulu identity.)

In academic circles maskanda is understood largely in relation to specific musical characteristics which are identified as distinguishing features of the style (Davies, 1991, 1992, 1993; Muller, 1995, 1996). These characteristics are frequently described in terms of Zulu 'tradition', where 'tradition' is taken to mean pre-colonial practice.

In local discourses on maskanda the concept of tradition is referenced in ways which reflect a more general ambiguity surrounding the term. This ambiguity arises primarily out of a disparity between the idea of tradition and what is identified as traditional practice. The dialectic between an idealised past and a lived present is therefore at the root of common perceptions of maskanda and is

reflected in the way all three of these musicians interpret maskanda. The power of performance, however, lies in its capacity to imaginatively construct 'moments' which are experienced as reality. The 'virtual' time of musical performance draws the audience into a world in which the past is in the present, and the boundaries of reality are stretched to accommodate new possibilities for the future.

Shiyani Ngcobo, Phuzekhemisi and Madala Kunene's music and performance style both reflects and contests various images of contemporary Zulu experience. Shiyani Ngcobo addresses the disjuncture within rural communities, Phuzekhemisi offers a version of contemporary Zulu experience popularised and motivated by economic and political agendas, while Madala Kunene confronts the paradoxes inherent in the Zulu experience of urbanization. Each scenario is, however, characterised by the experience of marginalization, a condition which has been part and parcel of the process of modernisation for black South Africans throughout the past century. Positioned within this marginalised space Zuluness has been constructed both from without and from within in a series of interactive processes which have been, and continue to be, dominated by colonial constructions of Zulu identity. The power of tradition lies in the value which is attributed to so-called 'traditional practice' as an authentic expression of identity. It is thus a concept which is frequently called upon to validate discourses on identity, and engaged in contestations over positions of power.

As a consequence of the ideological assumptions which have been made in the past concerning the relationship between tradition and modernity, and Africa and the West, the meanings embedded in contemporary musical discourses like those of Shiyani Ngcobo, Phuzekhemisi, and Madala Kunene are frequently converted to facile and oversimplified statements of 'otherness'. However, through the restructuring of the time-space referents which operate in everyday life, contemporary expressive forms like these present a "new master narrative....one that is rooted as much in shifting notions of tradition as in the crisis of modernity itself" (Erlmann, 1999:199).

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Andersson, Muff. 1981. Music in the Mix: The Story of South African Popular Music. Johannesburg : Ravan Press.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1990. "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy." In : Public Culture 2: 1-24. 1990.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. 1981. The Dialogic Imagination. Austin : University of Texas Press.

Ballantine, Christopher. 1993. Marabi Nights : Early South African Jazz and Vaudeville. Johannesburg : Ravan Press.

Bhabha, Homi. 1994. The Location of Culture. London : Routledge.

Blacking, John. 1973. How Musical is Man ? Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Boyer, Pascal. 1990. Tradition as Truth and Communication : A Cognitive Description of Traditional Discourse. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

Chambers, Iain and Lidia Curti. (eds) 1996. The Post Colonial Question : Common Skies, Divided Horizons. New York : Routledge.

Clegg, Jonathon. 1981. "The Music of Zulu Migrant Workers in Johannesburg - A Focus on Concertina and Guitar." In : Tracey, A. (ed) Papers Presented at the First Symposium on Ethnomusicology. Grahamstown : International Library of African Music.

Clegg, Jonathon. 1982. "Towards an Understanding of African Dance : The Zulu Isishameni Style. In : Tracey, A. (ed) Papers Presented at the Second Symposium on Ethnomusicology. Grahamstown: International Library of African Music.

Clifford, James and George Marcus. (eds). 1986. Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. Berkley and Los Angeles : University of California Press.

Coplan, David. 1985. In Township Tonight! South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre. New York : Longman Publishers.

Coplan, David. 1994. In the Time of Cannibals: The Word Music of South Africa's Basotho Migrants. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Davies, Nollene. 1991. "Aspects of Zulu Maskanda Guitar Music" In Tracey, A. (ed) Papers Presented at the Tenth Symposium on Ethomusicology. Grahamstown: International Library of African Music.

Davies, Nollene. 1992. A Study of Guitar Styles in Zulu Maskanda Music. Thesis M.Music. Natal University.

Davies, Nollene. 1993. "From Bows to Bands :On the Historical Development of the Maskanda Tradition." In Tracey, A. (ed) Papers Presented at the Eleventh Symposium on Ethomusicology. Grahamstown :International Library of African Music.

Dlamini, Sazi. 1999. Township Music : The Performance and Compositional Styles of Three Neo-Traditional Musicians in Durban. Thesis. M.Music. University of Natal.

Edwards, Iain. 1989. Mkhumbane our Home : African Shantytown Society in Cato Manor Farm 1946-1960. Phd. Thesis. University of Natal.

Erlmann, Veit. 1991. African Stars: Studies in Black Performance. Chicago : University of Chicago Press.

Erlmann, Veit. 1993. "The Politics and Aesthetics of Transnational Musics." In The World of Music. 35 (2).

Erlmann, Veit. 1996a. Nightsong : Performance, Power and Practice in South Africa. Chicago and London : University of Chicago Press.

Erlmann, Veit. 1996b. "The Aesthetics of the Global Imagination : Reflections on World Music in the 1990's. In Public Culture 18:467- 488.

Erlmann, Veit. 1999. Music, Modernity and the Global Imagination. New York and Oxford : Oxford University Press.

Fabian, Johannes. 1990. Power and Performance : Ethnographic explorations through proverbial wisdom and theatre in Shaba, Zaire . Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Fernandez, James. 1986. Persuasions and Performance : The play of tropes in culture. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Foster, Robert. 1991. "Making National Cultures in the Global Ecumene" in Annual Review Anthropology. Vol 20:235-60.

Giddens, Anthony. 1979. Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Giddens, Anthony. 1990. The Consequences of Modernity. Cambridge : Polity Press.

Hall, Stuart, David Held and Tony McGrew. (eds). 1992. Modernity and its Futures. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hall, Stuart and Paul DuGay. 1996. Questions of Cultural Identity. London : Sage.

Hall, Stuart.(ed) 1997. Representation : Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices. London : Sage.

Hamilton, Carolyn. 1998. Terrific Majesty : The Powers of Shaka Zulu and the Limits of Historical Invention. Cape Town and Johannesburg : David Philip Publishers.

Hobsbawm, Eric and Terence Ranger. (Eds) 1983. The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge, London and New York : Cambridge University Press.

James, Deborah.1990. "Musical Forms and Social History : Research Perspectives on Black Southern African Music." in Radical History Review. Vol 46/7 :309-319.

Joseph, Rosemary. 1983. "Zulu Women's Music" in African Music. 6 (3):53-89

Keil, Charles and Steve Feld. 1994. Music Grooves. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Langness, L.L. and Geyla Frank. 1981. Lives : An Anthropological Approach to Biography. Novara, California : Chandler and Sharp.

Larrain , Jorge. 1994. Ideology and Cultural Identity : Modernity and the Third World Presence. Cambridge : Polity Press.

Lazarus, Neil. 1999. Nationalism and Cultural Practice in the Postcolonial World. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lindfors, Bernth. 1983. "Circus Africans." in Journal of American Culture (6)2:9-14.

Marcus, George. (ed) 1993. Perilous States : Conversations on Culture, Politics and Nation. Chicago and London : The University of Chicago Press.

Mare, Gerhard. 1992. Brothers Born of Warrior Blood: Politics and Ethnicity in South Africa. Johannesburg : Ravan Press.

Mare, Gerhard. 1995. Ethnicity as Identity and Ethnicity Politically Mobilised : Symbols of Mobilisation in Inkatha. Phd. Thesis. University of Natal.

McGrew in Hall, Stuart, David Held and Tony McGrew. (eds). 1992. Modernity and its Futures. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Meintjes, Louise. 1990. Paul Simon's *Graceland*, South Africa, and the Mediation of Musical Meaning. In: Ethnomusicology. 34:37-73

Meintjes, Louise. 1997. Mediating Difference : Producing Mbaqanga in a South African Studio. Unpublished PhD Thesis. UT. Austin.

Morrell, Robert. (ed). 1996. Political Economy and Identities in KwaZulu-Natal : Historical and Social Perspectives. Durban, South Africa: Indicator Press.

Mudimbe, V.Y. 1988. The Invention of Africa. Bloomington :Indiana University Press

Muller , Carol. 1995. "*Chakide* - The teller of Secrets: Space, Song and story in Zulu Maskanda Performance." In: Current Writing. 7 (2)

Muller, Carol. 1996. Popular and Traditional Musics: Africa and Beyond. Resource Materials for lectures and tutorials - Music History and Culture 1A. University of Natal.

Ranger, Terrence. 1993. "The Invention of Tradition Revisited: The case of Colonial Africa." In : Legitimation and the State in Twentieth Century Africa. eds. Terrence Ranger and Ofumeli Vaughan. Oxford : Macmillan.

Rutherford, Jonathon. (ed) 1990. Identity, Community, Culture, Difference. London : Lawrence and Wishart.

Rycroft, David.1980. "Nguni Music." In The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians Vol.13 :197-202. edited by Stanley Sadie. London : Macmillan Publishers Limited.

Said, Edward. 1993. Culture and Imperialism. London : Chatto and Windus.

Shepherd, John. 1991. Music as Social Text. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Shepherd, John and Peter Wicke. 1997. Music and Cultural Theory. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Stokes, Martin.(ed) 1994. Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place. Oxford : Berg.

Wright and Carolyn Hamilton in Morrell, Robert. (ed). 1996. Political Economy and Identities in KwaZulu-Natal : Historical and Social Perspectives. Durban, South Africa: Indicator Press.

Musical Excerpts on the CD.

With the exception of 'Track 17' the following tracks were recorded with the permission of 3rd Ear Music, Gallo Recording Company, and M.E.L.T. 2000 respectively:

Shiyani Ngcobo

- Track 1 : Sevelina
- Track 2 : Ngimkhohlwe Kanjani
- Track 3 : Nginombhede
- Track 4 : Ikathi
- Track 5 : Asihlahle Phansi
- Track 6 : Uham' Utshel' aBantu
- Track 7 : Ayesaba Amagwala
- Track 8 : Ngizofel' Ingoma
- Track 9 : Isambani
- Track 10 : Efulansi

Phuzekhemisi

- Track 11 : Amagama Akho'
- Track 12 : Ngo '49
- Track 13 : Sidlal' uNPA
- Track 14 : Imbizo
- Track 15 : WeBhodloza

Madala Kunene

- Track 16 : Abangoma
- Track 17 : Mata Gota Free (recorded live at the Bat Centre by the author)
- Track 18 : Kon'ko Man

APPENDIX 1 : MELT 2000

- | | |
|--|---------|
| A) Press Article : "Foreigner loves local music" | 1 page |
| B) Internet Article (www.melt2000.com) :
"Musical Energy and Loud Truth Beyond 2000." | 3 pages |
| C) Internet Article (www.melt2000.com) :
"History." | 1 page |

Foreigner loves local music

Swiss music producer and owner of record company Melt 2000 is hailed as a major music promoter of our South African mega-stars. Arts and Leisure Reporter KEIASHA NAIDOO spoke to Robert Trunz

TYPICALLY South African music lovers support international artists and think nothing of spending money on Michael Jackson's latest CD, or coughing up hundreds of rands to watch the Bee Gees' concert.

And it's no wonder that half of Durban's music fans don't even know who the famous Afro-jazz singer Busi Mhlongo is. Never mind that she was born and lives in KwaMashu, outside Durban and that her latest CD, *Urban Zulu*, was released in Paris and London four months ago, long before it was introduced to us here last week. But Trunz was in Durban last week to launch Mhlongo's latest album.

Then there's the surrealism that it takes a Swiss hi-fi manufacturer, Robert Trunz, to pool our local stars into a foreign production and recording com-

pany - Melt 2000. Trunz has tirelessly and generously promoted South Africa's finest artists both locally and abroad. Some of South Africa's mega-stars on his books include Busi Mhlongo, Deepak Ram, Madala Kunene, Pops Mohammed, Moses Molelekwa and Abdula Ebrahim.

It's no secret that African music and African artists are more well known overseas than in our own country.

Luckily Trunz visited South Africa for the first time in 1993 and immediately seized the initiative to promote local musicians. He was so amazed with the music that he snapped up talents such as Sipho Gunedo and Pops Mohammed. He also claims to have been very disappointed with the first recordings he heard of local music. "The recording was crappy and it was obvious that the artists weren't well advised and had been exploited. This country, and particularly KwaZulu-Natal, oozes with phenomenal talent in music and arts, but it frustrates me to see how little these artists are supported by the public, and by local producers."

With a burning passion for African music, Trunz sold his established hi-fi manufacturing company in London about 10 years ago. He then poured all his profits into Melt 2000 which is



ROBERT TRUNZ

now a successful recording and producing haven for artists.

"This might not be a very lucrative business, but it's an investment into the community. I know that every time an artist makes money from Melt 2000, the musician's community will also have money," he adds.

"Admittedly," he continues "this is a less-selfish way of thinking, and it's very different to the many local producers whom I deal with. All they're interested in is how much money is to be made. And although this is good business practice, struggling artists have incredible talent in this country and need a chance to be developed."

He explains that the best way of producing quality albums and promoting good musicians is to make them part of his life. "Busi

is a close friend of my family's, we draw so much experience from her and we have a great working relationship. That's one of the reasons I've just bought a house in Cape Town - to be closer to the musicians."

Trunz, known in the music industry as "Mr Melt", very frustratedly says: "There is a world-wide African Renaissance and yet South African producers do sweet fuck-all to promote the local talent. And I'm really surprised at the phenomenal African and Indian music on the streets in Durban. It's such an interesting mix and the music - ooh! it has deep emotion and so much dance rhythm," he enthuses.

"But I still feel that this country is very far behind as far as mixing cultures is concerned. You hardly find many blacks dancing to bhanga or whites jiving to kwaito - in most instances people from different cultural groups don't even know about the other's favourite music. Overseas things are very progressive and in night-clubs DJs are spinning blue-room (a techno label), bhanga and Afro-jazz together, because people are open to all types of music."

Sounding more hopeful for the future of the industry he says that things will surely change in this country as the younger crowd grows and mixes with each other more. He also cites a massive talent festival as a way of promoting our home-brewed artists.

MUSICAL ENERGY AND LOUD TRUTH BEYOND 2000

A new jol is rising up against the mall. From Boksburg to Berlin discerning ears are being seduced by a revolutionary record label that measures its success in the currency of meaning. And that meaning takes the form of a headspace and structure where lifeworlds melt into each other on their own terms. If this jol reaches critical mass 'the global village' might just stop being a convenient American euphemism for Americanisation. We might even reach the point where 'international' and 'local' mean what the dictionaries say they do.

We don't have to throw paving stones at Babylon to discover the beach beneath the city. We can start living the revolution today and, just to make things easy, there's a meta-hip record company providing a perfect soundtrack. The company is called Musical Energy and Loud Truth beyond 2000 (M.E.L.T.2000). Its artists dissolve the borders between the familiar categories of jazz, trance, dub, maskanda, drum 'n bass, kwaito and divination rhythms and nobody seems to know if this is post-genre or a new genre waiting for a name. But everyone does agree that the artists are mediums opening channels between meaning, pleasure and their labels.

Despite being based in the Tory infested English country side M.E.L.T.2000 is internationalist in spirit and built on a breath takingly broad imagination. And, if you haven't heard, the kiff news is that its been sharing some of South Africa's best music with the world since 1994. Robert Trunz (aka Chiskop and Temba) is the man whose vision and resources fuel this insurrection of subjugated musics and ideals. Originally from Switzerland he moved to England in the early 80's to run the B&W speaker company. The company's radicalism ranged from the shape of their speaker Pods to providing the PA system for the illegal raves run by the Innerfield Crew. B&W sponsored the Montreaux Jazz Festival for a couple of years and began releasing compilations recorded at the festival.

Then, in 1993, Robert heard jazz legend Sipho Gumede weaving his spells at a club on the Durban beachfront and, not for the first time, Sipho's magical bass trips changed a life. In October '94 Robert returned to South Africa with plans to record. He bought along a group of B&W's top artists that included Brazillian drumming genius Airto Moreira and it wasn't long before B&W had put a whole range of innovative collaborative albums, as well as a sublime Sipho Gumede album, on the shelves. Since then the label has changed its name to M.E.L.T.2000 and released a remarkable collection of albums by artists of the stature of Madala Kunene, Deepak Ram, Amampondo and Pops Mohamed as well as a large number of ground breaking collaborative projects and compilations. Although most of the artists are South African the stable includes musicians from everywhere from Switzerland, down to the Cameroon and across to Cuba and Brazil. In addition to this the label also has a bootleg.net division which releases recordings made in the field on a car battery powered DAT machine and an Electric M.E.L.T. division which specialises in cutting edge drum 'n bass, techno, jazz funk, house and dub projects and remixes.

The label's co-operative spirit means that all the artists on the label get to play on each other's albums and, for example, a maskanda band like Skeleton have digeridu on their album and Indian flautist Deepak Ram has West African kora on his album. In addition there have been collaborations like Pops Mohamed and traditional Khoisan musicians, Madala Kunene and Swiss guitarist Max Lasser, English techno dub innovators Bandulu and Skeleton, ex-Orb engineer Greg Hunter and Umrubhe (mouthbow) virtuoso Madonsini Manquina and Mabi Thobejane and Juno Reactor.

Moreover artists on the label have worked in top class studios around the world, had access to the very best producers and played at leading festivals like WOMAD. The

downside is that despite a fairly high media profile in Europe and a superb website (www.melt2000.com) the label's marketing and distribution in South Africa has been poor.

But things are improving in that regard and jazz prodigy Moses Taiwa Molelekwa, who's been with M.E.L.T. since the beginning, isn't complaining: "There's still something of a monopoly by the large companies but M.E.L.T.2000 has powerful artists like Amampondo and Busi Mhlongo and will be a powerful force in the future. I'm planning to stay with them for a long time. They discovered me and it's really working out very well. Some very efficient people have come on board and things are shaping up. I mean my new album doubles as a CD ROM. That's a step ahead. This is a label going places."

Madala Kunene's just as happy. "It is", he says, "very, very nice for me. M.E.L.T.2000 is holding my life. I was very lucky to get the company. All my life, the money, the house is M.E.L.T.2000. My music is selling here and overseas and I'm going to record another album in September."

For Busi Mhlongo whose long awaited maskanda album, *Urbanzulu*, will be out on 19 October M.E.L.T.2000 has meant more than just a chance to work with Angelique Kidjo's producer Will Mowat and top musicians like Cameroonian drummer Brice Wassy. "M.E.L.T.2000", she stresses, "don't just sign artists as a business. They care for how you live, for your health, where you stay. South African musicians have been surviving on words for so long now but with M.E.L.T. we're finally seeing some action. And because of M.E.L.T. South Africans are at last getting a chance to listen to ourselves and to believe in ourselves. I mean we've always copied American music but we haven't copied the way that they support their own culture. We need to understand that our music industry is a baby that needs our love to help it grow."

Brendan Jury's band Trans Sky will be releasing their deep ambient trance album on the Electric M.E.L.T. division in December. Trans.Sky have got to work with people like Greg Hunter and Amampondo and Brendan enthuses about the "collision of universes that would never have happened without M.E.L.T." Brendan met Robert Trunz when he was playing with Durban jazz Professor Darius Brubeck at the Nantes Festival in France. That encounter turned into what Brendan describes as a "Wild opportunity" and he adds that "Robert's a dream. He's hugely warm and kind and he's prepared to take enormous risks. He's passionate about music and for him it's not about money. His mission is to manage situations in a way that generates new creative possibilities and recreates lives. He's transformed the spaces in which a lot of South African musicians work and although it's a serious political mission the records are all made in a spirit of serious fun."

The bootleg.net series has received major critical acclaim. The Sunday Tribune called the series "remarkable" and described Madala Kunene's *King of Zulu Guitar Vol. 1* as "truly beautiful." And of course albums by artists like Deepak Ram, Madonsini Manquina, Sipho Gumede, Pops Mohamed and now the brilliant new drum 'n bass influenced jazz album by Moses Taiwa Molelekwa have all been critically celebrated across the globe. The Electric M.E.L.T. division has also been received with serious excitement. And when DJ's Andre and Roy, who manage Durban's most innovative, sussed and hip DJ collective, Evenflow, took a listen to the 10 track Electric M.E.L.T. compilation *Statement of Intent* they pronounced that: "Every track is brilliant. This is an album that you buy and when you drop the first track you know you'll listen to it forever. It's an album like U2's *Boy*, it'll change people's whole lives." They're particularly excited about the African involvement because "This is where the rhythm comes from. Latin sounds have been informing House and pushing its boundaries for a while and it's time that African music did the same." But they do caution that "this isn't for a commercial club. It's more for the discerning listener but we'll play it at Red Eye where we can drop what we really like deep inside."

SL caught up with Robert Trunz in San Francisco and he was able to confirm that Amampondo are the top selling South African band on the label and that Germany is currently the best market although "the message is spreading fast to the USA and the Far East and will soon also come to South Africa." Robert is well aware that many South Africans are only just beginning the struggle to decolonize their minds and develop some self respect but he believes that the situation is improving steadily and that: "The current strong emphasis on everything America exports to your country could be the key to entering your industry through the backdoor by making your music popular in the States first and then releasing it in South Africa."

Robert recognises that "South African radio is still reluctant to really get behind South African music" and says that one of his pet hates in life is "the more cheesy crap being played on South African radio stations which seem to be dominated entirely by America's music industry." He adds that "distribution companies seem to be either unable or unwilling to place our products in most parts of South Africa, especially the rural areas where a lot of our music comes from." But he has firm plans for change and is convinced that Moses Molelekwa's new album Genes and Spirits is set for major success and that Busi Mhlongo's Urbanzulu will make her "the bright new star on the international scene and the pride of your country."

Robert likes to keep the focus on the artists and it's difficult to get him to speak about his motivation. But he does insist that: "There is no such thing as THIS music in my life because I have always tried to keep in touch with forms of music that either have deep roots or concern themselves with daily life and allow a deeper look into resolving differences through music." He's also gone on record as saying that a key influence in the development of his taste was the Swiss government funded radio station Couleur 3 which broadcast the whole spectrum of underground sounds from so called 'world music' through to electronica. At the same time that Switzerland was reveling in the deep pools of Couleur 3 English radio was plugging Madonna and Elton John as the cutting edge. Once again progressive social policies have made the world a better place and it seems that we need to be asking why our government owned radio stations still follow a largely commercial agenda.

South Africa has produced great labels like Shifty Music, Tic..Tic..Bang!, Wildebeest Records and Sheer Sound. And now, with the release of the superb remix compilation Rerooted, Fresh Music has instantly earned a place in the history of progressive South African music. M.E.L.T.2000 is not the whole story but it is the most significant intervention into the avant-garde side of our music industry. Celebrate it. Catch a fire.

Richard Pithouse



M.E.L.T.2000 - 'Musical Energy & Loud Truth beyond 2000' - is a new and unique recording label set up by Robert Trunz, former boss of B&W Loudspeakers and its subsidiary, B&W Music, who last year decided to leave the company to pursue his dream of reinvigorating modern music by injecting the passion of some of the world's greatest players.

The story of how M.E.L.T.2000 came to be really started in September '93, in a mixed-race (and, therefore, illegal) music joint in Durban. Brazilian percussionist, Airto Moreira, was playing his first ever gigs in Africa with Flora Purim, guitarist José Neto and their band, Fourth World. After the show, Airto and Robert Trunz, visited the bar to be greeted by the owner, with wise and prophetic words: 'Nobody comes to South Africa without a mission'.

That night, Robert and Airto met the legendary bass player and founder of Sakhile, Sipho Gumede. The encounter, and others with such extraordinary musicians as Pops Mohamed, persuaded the pair that they had to return to South Africa. Gradually, it became clear that their mission was to offer their new musical friends the opportunity for a free exchange of culture and ideas; to facilitate the creative collaboration that had been denied to them throughout the cultural boycott of the apartheid era.

In October '94, this process began with a group of B&W artists travelling to South Africa meet up and jam down with more than 50 local musicians under the banner, 'Outernational Meltdown'. For B&W Music, this adventure was a step into the unknown. As sponsors of the Montreux Jazz Festival from 1988 to 1990, B&W initially released compilations of performances from the festivals. But, increasingly, Robert Trunz began to take a global approach to the label's repertoire and creative direction.

This grew from Robert's view that a mixture of different cultural and ethnic styles both informs and enhances playing styles and works particularly effectively in a jazz context, but also from his belief that, as a purveyor of speakers, which are only animated - given life and soul - by the music played through them, he must pay his dues to the musicians who created the (soul) music and to pay respect to those people who still have a more spiritual than material perspective.

Another factor that shapes M.E.L.T.2000 is Mr Trunz's predilection for percussion-based music, which has led him to collect some of the world's greatest percussionists. There's Airto, of course, plus Changuito - José Luis Quintana - from Cuba. From South Africa comes Mabi Gabriel Thobejane and Nelson Mandela's favourites, Amampondo, whose forthcoming album is produced by another world class drummer, Brice Wassy.

Add to this mix some of the most promising young jazz musicians, like pianist Moses Molelekwa (who is the natural successor to Abdullah Ibrahim), trumpeter Byron Wallen (who stands comparison with the mighty Miles) and saxophonist Iain Ballamy (currently enjoying huge success with his band ACME) and you have the most exciting and innovative label around.

APPENDIX 2 : Shiyani Ngcobo

- A) Press Article : “Less is better, says music guru.” 1 page
- B) Internet Article (www.melt2000.com) : 2 pages
“Zulu Blues.”
- C) Internet Article (www.artsmart.co.za) : 1 page
“Shiyani Ngcobo.”

Less is better, says music guru

SEEMA GANGARAM

MUSIC teacher Shiyani Ngcobo made his first guitar from an empty metal oil container when he was 11 years old.

Now, 36 years later, he digs out a guitar made from a discarded oil drum and strums it for audiences who come to listen to the old style of maskanda.

"Maskanda is different today. People use too many instruments and it becomes difficult to learn or understand.

"I like to play the old isiZulu esikhulu style, which sounds like a concertina, but it is also very difficult to play," says Ngcobo, who teaches maskanda to six students at the University of Natal's School of Music as part of its African Music Project.

He was taught maskanda by his older brother, Kethuyise, who gave him an acoustic guitar and taught him the song *Sevelina*.

"I listened to this song and then I started to play and sing it. It has become one of my favourites.

"It's about a young man who is crying because the woman he loves is leaving him," says Ngcobo, a father of two from Kwamakutha, outside Durban.

He has written more than 300 songs. "I teach the students to listen to the sound and to use



MUSIC MAESTRO: Shiyani Ngcobo says a large number of instruments are not required to make good music
Picture: JACKIE CLAUSEN

their eyes to watch how I play and that is how they learn.

"We don't use written music. It is better when students who don't know how to play a guitar at all come to me, because it is easier to teach them.

"Sometimes it's difficult to teach someone who has already learned another style," he

says. Ngcobo also plays the electric, acoustic and bass guitars. But he maintains a large number of instruments are not required to make good music.

Maskanda is said to be neo-traditional music started by migrant workers who sang about social and political issues.

"I sing about people and

things I know about, my family and my neighbourhood."

Last year he was a guest artist on the *Guitars for Africa* stage at the international WOMAD festival.

He has also performed at the *Turn of the Century Festival* in Nantes, France, and at the *World Music Festival* in Yaounde, Cameroon, and Modena, Italy.

DAILY NEWS (S.A.), 6.4.98

Zulu Blues

Maskanda is the music of the people of KwaZulu-Natal, and the Maskanda players are the spokesmen of the people. Shiyani Ncgobo has been acclaimed at home and abroad for his musical expertise. Gisele Turner reports.

MASKANDA! The music played by the man on the move, walking the long miles to court a bride, or meet with his chief. The music of the man who sings of his daily sorrows and joys and his observations of the world, the man who's got the Zulu blues.

Maskanda derives from traditional Zulu music, but the genre has undergone many changes over the years. Traditional instruments have been replaced by guitars and concertinas, tuned or doctored to reflect the polyrhythmic sounds of ancient Africa.

And whereas Maskanda was originally solo music, in the fifties Maskanda bands were formed by men living in hostels or in the suburbs, a long way from home. Today, Maskanda is performed on amplified guitar, with electric bass and drum kits, and dancers - dressed in personalised modern versions of trad gear - add visual impact.

Every year, there are huge Maskanda competitions and contestants come from far and wide, dressed to the nines in outrageous finery, touting their musical skills.

Musicians of the calibre of Sipho Mchunu (Juluka) judge these contests, which are fierce and serious, and the winners are deemed heroes by the followers of Amaskanda.

Such a man is Shiyani Ncgobo, who won the solo guitar category in 1991. Ncgobo began playing Maskanda as a small boy.

"In 1956 I was born," he tells me as he tunes his oil-can guitar for his concert at the University of Natal in Durban last week, "and in 1966 I was starting to play tin guitar. At the end of 1966, I started proper guitar. My brother 'tuned' me at that time. He gave me a guitar and showed me Maskanda style. During that time I was going one way until today. I have not stopped playing guitar..."

Indeed, Ncgobo has played at major festivals like Splashy Fen and Guitars for Africa. He also teaches Maskanda guitar at UND and the University of Durban- Westville.

Last year, he had his first experience in the international arena, playing at the Fin De Siecle Festival in Nantes. I asked him what it was like to play his music in France. He grins shyly.

"Ayee, yae, yae" For Francie, I was big man that day! They were very liking my music! People saying 'Shiyani, come this side! Shiyani, come that side!'

His manager, Peter Rorvik of Third Ear Music, put it this way: "Apart from the main venue where Shiyani played for a couple of thousand people, he also played in a variety of bars and bistros, and attracted a lot of media attention. Sometimes he could hardly be seen for booms and cameras! It was the same in Norway at the beginning of this year. It's not just the novelty factor that draws the crowds, you know. Overseas audiences know a good thing when they hear it."

Ncgobo's trip to Norway meant that he had enough money to finish playing lobola for his wife. When I heard that, I was reminded of the words of one of his songs: "I was proposing a lady from Khuzwayo / and the lady left for Durban / I tried from Hadebe but she went to marry somewhere then, I changed to Dlamini / there they,,sald that she was no longer a virgin / what am I to do? / Because I really do want a second wife am unlucky."

It would appear that Ncgobo's luck has turned. A week after performing at Splashy Fen later this year, he leaves for Yaounde in Cameroon to attend a World Music Festival. And in August he will be in Modena, thrilling the Italians.

Ncgobo steps onto the stage and his traditional Zulu garb gives him flair and dignity. He plays the opening bars of a song he wrote many years ago.

Then he begins to sing, and his voice is fluid and versatile, changing pitch and intonation with ease. Then he moves into the isibongo section - the fast, spoken piece that states his father's name, where he grew up, and the name of the river from which he drank as a child.

I catch the word "Francie" and know that in his self-introduction he is recounting the tales of his experiences in a foreign land.

Ncgobo will have many such tales to tell in the future as he carries the magic of Maskanda, the music of his people, across the world.



ARTSMART
arts news from kwazulu-natal

music

www.artsmart.co.za

enquiries@artsmart.co.za

current news

[crafts - dance - drama - film & tv - literature](#)
[music - supper theatre - visual arts](#)
[miscellaneous news - festivals](#)

[events diary](#)
[letters to the editor](#)
[home page](#)

archives

[crafts - dance - drama - film & tv - literature](#)
[music - supper theatre - visual arts](#)
[miscellaneous news - festivals](#)

SHIYANI NGCOBO (article first published : 2000-03-27)

The School of Music at the University of Natal continues its regular series of free lunch-hour concerts today with a recital of maskanda music by Shiyani Ngcobo starting at 12h15 in Howard College Theatre. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Shiyani Ngcobo originally hails from the Umkomaas Valley in KZN and is now based in Kwamakutha outside Durban. He teaches maskanda part-time for the African Music Project at the UND's School of Music and taught at the music department at the University of Durban- Westville until its closure in February this year.

Those familiar with the fiercely contested maskanda competitions run by the UCD's School of Music will remember Shiyani as KZN winner in 1991 in the solo guitar category. He is a regular guest at the *Guitars for Africa* concerts and big festivals such as *Splashy Fen* where he plays and conducts maskanda workshops. Shiyani appeared as a guest artist on the *Guitars for Africa* stage at the international WOMAD festival held in South Africa for the first time in 1999.

Shiyani's performances at the *Turn of the Century* festival in Nantes, France in October 1997 were his first in the international arena. He has subsequently performed at the World Music Festival in Yaounde, Cameroon and in Modena, Italy. He is in the process of signing a new recording contract on the MELT2000 label.

Maskanda is neo-traditional music originally composed and played by Zulu migrant workers - the modern day folk-singers of KZN, whose songs are about social and political issues. Maskanda artists wear neo-traditional dress and usually accompany their songs with guitars, mouth organs, Zulu gourd-bows or concertinas. Shiyani plays several guitars - one of which he made himself.

current news

[crafts - dance - drama - film & tv - literature](#)
[music - supper theatre - visual arts](#)
[miscellaneous news - festivals](#)

[events diary](#)
[letters to the editor](#)
[home page](#)

archives

[crafts - dance - drama - film & tv - literature](#)
[music - supper theatre - visual arts](#)
[miscellaneous news - festivals](#)

a co-production by *caroline smart services* and [durbanet](#).

[site credits](#)

copyright © subsists in this page. all rights reserved.

[copyright details](#)

APPENDIX 3 : Nantes Festival

A) Internet Article (www.melt2000.com) :
"Turn of the Century at Nantes, 1991."

3 pages

TURN OF THE CENTURY AT NANTES, 1997

The idea of the Festival du Fin de Siecle is to invite to Nantes, in western France, all kinds of cultural representatives from three of the world's great cities, in order to illustrate the creativity of each of these places at the dawn of the third millennium. The festival began in October, 1997, with a celebration of Johannesburg, representing Africa, continent of roots.



Beautiful costumes and great visual performances made the festival a unique event.

Around 380 diverse artists were selected from every creative field and months of preparation was necessary to put this thing in place. Pascal Letellier travelled extensively through South Africa, looking for artists to participate in the festival and, naturally enough, several of the musicians he approached were associated with M.E.L.T.2000 and recommended that he should contact Robert Trunz.

The Festival proved to be a great success, although it was something of a logistical nightmare considering the scale of the event and the numerous venues involved, but all the shows were recorded and filmed for future release. We used a mobile recording studio called The Van, operated by the two Flying Dutchman, Jan and Paul (*right, receiving quiet words of encouragement from Mr Trunz*). They did a fantastic job of running from venue to venue in order to catch all the performances and worked at least sixteen hours a day for us. Thanks guys!



Amampondo played late night concerts at the largest venue, a former old biscuit factory - l'usine lu - which has been converted into a cultural centre. Unfortunately, even the privileged citizens of Nantes have to go work in the morning, so the place was cold and a bit lifeless during the week. There was no acoustic treatment and the atmosphere was cold, so it didn't always do justice to the artists, although M.E.L.T.2000'S chief engineer, Chris Lewis, insured that

they had the best possible sound under the circumstances and Amampondo never fail to warm up the area.

A group that formed out of Amampondo (*left*) - consisting of Mantombi, who plays umrhubhe (mouthbow), and Mangaleswa playing accordion, with Dizu playing uhadi (berimbau) - appeared on a separate, smaller stage, to perform some traditional tunes before joining the rest of the group onstage for the main event.



Madala, centre left, and his band. Busi Mhlongo, right, onstage at Nantes

Madala Kunene and his band played the factory with Busi Mhlongo, as well as several concerts at l'Olympic and both shows were rapturously received. Madala has put together a terrific new band who it is hoped will be playing more live concerts in Europe before long. Brice Wassy was also in effect, playing a couple of fantastic concerts with Busi, who is currently recording a new album with producer Will Mowatt.



Moses Molelekwa (left) arrived fresh from the studio in Johannesburg where Chris Lewis has been helping to put the finishing touches on his eagerly anticipated CD, played in different formations: with Zolani Mkiva, with Sibongile Khumalo, and solo at La Tour a Plomb, where he previewed songs from the new album and seduced audiences with songs from his debut, Finding One's Self.

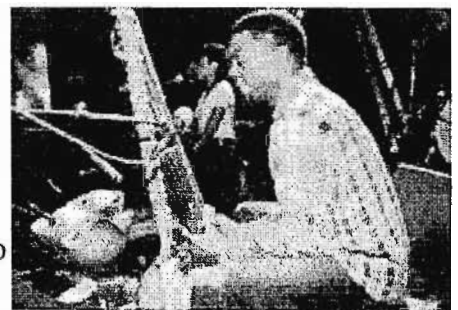
Darius Brubeck, (right) the mastermind of Gathering Forces II had written a couple of new songs especially for the festival, where he performed Gathering Forces III: '2000 Minus 3' together with his frequent collaborator, Deepak Ram, whose forthcoming solo album on M.E.L.T. 2000 is Flute For Thought (BW104). Deepak also gave a one-off recital of Indian Classical flute while another great flautists, Zim Ngqawana played with his Quartet every evening from 10pm at the hotel Duchesse-Anne.



Also appearing at the Festival was a new discovery, a maestro maskandi from the beautiful Umkomaas Valley in Kwa-Zulu Natal, Shiyani Ngcobo, (LEFT) who was playing his first gigs outside of SA. Renowned for his purest approach to maskanda guitar style, plus his catchy story lines, Shiyani is a popular winner of the fiercely contested maskanda competitions and now teaches part time at the University of Natal-Durban. We used the NAGRA-D to record

Shiyani in the bathroom of the hotel room and those tapes are being worked upon, with overdubs from Mabi Thobejane and some of the Amampondo guys.

In his own unique niche is Pops Mohamed, who had been playing gigs across Europe to promote his current album How Far Have We Come?. Pops played a showcase concert at l'Olympic with his touring band and also, together with Zena Edwards, performed with the Xhosa Singers of Lady Frere in the atmospheric church of St-Georges Des Batignolles. This choir from, Ngqoko Village are the last practitioners of umngqokolo - ambient trance music - which Pops describes as one of the future sounds of Afrika. These concerts were very successful and Pops attracted several complimentary articles in the local press.



The South African groups made great efforts to dress as colourfully as possible and they certainly brightened up the streets of what is a rather drab industrial town by wandering around wearing great traditional costumes despite the weather, which got pretty chilly towards the end of the week! We all had a great time and now have a lot of material, both video and audio, that will be forthcoming over the next few months. Stay tuned!

APPENDIX 4 : Madala Kunene.

- | | |
|--|---------|
| A) Press Article :
"Illuminating the dark with music." | 1 page |
| B) Article published in 'Drum' magazine :
"Madala's Musical Dreams." | 2 pages |
| C) Internet Article (www.melt2000.com) :
"Madala Kunene Kon'Ko Man." | 2 pages |
| D) Internet Article (www.melt2000.com) :
"Madala Kunene - King of Zulu Guitar Live Vol.1." | 1 page |
| E) Internet Article (www.melt2000.com) :
"Recording Project - Madala Kunene and Baba Mokeona
in Durban, SA, 1999." | 1 page |

Illuminating the dark with music

Madala Kunene gets to play a gig with a difference

THABO MKHIZE

ONE of South Africa's finest maskanda musicians, Mzwakhe "Madala" Kunene, recently performed in a pitch-dark theatre for an audience that was mostly blind.

Durban-based Kunene and Philip King, bass guitarist for renowned barpist Andreas Vollenweider, were invited by Swiss guitarist Marx Lasser to perform alongside him at the unusual event in Zurich last month. The aim of the "show in darkness" was to demonstrate the experience of blind people and to expose the audience to music without visual distractions.

"Throughout the 90-minute performance, I could not see anything," said Kunene. "I was nervous, but I soon settled down. I guess my experience of practising in the dark at home in Hillary had a lot to do with it."

After the performance, food and drinks were also served in darkness. He discovered, to his surprise, that most of the audience, as well as the waiters, were blind.

During his trip to Europe, Kunene, 47 — affectionately known as "Madala", meaning old man — teamed up with Ray Phiri, Vusi Mahlasela, Khaya Mahlangu and 14 other South African musicians to hold workshops for Danish students. The talented Kunene also performed for the Danish Prime Minister, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, in Copenhagen's City Hall.

He plays the guitar and *tshekoko*, an instrument similar to the Jewish harp. Born in Cato Manor, he developed a

passion for music at a young age. His first instrument was a guitar fashioned from a cooking-oil tin and fishing gut.

Kunene's career began to take off when he worked with Sipho Gumede and Rust Mhlonogo. In 1990 he joined the dance troupe Woza Africa, for whom he wrote and played music for three years. A London recording company, M.E.L.T. 2000, gave him a recording opportunity in 1993. Since then, he has not looked back. His albums include *Kon'ko Man*, *King of the Zulu Guitar* and his favourite, *Booteq*.

But he is disappointed with the reception he has had in his own country. "Local recording companies don't want to record our music. We also don't get the same exposure on radio and television that foreign artists get."

"More people know me in foreign lands. The sad thing in this country is that people get to know you and your work only when you are dead."

Kunene has conducted workshops for juveniles at Durban's Westville Prison for a project sponsored by the National Arts Council.

"We don't only warn them about the dangers of crime, but also entertain them with music and teach them *isipantsula* and Zulu dance. We teach them to play the guitar and concertina," he said.

Traditional family values and respect for one's ancestors are some of the most important things in young people's lives. They need to be motivated to respect their country and fellow human beings. The youth has to be told about the importance of reconciliation and shown that there are people out there who care for them.



STRANGER IN HIS OWN LAND: Maskanda musician Mzwakhe Kunene, most of whose fans are overseas
Picture: JACKIE CLAUSEN

ALONE man walks onto a huge stage on the beach. The festive crowd falls silent as he picks up his guitar and begins to play, the sound of the sea caressing his music.

By the end of the first song most of the audience sitting on the sand are swaying gently to the music. This is what happens when people listen to the sounds of Durban's Madala Kunene.

He's been popular in Kwa-Zulu-Natal since the '80s. It's only in the past few years that his work has taken off nationally and internationally.

Now more and more people are waking up to Madala's talent and he's been asked to perform with musicians from

head."

Despite being born into a family of teachers, Madala refused to go to school, opting instead to form a marabi band, Amanikabheni, when he was only seven.

It featured him on guitar (made from a cooking oil tin and fishing gut for strings), and two friends on spring bass (tea chest, rope and stick) and drums (paint tins with the lids for cymbals and tyre

Durban's Madala Kunene has been making music since he was seven, when he refused to go to school. Today he's well-travelled, immensely popular and widely known. Now if only he could make money from his music...

By MONICA HILTON-BARBER

"When I'm playing, my brain is not there," he says. "Each time I go to a place I've never been before."

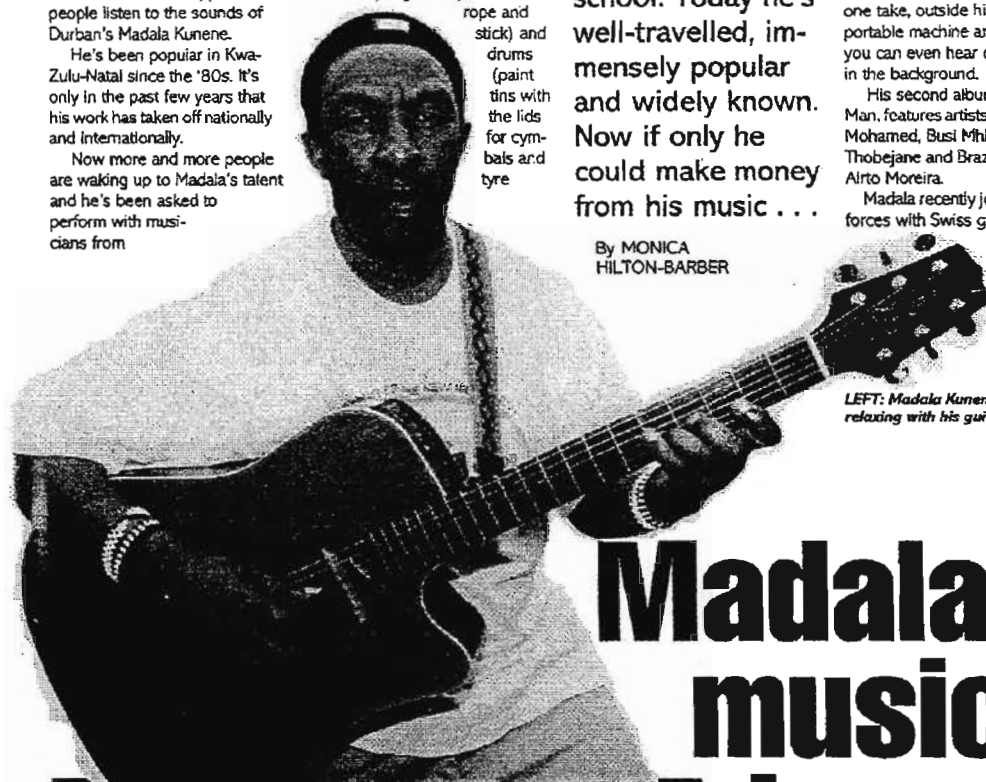
As each of these "dreamtime" journeys is different, every performance becomes a particular event with a certain character.

An especially brilliant performance has been captured on his live solo album, *King of Zulu Guitar Vol 1*. It was recorded in one take, outside his home, on a portable machine and it's so live you can even hear dogs barking in the background.

His second album, *Kon'ko Man*, features artists such as Pops Mohamed, Busi Mhlongo, Mabi Thobejane and Brazilian legend Alito Moreira.

Madala recently joined creative forces with Swiss guitarist Max Lasser for the album *Madamax*, creating a connection between

LEFT: Madala Kunene relaxing with his guitar.



His sound creates a trance-like atmosphere and has fascinated fellow musicians across the world

Madala's musical dreams

Johannesburg, Paris, London, Switzerland and Scandinavia.

Like all spiritual adventurers, Madala has made many journeys. Born in Cato Manor in 1951 and later forced to move to KwaMashu, he started playing for cash on Durban's beachfront.

"People threw money out of the flats," he recalls. "Sometimes money would hit you on the

tubes for skins).

In 1963 he bought his first real guitar, and began playing songs by the Beatles and the Shadows at weddings. Three years later he worked with Phuthu, a top mbaqanga guitarist, and soon graduated to playing township halls.

But he was still restless.

"I wanted to play my own thing,

I didn't want to copy anybody," he says.

So he listened to his inner voice and let the music inside him come out. He calls it the "Madala-line", which requires six different tunings and a delicate plucking style.

Although it's based on trance-like rhythms, it uses elements as different as maskanda and rock.

Europe and Africa.

After their meeting in South Africa Max invited Madala to Switzerland to work with him, and they took their unique sound on tour through Switzerland and Scandinavia.

Now Madala is working closely with many other European artists

(TO PAGE 99)

ORLIM 6 January 2000 89

BELOW: Madala Kunene on stage at the Living Treasure Festival at St Lucia in Kwa-Zulu-Natal



Madala's musical dreams

(FROM PAGE 89)

fascinated by his unique sound.

When he's not playing or touring Madala stays home with his second wife and an extended family. When he needs to relax he rocks a crying baby to sleep, or works in his garden.

But even though he's successful, Madala battles to support his family on his musician's earning. "I love what I do but the money is not there," he says. "My record company, MELT2000, helps me out, but it's hard."

But he's trained only to play music. That's why he tells his children "Do what you like, but don't do like Dad. Go to school first."

His one regret is that only now, in his later years, has he been able to travel overseas and learn more about music and other cultures. Besides touring a little in Europe he was also invited to teach at a Scandinavian University last year.

"Those young musicians were so interested in what I was doing," he says. "They wanted to learn. It

shows that white people can learn, which is good.

"Overseas musicians know how to work, and they work so hard. They're focused and organised. They know what they want and there's no messing about. It's something very special.

"I saw now apartheid killed creativity for us. We lost our direction. Now we must find it again."

That brings Madala to the subject of kwaito. "It's good because it's about young South Africans and it doesn't imitate America," he says. "Youngsters are building something that's their own."

Madala is considering another crossover album, this time with a Danish jazz group, and also wants to pressure the government into establishing a ministry of music. "It would be more important than a ministry of sport," he says.

Meanwhile he wants to balance the meaning in his music with a little money. If he could have both, he'd be a happy man. **D**

MADALA KUNENE



Kon'ko Man (meaning, 'The Big Man') is the debut solo album from the King Of The Zulu Guitar, Madala Kunene. Many of the tracks were produced by two other M.E.L.T. 2000 artists: fellow South African, Pops Mohamed and Brazilian master percussionist, Airto Moreira.

Kon'ko Man features contributions from many musicians that Madala has met through his constant touring of the townships, particularly his good friends, Mabi Thobejane, who plays percussion on all tracks, and Busi Mhlongo, who sings on several songs. The album also features contributions from Madala's new friends from the extended family of Fourth World, including Flora Purim and her daughter, Diana, José Neto, Gary Brown, Jovino Santos Neto, and Chil Factor.

1. Company
2. Kon'ko Man
3. Abangoma
4. Khono Thwele
5. Gumbela
6. Igwababa
7. Sani Bonani
8. Celebrate
9. Washa

All tracks composed by Madala Kunene with the exception of 8, 'Celebrate' by Pops Mohamed. Recorded at Downtown Studios in Jo'burg and SABC Studios in Durban in January and August 1995. Produced by Robert Trunz and Peter Thwaites. Overdubs at Milo Studios, London and Brownhill Farm, Sussex. Mixed by Chris Lewis and Richard Edwards



Madala Kunene, Kon'Ko Man
Catalogue no: BW058
Category: Township Jive/Guitar

Download samples from *Company*,
Kon'ko Man and *Khono Thwele*:



(653K)



(1.3MB)

Download a quicktime movie of Madala
performing *Kon'ko Man*



(1 Min, 1.9MB)

Chris Lewis and Richard Edwards
at Brownhill Farm, assisted by
Pluto. Mastered by Ray Staff, Chris
Lewis and Richard Edwards.

Reviews of 'Kon'ko Man'

'Former Durban football star Madala Kunene comes through with a profoundly engaging, deep and soulful set. The "old man" is joined throughout by friends old and new - percussion master Mabi Thobejane, Busi Mhlongo, Airto & Flora, José Neto, Jessica Lauren, Ike Leo and Shades. This is not South African music as you know it. Madala's music has been honed since his contributions to the Outernational Meltdown recordings, but the Kon'ko Man remains deeply rooted (in township life, in the trials and tribulations that preceded the downfall of apartheid) and Madala's voice, songs and guitar provide a strong anchor. Revel in the hypnotic *Abangoma* - it's here that the spirits of the ancestors resides - or ride the gentle melodic waves of acoustic guitar and percussion on *Khono Thwele*.'

Paul Bradshaw, Straight No Chaser, Autumn 1996

'La normalidad musical, al menos ésa, ha llegado a Sudáfrica. La compañía Londinense B+W está llevando a cabo un seguimiento de los nuevos valores sudafricanos y elaborando una colección de primeros trabajos que pone de relieve lo que nos hemos estado perdiendo durante todo este tiempo. Pese a no tratarse de world music en el sentido más aglutinador del género, la música de Madala es más bien un primer acercamiento a los esquemas occidentales con un tratamiento tribal y folclórico del país que acaba de despertar. *Konko Man* no gustará a los amantes de la W.M. que se escucha en las discos negras de la península, pero sí a los partidarios de la música étnica en la que, por primera vez, la balanza se inclina a favor del sur. Aquí, los temas son largos y eminentemente vocales, largos fraseos enajenados y estremecedores acompañados por una percusión dura y repetitiva que deja el exotismo de Yma Sumac a la altura de Francisco. Para insomnes tropicales.'

Pau Todó, 1 World Music, Abril-Mayo, 1997

MADALA KUNENE

KING OF THE ZULU GUITAR



'Madala' translated means 'old man'. Although now in his mid forties, Madala's guitar and his very distinctive voice don't exactly sound old, but quite different from what we are used to hearing. Madala is self-taught and lives in one of the many south African townships on the periphery of Durban, Natal - once the homeland of one of the most feared and proud warriors, the Zulus.

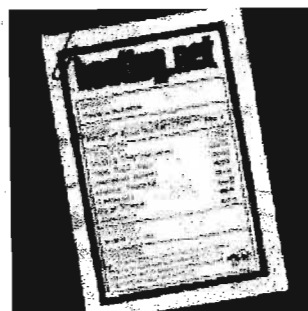
Those who read or watch the news will have noticed the ongoing violent clashes between the still-fighting factions of different political views. As is so often the case, it is the common people who are suffering and it is still very dangerous even for African people to go out at night. The sounds of gunfire throughout the night leave one with no choice but to barricade oneself and wait for morning, when it's time to count the bodies.

Those incredibly patient and loving people who have gone through decades of apartheid and brutality have come through at the end under a president who knows more about repression than most, but is still smiling, still loving and forgiving. South Africa is a country full of contradictions, but with lots of energy and a willingness to change in its own way and perhaps, for once, on the terms of the black community.

There is talent everywhere and Madala Kunene is one of the people that can help make a difference, so it is a privilege for me to introduce you to such an outstanding musician. Madala plays an ASPEN acoustical guitar, serial no. 000101, as he proudly states in his letter to me with the basic descriptions of the sounds I recorded live on the riverbank at the bottom of his garden using my Sony DAT recorder and a Soundfield microphone, everything battery-driven due to the lack of electricity in places like the farm in KwaZulu hinterland.

Dick Jewell was kind enough to film the unique encounters of Madala with percussionist Mabi Thobejane and Busi Mholongo rehearsing in their hotel room in Johannesburg. Check out their collaboration with Airto Moreira and other international musicians on the Outernational Meltdown project.

Sleeve notes by Robert Trunz



Madala Kunene, King of the Zulu Guitar Live Vol. 1

Catalogue no: BNET CD/LP
001

Download samples of tracks
from the album:
Apartheid and Gumbela



(653K)



(1.3MB)

Download a quicktime movie
of Busi Mholongo with Madala
Kunene.



(1 Min, 1.5MB)

Download a quicktime movie
of Madala and Mabi.



(1 Min, 2.6MB)

PRE RELEASE 17th. August 1999

RECORDING PROJECT MADALA KUNENE AND BABA MOKOENA IN DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA 1999

Madala Kunene and his collaborations with different musicians is one of the best examples what MELT 2000 is all about - melting styles and talents. After the 1994 Outernational Meltdown encounter and recordings with Airtó Moreira, Madala Kunene went on to record his first album Konko'Man involving artist from both South Africa and the UK. The album was produced partly by Pops Mohamed and Airtó Moreira.



I met Baba Mokoena for the first time in 1994 when he played with Airtó and Jose Neto during the Outernational Meltdown recordings and ever since wanted to record his unique guitar playing. It took more than 4 years for our paths to cross again and when I learnt from my house engineer Chris Lewis that Baba and Madala were rehearsing I got on a plane to Durban to get a sneak preview of what I already conceived as the next collaboration project. Glad I went because it was a great reunion full of joy to be able to work together

APPENDIX 5 : Maskanda

- A) Internet Article (www.melt2000.com) : 2 pages
 "The Roots of Maskanda."
- B) Internet Article (www.gallo.co.za) : 1 page
 "Maskandi."

The Roots Of Maskanda.

Several M.E.L.T.2000 artists - Madala Kunene, Skeleton, Shiyani Ngcobo and, most unusually, a woman, Busi Mhlongo - are masterful exponents of maskanda. Here, Sazi Dlamini explains the roots of this Zulu folk music.

Like most egalitarian societies around the world, the Zulu have no single word that encompasses all the activities that involve music-making. Beyond celebration, music and dance formed an important part of the rituals and ceremonies at the core of a functioning society. Performance found expression in activities addressing the various institutions of power, including the kings and chiefs, religious institutions of the ancestral spirits, the family and the clan. The rites of passage from birth to grave - childhood, puberty, courtship, marriage - were all celebrated with the performance of appropriate songs and dances, relevant texts and rhythmic/melodic elements.

The traditional conception of song is as "music which accompanies dance" and the term *ingoma* is used generally among the Nguni to refer to both song and dance (as well as unaccompanied songs and the various genres of dance). This tradition of *ingoma* - the unity of song and dance - along with traditional rhythms and melodies, has been inherited by the contemporary *maskanda* musicians. Today, the term *maskanda* is understood to mean both the musicians as well as the traditional Nguni and primarily Zulu music they play on Western instruments such as guitar, violin, concertina and electronic keyboard.

Alongside other generic forms of music such as *mbaqanga*, *isicathamiya*, gospel and African jazz, which can be heard in South Africa, *maskanda* stands out as the most truly indigenous expression of the African working class experience. *Maskanda* practitioners convey the contradictions inherent in the rural/urban dichotomy of the migrant labourer and their music is closely bound up with the social, political and economic implications of colonisation and the loss of independent political power. Musicians have, in the past, defined the finer margins of the black urban social identity.

The adaptation of traditional music to Western-style instruments certainly predates industrialisation, but it is in the urban hostels and mining compounds that the *maskanda* guitar style burgeoned. Within such conditions, *maskanda* played a significant role in reaffirming the symbolic role of performance and the social organisation of destabilised traditional societies; to strengthen 'home boy' ties and to test, symbolically, the adaptability of individuals in dealing with the changing social order. Other socio-cultural male bonding rituals, such as competitive dancing, stick-playing, gumboot dancing and *isicathamiya* also played a significant role in this culturalisation process.

Mission school-educated and urbanising Africans in the early decades of this century were at pains to shed the 'primitive' connotations of their cultural heritage in their assimilation of middle class Christian values. As a social class, *maskanda* musicians have not embraced Western values, have always sought to uphold traditional customs, and have constantly viewed their existence within the urban centres as temporary. They sang of their maidens and wives, the hills and rivers, and their cattle.

At this point, it must be noted that the word *maskanda* comes from the Afrikaans, 'musikant' - 'musician' - and the term is generally used by the musicians to describe themselves. They refer to the music generally as *ingoma*. Through time, though, a style of music has evolved that is recognised as *maskanda*. The term now takes precedence over such traditional names for instrumental performance as *umaKhweyana*, *isitolotolo*, *ugubhu*, and *isicelekishe*. There are different styles and ways of tuning instruments and

these differences occur regionally, as well as between individual *maskandi*, just as the dances differ from region to region.

A *maskandi* sings in the vernacular and is traditionally a solo performer. *Maskandi* are known to walk long distances in the countryside, singing and accompanying themselves on their instruments - usually guitar, or concertina - visiting far-flung relatives, or to rendezvous with a maiden. The words of their songs are typically individual, personal statements and observations about people, family, nature, calamities, humour, politics, marriage and so on. Their eloquent commentary on life's little ironies places them on a par with the traditional praise-singers and is popular with young and old, men and women alike.

Because of radio and the recording industry, some *maskandi* have become popular and have been widely emulated by the younger musicians. Arguably the most famous *maskandi* was the late John Bengu, nicknamed 'Phuzushukela' ('Drinking the Sugar'). In keeping with the custom for young men to boast of their accomplishments through singing their own praises, the traditional praises find their way into a *maskanda* performance, during which the *maskandi* introduces himself, relates heroic deeds that distinguish him from his peers, then praises and thanks his ancestors. He will also name a landmark from his village - perhaps a hill or mountain range - and the river from which he drinks. This is a standard rendition of a song that has been orchestrated with instruments, leading vocals and chorus, and a dance sequence.

The adaptation of *maskanda* music to a band performance dates from the 1960s. It was suggested to Phuzushukela by black producers at Gallo Recording Studios in Johannesburg that he adopt this format in order to match the spectacle and popularity of *mbaqanga* jive (e.g.: Mahlanthini and the Mahotella Queens). Since then, *maskanda* musicians have sought to assemble a group of instrumentalists - usually drums and bass with violin/concertina/keyboard - to provide a musical backing for the lead singer, who is usually also the composer, band-leader and choreographer, plus a variable number of backing singers, who also dance.

Another, earlier innovation was a technical one. Early *maskandi* played in the 'vamping' style known as *ukuvamba* - usually employing five string guitars. Phuzushukela himself started his recording career in the late 40s/early 50s playing in this style. From the 50s, a style of 'picking' developed and Phuzushukela became one of its premier exponents. The new technique was considered to be superior for its ability to delineate the different elements of the traditional melody, which is generally outlined by the bass voice of the guitar and augmented by the bass guitar in a band setting.

As a result of increased radio and television exposure, *maskandi* have been growing in popularity, notably among the urban youth who have been looking for popular music that is culturally relevant. Since the early 70s, the most innovative black neotraditional bands and jazz musicians have been looking to the rich heritage of *maskanda* for fresh ideas and the articulation of concepts of black consciousness to counter Apartheid ideology. Music scholars and students are also focusing their attention on *maskanda* for its socio-historical significance and its close links with older Zulu musical genres, such as the instrumental music of *umaKhweyana* gourd-resonated bows, the indlamu dances and the ritual *amaBhukho* songs.

Article by Sazi Dlamini



genres

Select a Genre

View Selected Genre

Maskandi

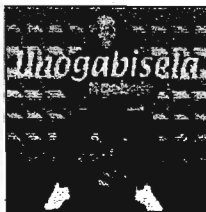
The Zulu nation dominates the entire north-eastern corner of South Africa and the modern day province of Kwa-Zulu Natal. The Zulu people have long exhibited a decided preference for adopting Western instruments, particularly string instruments, to create a variety of neo-traditional styles. By the late 19th century, Zulu musicians had already invented a violin crossover style and after the First World War, when inexpensive guitars, mandolins, banjos and concertinas were either being imported in large quantities or manufactured locally, several other Zulu-Western mixtures began to evolve.

As early as 1938, recordings were being made of modified Zulu folk songs sung to the accompaniment of a strummed or finger-picked guitar. But it was not until the 1950's that John Bhengu (who later took the stage name 'Phuzushukela' meaning 'Sugar Drinker') created the standard Zulu Traditional structure. Each song begins with the izihlabo - an instrumental flourish that sets the mood of the piece while flaunting the musician's prowess - which is followed by the main melody, often an adaptation of a traditional song. Then in the middle of the performance, the singing is interrupted by the ukubonga, a section of spoken praises for clan, family, chief or even the singer himself, delivered in a rapid-fire fashion reminiscent of some Rap. The singer then returns to the original melody to conclude the song.

Bengu began his career as a vocalist accompanying himself with his unique picking style on an acoustic guitar. Later he switched to electric guitar and added an electrified mbaqagna backing band complete with female vocalists. His example dominated the Zulu Traditional genre for two decades and was widely imitated.

In the 1980's the word 'traditional' fell out of favour because of its apartheid - supporting political connotation. A new term then evolved to describe the genre: maskanda, a Zulu variation of the Afrikaans word 'musikant' meaning 'musician'. The instrumentation also changed. A prominent concertina became an ingredient of most maskanda bands and in the recording studio, the synthersizers and drum machines that dominated the sound of urban township pop were increasingly used as backing devices.

In the 1990's, one of the most popular maskanda artists is probably Phuzekhemisi. His recordings are best selling examples of modern maskanda but do not begin to convey the power of his live performances which feature an eight piece band and spectacular dance routines.



APPENDIX 6 : Phuzekhemisi.

- | | |
|---|--------|
| A) Internet Article (www.gallo.co.za) :
"Phuzekhemisi - Inkunzi Ka Bejana." | 1 page |
| B) Internet Article (www.artsmart.co.za) :
"Maskanda Magic." | 1 page |
| C) Internet Article (www.gallo.co.za) :
"Phuzekhemisi." | 1 page |
| D) Internet Article (www.gallo.co.za) :
"Phuzekhemisi No Nothembi." | 1 page |

PHUZEKHEMISI - Inkunzi Ka Bejana



(CDGMP 40807 / MCGMP
408070)

TRACKLISTING:

1. Inkunzi Kabhejana
2. Igama Lami
3. Induna Yezinsizwa
4. Izinhlangani
5. Amaphoyisa
6. Emakhosini
7. Egoli
8. Izifundiswa
9. Mtaka Baba
10. Embangweni

Johnson Zibokwakhe Mnyandu entered the local music scene after much encouragement from Welcome Bhodloza Nzimande, the station manager of Ukhozi FM (formerly known as Radio Zulu).

His debut album 'Imbizo' was a phenomenon in that it mixed **Maskandi** music and Township Pop. Fans from rural areas, hostel and city dwellers, and a large variety of people bought this album.

In townships and homes throughout the country the song became a "cry" at a time when South Africa was divided by political conflict. With the album 'Imbizo', Phuzekhemisi made political commentary in a satirical fashion about always being summoned to an Imbizo (traditional court) at the chief's palace to discuss matters beyond one's capabilities. This album sold over double platinum (over 100 000-unit sales) - a first for a Maskandi Group.

Back to New Releases

For further information, email GMI

©1997/98/99 Gallo Music International



ARTSMART
arts news from kwazulu-natal

music

www.artsmart.co.za

enquiries@artsmart.co.za



MASKANDA MAGIC (article first published : 1999-09-17)

South Africa's finest maskanda musicians will take part in a major maskanda show on October 2 in the Durban City Hall. The massive line-up includes Phuz'ekhemisi, a musician who offers very poignant messages. "It's unique, very tongue-in-cheek and he transcends all other genres," says SABC's KZN regional manager, Khaba Mkhize in an interview with *The Daily News*. "The kwaito guys emulate him, the reggae guys love him and he is really a household name who attracts thousands to his concerts." Phuz'ekhemisi will be joined by Mfiliseni Magubane, Umfaz'omnyama, Ihash'elimhlope and Bhukumuzi Luthuli.

The maskanda concert is part of a massive 10-day music festival in Durban that starts on September 24 and takes place at a number of venues. The festival has also attracted the talents of Jabu Khanyile of Bayete, jazz maestros Sipho Gumede, Paul Hamner, McCoy Mrubata, Errol Dyers and Franc Paco. The Nordic Shuttle programme in association with the BAT Centre includes Tu Nokwe, Zim Ngqawana and Cross Rhythms. There's also classical Indian music with Rekhadevi on at the Elizabeth Sneddon Theatre on September 28.

VIBE 2000 has planned a kwaito rave on September 25 at a venue still to be secured and there is a gospel night at the Nu Jazz Centre on October 1. Mvunge's Choral Society will fill the Elizabeth Sneddon Theatre with sweet song on October 2, while Khanyile performs at the same venue on September 29. There will also be an isicathamiya competition at the BAT Centre on October 3, the last day of the music festival.

Acurent news

[crafts](#)
[dance](#)
[events diary](#)
[festivals](#)
[drama](#)
[film & tv](#)
[literature](#)
[music](#)
[supper theatre](#)
[visual arts](#)
[miscellaneous](#)

[lifesmart](#)
[letters to the editor](#)

Archives

[crafts](#)
[dance](#)
[drama](#)
[festivals](#)
[film & tv](#)
[literature](#)
[music](#)
[supper theatre](#)
[visual arts](#)
[miscellaneous](#)

[home page](#)

a co-production by **caroline smart services** and [durbanet](#).

copyright © subsists in this page. all rights reserved.

[site credits](#)

[copyright details](#)



PHUZEKHEMISI

The South African hero of the musical genre Masakanda is without a doubt, Phuzukhemisi whose social commentary through music has successfully managed to promote the genre internationally.

Phuzukhemisi has succeeded in seducing audiences in France, Denmark, Belgium, Sweden and Finland. He is among the very few musicians from KwaZulu-Natal to draw on the social ills that plague his villagers. A musician struggling to unearth the feeling of his villagers who are not yet free from the grip of chiefs, Phuzukhemisi first burst on the music scene with his brother Khethani. It was the album Imbizo that announced the duo's arrival on the scene. This album went

on to sell 100 000 copies. The album was extremely popular with his villagers who felt that the song expressed their sentiments.

Although their music was IsiZulu, that did not confine them to KwaZulu-Natal and hostels. Their music spread like a 'fever' and Imbizo, which was a title track became a regular feature at street bashes and music festivals.

DISCOGRAPHY

<u>Album Title</u>	<u>CD</u>	<u>Cassette</u>	<u>Genre</u>	<u>Released</u>
<u>Inkunzi Kabhejane</u>	CDGMP 40807	MCGMP 40807	Maskandi	1999/10/15
<u>Phans' Imikhonto</u>	CDTIG 537	CCTIG 537	Maskandi	1998/09/04
<u>Izwe Alithuthuki</u>	CDTIG 535	CCTIG 535	Maskandi	1997/08/08
<u>Ngo '94</u>	CDTIG 527	CCTIG 527	Maskandi	1996/03/15
<u>Impimpi</u>	CDTIG 504	CCTIG 504	Maskandi	1995/03/10



PHUZEKHEMISI NO NOTHEMB

Two of the country's most brilliant tradition: musicians - Phuzukhemisi , a maskanda phenomenon and Nothembi Mkwebane, an internationally renowned Ndebele guitarist have partnered on 'Sihlanganisa Izizwe', an exquisitely crafted collaboration album that sees these two guitar wizards pushing the boundaries of their musical roots to dizzy heights

Their guitars effortlessly mingle into a symphony of African rhythms. In this collaboration the queen of Isindebele music rolls easily with her unique rhythms, while Phuzukhemisi's guitar bursts of speedy and

unapologetic guitar riffs. Their guitars equal with aplomb as they roll into beautiful pieces.

This awesome 10-track album opens with the melodic, Solo Ngiyathokoza. The album flows with other beautiful songs including Sathwala Kanzima (Heavy Burden Unembeza, (Conscious) and Bayede (Your Highness), Mtaka Dadewethu (My Sister' Child).

Phuzukhemisi has kept audiences abroad spell-bound with his guitar playing.

DISCOGRAPHY

<u>Album Title</u>	<u>CD</u>	<u>Cassette</u>	<u>Genre</u>	<u>Released</u>
<u>Sihlanganis' Izizwe</u>	CDGMP 40838	MCGMP 40838	Traditional - Ndebele	2000/07/07

APPENDIX 7 : Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and King Goodwill Zwelethini.

- A) Press Article : 2 pages
 "King of the People."
- B) Internet Article (www.mg.co.za) : 3 pages
 "King isolated in Zulu power play."

King of the people



The custodian of the Zulu empire talks to the *Daily News* about the future of his nation and the role it must play in the upliftment of poor communities and the restoration of *Ubuntu* (a sense of community), reports **Eric Ndiyane**. **Steven Naidoo** took the pictures.

HOURS before King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu starts his work for the day at 10am, scores of people wait outside the premises to see him and others stand in hope, without having made prior arrangements to be there.

Among the visitors, there are those who are filled with enthusiasm over the opportunity of offering their gifts to him.

Meanwhile, they are provided with drinks and food to keep cool when it is hot, and chairs are provided under the trees where they will sit and wait.

This is Lindizulu, one of the busiest royal residences in the middle of KwaNongoma. Then comes the sound of sirens from a distance, signalling that someone important is coming.

Two praise singers walk up and down simultaneously shouting all the names and *izibongo* (praises) of the late, great Zulu kings.

These signal the arrival of King Goodwill and his bodyguards. There will be a total silence, and it

journalists had secret agendas.

These exchanges help me to calm down. After praising the interest shown by the *Daily News* in him, and after explaining the purpose of the interview, he says "*Asiqale, ndodana*" (Let us begin, son).

A husband to five wives and father to more than 30 children, the king will seek to attend to the

and for discouraging acts of violence. As politics became the order of the day in KwaZulu-Natal, his critics said the time for the Zulu monarch was coming to an end. They were soon proved wrong as he still remains the king of his people and enjoys the support of the Government.

He believes that there will be no South Africa without KwaZulu-Natal and its monarch. And he sees a bright future for the Zulu nation under the leadership of its royal family.

Zwelithini leads by example. When he is not attending to visitors at the royal residences, he swings a hoe in the mielie fields, and will visit sick people in local hospitals.

Sometimes he convenes meetings with *amakhosi* and *izinduna* to discuss problem areas affecting communities. Apart from being the custodian of the traditional Zulu ceremonies, there are other projects that the king engages himself in, such as irrigation schemes, poultry farming for rural women, building schools, Aids-awareness programmes and



takes at least one minute for him to get out of the car, then praise singers will lead: "Wena weNdlorvu" (hail to the elephant), and the rest of the people will follow "Bayethe".

Those who know him will continue shouting the praises and those who do not know him and are not familiar with procedures will look surprised at the man who makes others take off their hats.

As a symbol of respect, women will bow their heads down until the whole proceedings are over.

The king comes out of the car and he will wave his hands to the people.

In the process, there is no movement from the rest of the visitors and the king will walk inside the palace. He will be informed of his diary for the day.

Then everything goes according to the diary, with those with appointments attended to first and, in most cases, people who just visit without any kind of arrangements being sent back home.

Being a son of a Xhosa woman, I stood there nervously and, not knowing how to address the king of the nation that once defeated the Old Guard (great British Army) with just ordinary home-made spears. The moment of truth came as we were the first to see Zwelithini on the day.

In his office, calendars and statues of great Zulu kings hang and occupy the space. Everything else is glittering - beautiful curtains are half-opened and the amount of light getting in is enough to provide necessary illumination. As opposed to carrying a spear, there is instead a small 5210 Nokia cell-phone in his right hand.

At the age of 52, very humble and speaking with a low tone and respecting voice, often he smiles and would even crack a joke. A real gentleman.

"Is this the young man who has been chasing us?" he asks.

"I can see you are serious about this; you drove all the way from Durban. But I am happy that you made it to heaven."

We all laugh.

"When I was as young as you, I would be looking after the cattle; *madoda*, things have changed."

To which I respond: "*Cho Hlanga Lomhlolobathi ngicacela izinkomo lezo kuwena*. (No, your majesty, I have come to ask for those cattle from you." This sends the whole house into laughter.

He says he had refused interviews in the past because some



It is laughable to hear people outside this province and non-Zulus questioning and criticising the existence of the monarch

problems in five of his busy royal residences. He admits that he never spends quality time with his immediate family because there are many people who want to meet him. They range from business people, Government officials and artists, to mention a few.

And his main reason for not carrying a spear around like his predecessors is that times have changed.

The king believes that the times are now different from those of King Shaka, Cetshwayo and Dinizulu, and that the power of the mind determines how strong one is.

There is one common element between Zwelithini and King Shaka: they both were supporters of a united kingdom of the Zulus. But the king takes the idea further by saying: "Unity in peace, economic development and forward with the upliftment of the disadvantaged communities."

He is a strong leader who has stood the test of time and he has seen things happening.

Many may not realise his importance, but when South Africa called on him to save it when it was losing its grip on democracy, the king moved swiftly to persuade the political parties to go back to the discussion tables.

The king was once criticised for not endorsing any political party

many others.

He has received more than 100 wheelchairs from overseas countries, and these are ready to be handed over to different hospitals and charity organisations.

He says the Zulu nation is engulfed by poverty because people are too lazy to work the land and they expect that things will come down to them.

"I always preach about the need to start producing food from the land because there are no jobs."

The king believes that the Zulu royal monarch still has a role to play in the lives of people of this province. "My people have been accused of being violent, and it will be good if they can embark more on peace initiatives."

He says the Zulu nation needs to ask itself what role it wants to play in the development of the communities and restoration of familyhood that they seem to have deserted.

"It is laughable to hear people outside this province and non-Zulus questioning and criticising the existence of the monarch. People here never said they had a problem with their king, and that is because they know where they come from - so the criticism from outsiders will not disturb our existence as the royal family."

His face changes when he is approached about the much-talked-about demarcation process.

"The demarcation board decided to undermine the social structures here, and they wanted to do things their own way."

"I took two representatives from the major political parties in the province (the IFP and ANC) to meet with President Thabo Mbeki because the situation was getting out of hand, and it could lead to conflict," he says.

The king tells the *Daily News* that one of his plans is to open all of his royal residences as tourist attractions, like those of the British royal family. And the money that will be generated from that will be directed to the development of the communities where those residences are.

Mr Theminkosi Memela, the director in the office of the king, echoes the words of his majesty, saying there are plans to improve the standard and conditions of the royal residences.

He says Zulu royal residences are just no match for those of the British royal family and other European monarchs, but some people still complain when the king receives his budget.



DAILY MAIL & GUARDIAN



Renault
Megan
Cabriolet

WANNA WIN IT?

[letters](#) | [zapiro](#) | [matshikiza](#) | [webfeet](#) | [cyberdrive](#) | [homesick blues](#) | ['99 arts directory](#) | [e-mail us](#)

Johannesburg, South Africa. August 16, 1999

King isolated in Zulu power play

Changes in local government are the source of renewed intrigue in the Zulu royal house.

IVOR POWELL reports



THE latest spat between Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini on one side and the Zulu chiefs under Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi on the other reads like an intrigue from another time -- a battle for the soul and the loyalty of the Zulu people.

Brothers at arms: Mangosuthu Buthelezi (right) and King Goodwill Zwelithini are locked in a medieval power struggle

The king reportedly lives in fear for his life after the *amakhosi*, the council of elders gathered in the KwaZulu-Natal House of Traditional Leaders, issued a statement censuring his alleged failure to identify with them or to provide his people with the symbolic leadership vested in him.

Members of the king's inner circle at Nongoma in northern KwaZulu-Natal have apparently gone into hiding amid rising tensions in the area, death threats and attacks on their homes.

Pointedly, the *amakhosi* failed to attend the king's birthday celebrations recently, or to provide tribute in the form of cattle and gifts.

Buthelezi, chair of the provincial House of Traditional Leaders, last week gave an interview to the IFP-owned *Ilanga* newspaper in which he attacked the character of the king. He detailed alleged involvement of the monarch in apartheid-sponsored political parties in the 1970s, and painted him as a wastrel and a spendthrift.

By way of contrast, at the IFP's congress in Ulundi last month the party

provides lustre to the entire continent". It urged "Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi to provide the country with his much-needed leadership".

Behind these almost medieval palace intrigues is the unfolding of some all too contemporary power politics -- politics that look as much to the future as they do to the traditional past.

The progressive isolation of Zwelithini -- which has coincided with the king's own attempts to remove himself from party politics since before the 1994 elections -- serves to underline that what is at stake is not so much Zulu tradition as the survival of the IFP.

RELATED ARTICLES

- [A royal row over Shaka Day](#)
- [IFP clash with King reaching a climax](#) August 1995
- [Right royal battle for soul of the Zulus](#) March 1995

CYBERSPACE

- [IFP's web site](#)

TALK TO US

- What do you think? [Have your say](#)
- [Mail the editor](#)

At the centre of the row lies a legislative jigsaw being put together in advance of local government elections in 2000. The main stumbling block is the Municipal Structures Act of 1998, which replaces the Local Government Transition Act of 1993. From the IFP's viewpoint, the problem with the new legislation is its most basic premise: the entrenching of democratic principles in the structures of local government.

Whereas the 1993 Act created provisions for the amakhosi in tribal trust lands to serve as ex officio local government officials, the new law extends the purview of elected representation.

While *amakhosi* -- as citizens -- are permitted to stand for election, and while in certain cases "traditional authorities that traditionally observe a system of customary law in the area of a municipality" may be represented at municipal level by their traditional leaders, the new law limits that representation to 10% of any municipality.

At the same time, the work of the Municipal Demarcation Board -- also mandated in terms of 1998 legislation -- has further compromised the authority of the *amakhosi* at the level of local government.

In defining municipal structures, the demarcation board has specified that municipalities in the new dispensation will be centred on hubs of economic activity. In effect this means the deeply rural areas directly controlled by the *amakhosi* -- the former tribal trust lands under the apartheid homelands system -- will be brought together with urban centres in local government structures.

The result is the voice of the *amakhosi* is unlikely to be heard as stridently as in the past.

National director of local government Crispin Olver says direct representation will, however, not be the only role played by traditional leaders in the new

dispensation.

"Traditional leaders will still have an important role to play," Olver observes. "We are looking at a co-operative model whereby the chiefs as the representatives of tradition are involved in a dialogue with local government structures in developing their areas.

"As custodians of land through customary law, the chiefs will also be in a landowner-to-council relationship with the local councils which can be used in the process of development."

What Olver doesn't specify is that, in the new dispensation, the purse strings will be held by municipal structures. Under earlier legislation, money paid to local government structures in areas represented by the amakhosi was directly under their control. This was in addition to stipends paid to them as members of the House of Traditional Leaders.

But for the IFP the financial considerations are unlikely to hurt as much as the political considerations.

The role of the amakhosi in the politics of KwaZulu-Natal lies at the heart of the IFP's vision of a "Kingdom of KwaZulu", as enshrined in the party's provincial constitution. This builds political power around a constitutional monarchy in which the powers of the king are severely circumscribed in favour of the authority of the House of Traditional Leaders.

The house is led by Buthelezi wearing the hat of "traditional prime minister to the king" -- an assumed office which anthropologists have questioned as being without precedent or substance, and which the king himself has challenged, inconclusively, through the courts.

-- *The Mail & Guardian, August 16, 1999.*

LATEST NEWS

- Leaders under pressure top solve S Leone crisis
- Injuries hit Stormers, Sharks
- Slain Zim farmer's killing was 'personal' - wife
- JSE levels highest in a month
- No progress in Philippine hostage crisis
- England up 2006 World Cup campaign
- Sa stocks get lift from resources

TODAY'S FEATURES

- Ex-finance minister's firm slammed
- Vigilante group faces split
- Unions wary of ANC labour stance
- Eastern Cape farm schools in crisis
- Amber light for investing in SA
- In the name of the father
- Abacha's stolen millions 'in British banks'
- No passport, no way out of Freetown

[HOME](#) | [CONTENTS](#) | [SEARCH](#)

[ZA@PLAY](#) | [WHAT'S SHOWING](#) | [MOVIES](#) | [MUSIC](#) | [BOOKS](#) | [LETTERS](#) | [CHAT](#) | [EXILE CHAT](#) | [FIND A FRIEND](#) | [CYBERDRIVE](#) | [LEMMER](#) | [PCREVIEW](#) | [WEBFEET](#) | [RUSHKOFF](#) | [JUMP*START](#) | [ZA*NOW](#) | [MADAM&EVE](#) | [AFRICA](#) | [FIND A JOB](#) | [LINKS](#) | [TRAVEL](#) | [WHO WE ARE](#) | [HELP!](#) | [EMAIL US](#)

[THE TEACHER](#) | [GAY ISSUES](#) | [MANDELA'S LEGACY](#) | [ARTTHROB](#)