

Hearing the Given and the Made in South African Maskanda Music

Author(s): Barbara Titus

Source: *The World of Music*, 2021, Vol. 10, No. 2, Audibilities of Colonialism and Extractivism (2021), pp. 79-106

Published by: VWB - Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/27095339>

REFERENCES

Linked references are available on JSTOR for this article:

https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/27095339?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents

You may need to log in to JSTOR to access the linked references.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



VWB - Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The World of Music*

JSTOR

Hearing the Given and the Made in South African Maskanda Music

Barbara Titus

Abstract

In this article, I discuss examples of cultural and musical appropriation in and through South African maskanda music, often marketed as “Zulu blues.” These maskanda appropriations (by musicians, listeners, producers and researchers, including myself) have responsive as well as extractivist potential. Maskanda musickers consider songs, styles, techniques or instruments to be “given” and re/make these on their own account. By claiming command over this primary material they exert power; for instance by re/claiming agency over their own (or someone else’s) body or by confirming African cultural authority and normativity on global stages.

Rather than discussing the economic implications of cultural appropriation, I focus on the epistemic implications of distinguishing between what is given (that can be resourced, mined and exploited ad infinitum,) and what has been made (acquiring rarity and value through extensive processing). I address how this implied sensorial hierarchy between the given and the made (Ochoa 2014:21) plays out in the realms of music and sound. As the maskanda case shows, in musicking activities it is not so easy to distinguish the making from the remaking and the unmaking. Distinctions between the given (in being taken for granted) and the made (with its madeness being accredited) are porous and changeable. An investigation of the liminal spaces between assumed “aural givens” and “aural makes” may provide us with more insight into the dynamics of unobtrusive creative inventions becoming voracious industrial routines.

Sensorial hierarchies of the given and the made

In the years following its release in 2003, the song “Ngafa” (Xaba & Magubane 2003) by the umaskandi duo Shwi noMtekhala hit rocket sales in South Africa, selling hundreds of thousands of copies every year (Sowetanlive 2007).¹ The song starts with an isihlabo, a melodic introduction picked on the guitar, typical of the maskanda genre, and then evolves into a groove that many continue to identify instantly as the riff of Marvin Gaye’s R&B song “Sexual Healing” (1982). Being acutely aware

of the immense popularity of soul, funk and R&B in post-apartheid South Africa, Mandla Xaba (Shwi) and Rodgers Magubane (Mtekhala) do not just echo African American musical and cultural sensibilities; they reground them *as* African by making them into maskanda through vocal style, instrumental texture, and harmonic progression (see Titus 2016 for a detailed musical analysis). South African audiences are hearing R&B and maskanda at the same time. What's more: they hear maskanda *made out of* R&B. Thus, "Ngafa" continues to be a proud demonstration of South Africa's creative capacities to communicate with the rest of the world after decades of international cultural boycott during the apartheid years.

This act of South African cultural appropriation of African American musical idiom illustrates the importance of participating in global flows of knowledge, ideas and goods. It also points at the post/colonial implications of those flows. A range of scholars has investigated the colonial histories retraced by the travels of different kinds of capital along existing routes and infrastructures. Venezuelan anthropologist Fernando Coronil (2002) demonstrates how colonial patterns of subordination are sustained by a continued dependence of formerly colonized nations on the export of primary commodities. Nations such as South Africa and Coronil's Venezuela provide natural resources, extracted from their soil, and subassemblies lying ready for (and often taken for granted by) others to employ, exploit, re/use, process and refine into those consumer goods that paying consumers demand. Paradoxically, in order to diversify their economies and become less dependent on primary commodities, post-colonies need foreign currencies, and the only way to acquire these currencies seems to be to continue extracting and exporting primary commodities (Coronil 2002 as quoted in Svampa 2012:117).

This article investigates the epistemic equivalents of such patterns of dependence. South African literary scholar Mbongiseni Buthelezi explains how vernacular constellations of knowledge from the Global South continue to be mined as if they were raw epistemic material (2017:18) to be theorized and polished through northern-hemisphere conceptual categories. These categories have been crafted from a particular historical experience but are universalized in their "claim to interpret and explain histories in other parts of the world" (Mamdani, Ossome & Pillay 2016:8 as cited in Buthelezi 2017:18). In this situation, the conditions for knowledge makers from the Global South to participate in global exchanges of ideas is to keep providing material that others can use and develop for their own interests.

I argue that practices of both resource extractivism and epistemic extractivism rely on a sensorial hierarchy between what is given and what has been made. The implied hierarchy of natural resources, subassemblies and finished consumer goods rests on an assumption that some commodities are given entities that can be re-sourced, mined and exploited *ad infinitum*, and other commodities acquire rarity and value through extensive processing. Basic logics of capitalism—such as the opportunity for the concentration of capital, and laws of supply and demand—rely completely on this implied hierarchy of the given (*datum*) and the made (*factum*).

In the remainder of this introduction, I will further explore the implications of this hierarchy with regard to notions of music and sound.

This hierarchy demonstrates the close intersection of capitalist economics with *environmental* exploitation. Conceptions of nature (as given) and culture (as made) distinguish “cultured” man from his “natural” environment: other animals, in/animate objects, spirits (Viveiros de Castro 2013:19), engendering the illusion that what is done to nature does not (directly) affect man, since man is not nature. This distinction also allows for an attribution of various degrees of “humanity” to various groups of people. Such a taxonomy continues to legitimize equally binary distinctions between, for instance, colonizer and colonized or migrant and settler. Thus, the hierarchy between the given and the made also demonstrates the close intersection of capitalist economics with *colonial* exploitation, which—as Coronil (2002) and Acosta (2013), among others, have demonstrated—extends into the so-called post-colonial era.

Whereas a categorical distinction between nature and culture has long been interrogated and even refuted (Carrier 1984; Franklin 2003), Ana María Ochoa Gautier demonstrates that the underlying distinction between the given and the made has remained active as a sensorial hierarchy. She outlines the implications of this sustained activity for our engagements with music, sound and listening:

As we know, the main method of labor in the humanities throughout the late twentieth century has been that of “denaturalizing” what has been culturally constituted (Avelar 2013). But in “denaturalizing” the cultural constructions through which the knowledge of the “other” has been subordinated in order to recognize and reveal an “other” knowledge we often leave intact the underlying relation between nature and culture that such a knowledge implies. Instead of denaturalizing we often reculturalize by proposing new modes of representation. But not all cultures and not all peoples in different historical moments of Western history consider “nature” as the given and “culture” as the made. What is needed in altering our ways of relating the given, the made, and the sensorial is not just unsettling the history of representations but approaching the underlying relation between nature (as the given) and culture (as the made) implicit in the distinction between music and sound. (Ochoa 2014:21)

In this article, I take Ochoa’s insight as a starting point for an attempt to further unpack the ways in which we relate the given, the made and the sensorial (and aural) through my engagement with South African maskanda music that I researched between 2008 and 2015. It is not my intention to prove the perceived and sometimes embodied distinction between the given and the made false or invalid. It serves many purposes. Rather, I intend to outline how this binary (with its underlying logics as outlined above) remains active in the creation and appreciation of music, even if the binaries that it sustains (such as nature and culture, human and nonhuman animals, sound and music) are in the process of being challenged. Thus, I intend to show how the binary of the given and the made sustains existing distributions of power providing the preconditions for extractivist practices.

Through my focus on maskanda music, I intend to foreground three aspects of extractivism that can help situate the work of scholars, including myself, who re-

search current audibilities of extractivism and their loaded colonial and environmental pasts. Firstly, I demonstrate how dynamics of extractivism rely on the perceived assumption that what is considered “given” has not been “made.” Throughout this article, I dwell on ways in which natural resources but also Indigenous ideas, approaches, belief systems, rituals, and modes of communication are being employed as if they were inexhaustible and unchangeable. Through this employment, they are being taken for granted. Surely, land, natural resources, forests, and ice caps but also rituals, customs and belief systems have not been given by some god, but have taken millions of years to be made and are still in the process of being made. Yet, their exploitation is only possible through the denial of their “madness”—a madness that accounts for their preciousness and vulnerability. Thus, secondly, I foreground how practices of extractivism share epistemic procedures with practices of appropriation. The given is taken for granted as being there—always, timeless, for everyone to access and to use, and hence belonging to no one in particular until someone *claims* to do or make something with it. Such processes of cultural appropriation have been extensively and critically discussed by a range of authors, also in the realm of music (Taylor 1997; Feld 2000; Radano & Olaniyan 2016; among many others). Their critiques reveal that Indigenous (musical) ideas, techniques and modes of communication often continue to be treated in a similar way as “natural” resources, namely as a given that is static and unchangeable until a “cultured” artist takes them up and makes something out of them that can be copyrighted and universalized. Nevertheless, my aim here is to, thirdly, diversify the valences attributed to both extractivism and appropriation. Extractivist and appropriative acts do not only have an economic dimension of exploitation in denying the “madness” of what they ravage, they also have a creative dimension of making, (re)configuring and relating to what they ravage. I argue that it is not always easy to distinguish the exploitation from the creation.

Few will argue that the extraction of oil from Nigerian soil or the cultivation of palm oil on Indonesian soil has a creative dimension. These extractivist enterprises should rather be indicated with creativity’s binary opposite: destruction. However, long intellectual traditions of theorizing the intersections of creativity and destruction indicate the instances in which these poles feed into each other, for instance—as I will demonstrate below—in musical activity. Another crucial feature of extractivism is its industrial mode of operation. What has been conceived or invented as an effective way of acquiring goods is cast into a routine of massive scale and almost absolute standardization and uniformity. This mechanicity engenders the destructiveness of extractivist oil mining and palm oil cultivation, among others. It is tempting to point at a single profit-driven “neoliberal rationality of globalising capitalism” (Svampa 2012:117) as the impetus of industrial mining and monocrop agriculture, leading to environmental exhaustion, pollution, ecological degradation and economic precarity. Many economic, political, geographical and anthropological studies (Svampa 2012; Acosta 2013; Tsing 2015) have established causal relationships between these developments. Musical activity and sonic behaviour are not exempt

from the totalizing implications of this “neoliberal rationality” as the research into musical appropriation by Tim Taylor (1997) and Steven Feld (1996, 2000) mentioned above demonstrates.

My aim with this article is to diversify and complicate the apparently totalizing and singular implications of this neoliberal rationality that facilitates extractivist engagements with our environment. I do this by delving further into assumptions of what is given and what has been made. These assumptions are not always my assumptions—I rather observe them in the ways musicians and listeners engage with what they hear. In musicking activities it is not so easy to distinguish the making from the remaking and the unmaking. Distinctions between the given (in being taken for granted) and the made (with its madeness being accredited) are porous and changeable. An investigation of the liminal spaces between assumed “aural givens” and “aural makes” may provide us with more insight into the dynamics of unobtrusive creative inventions becoming voracious industrial routines. I suspect that this dynamic is never a one-way development. Rather it is an unpredictably oscillating dynamic between marginality and normativity, depending on the value being attributed to them by human and nonhuman agents in multiple times and locations.

I regard musicking as a mode of remaking what listeners and musicians treat as given through the way in which they use it. When we music, we appropriate existing ideas beyond conceptual means by taking command of them and claiming a form of sovereignty over them: in the cover of an existing song, in the use and recognition of modes, tunings, vocal techniques and choreographies associated with specific regions and epochs, or in the embellishment of motives, melodies and grooves. As such, musicking is also deeply relational (Feld 2015:13). “Ngafa” being a maskanda rendering of “Sexual Healing” has, hence, important epistemic implications. It is a mode of situating oneself in the world, of navigating one’s environment, of sense-making. It exerts power. Through musicking we develop ideas, systems, relations, events and creations that serve particular local interests in articulating a position with agency in, and impact on global exchanges of knowledge and ideas. These musical creations intersect with conceptual categorizations and classifications such as nature and culture, sound and music, the local and the global, the Zulu and the African American. Thus, as Ochoa has established in her book about listening and knowledge in nineteenth-century Colombia (2014), acts of musicking crucially determine the sensorial schemes that shape and are shaped by these conceptual categorizations and classifications.

The status and authority of one and the same musicking practice may differ hugely depending on whether it is considered given (and taken for granted) or made (with makers and participants being credited for their painstaking efforts of taking command of something else). Within the current global exchange of goods, ideas and knowledge, the commodification of the creations that emerge from a musicking practice, in the form of songs, albums, styles, playing techniques and musical instruments, provides a peculiar urgency to the dichotomy between the given and the made. Musicians such as Shwi noMtekhala, listeners, critics and record producers

who take command of existing sonic material (in the form of existing songs, styles, and playing techniques as well as other sonic experiences) can be extractivist in their very act of musicking: appropriating what they hear around them and remaking that on their own terms for their own interests in routinely manners. Maskandi Bongani Nkwanyana and jazz guitarist Bheki Khoza outlined how this appropriative capacity is central to maskanda practice. They identified early purveyors of the genre—Sipho Khoza (a.k.a. Thwalofu), Moses Mchunu, and Mphatheni Khumalo (a.k.a. Mfaz’Omnyama)—as champions of “playing their maskanda” into other musics, with conscious appropriative agency: “[Thwalofu] did chorals. Some maskandas are very good with that. They get a church song and actually *colonize*” (B. Nkwanyana 2009b). Once these creations are commodified as recognizable consumer products that can be exchanged with other consumer products, their agency (and that of their makers) changes depending on how they employ musical givens and how they are employed as musical givens for the making of something else.

In referring to musical appropriation here I emphasize that I am not primarily concerned with the economic exploitation of the musical creativity of those that do not fully participate in commercial exchanges of goods. This has been extensively addressed in a range of music studies from the past decades referenced above. Rather, I am concerned with the notion of musical appropriation as a creative epistemic act that grants and assumes power in many different situations—including extractivist ones—for a variety of actors. Such forms of appropriation have been insightfully addressed by Michael Denning, in his seminal history of recorded music *Noise Uprising* (2015). Denning points out the empowering implications of the large-scale commercial production, recording, dissemination and global exchange of melodies, timbres, grooves and line-ups. He convincingly argues how this global exchange aided a “decolonization of the ear.” With the advent of cheaper electronic recording techniques in the 1920s and intensified exchanges of goods and ideas between colonial ports worldwide, musicians and listeners around the globe could expose themselves and be exposed to musical ideas, musical instruments and sonic gestures in “trans-colonial reverberations” (2015:167) without the direct interference of the universalizing and generalizing ears of European and North American producers, managers and sales persons, especially following political decolonizations after World War II. Not only could they expose themselves to these sounds, techniques, styles and instruments, they could also actively appropriate them, thus “remaking the musical ear” (171).

At the same time, there are long and painful histories—many of them still to be told—of Black musicking practices being appropriated by White musicians and tailored to the aesthetic preferences of White audiences (Lott 1993; Greene 1998; Wald 2008; Birnbaum 2013). Many such processes of appropriation relied on a notion of the given as being obviously and “naturally” available, ignoring or downplaying its “madness.” Kofi Agawu (2003:55ff), for example, summarizes the long history of Black people being framed as having a “natural” sense of rhythm—a framing that downplays the efforts and the training involved in these skills. Other examples can

be found in framings of music as being “pure,” “real” or “authentic.” Their alleged purity and authenticity suggest an immanence and inexhaustibility that again denies the painstaking efforts with which these musics have been made. Moreover, it legitimizes their appropriation that bolsters categories of “intellectual property” and “polished civilization” to which they serve as a rejuvenation or enrichment. Tim Taylor (1997:22ff) and Steven Feld (2000:152ff) have provided pertinent critiques of such appropriations with examples ranging from Johann Gottfried Herder’s *Volkslieder* and Béla Bartók’s string quartets to Paul Simon’s *Graceland* and Jan Garbarek’s “Pygmy Lullaby.” I draw on these appropriations to emphasize that the relation between the given and the made is not only a hierarchical one (allowing for various degrees of madeness in primary resources, subassemblies and consumer goods), but at times also a mutually exclusivist one: what is given cannot have been made, since it has always been there and will always be there. This assumed immanence and inexhaustibility accounts for its assumed realness and purity.

The downplaying of the given’s madeness continues to take shape within a global system of capitalist commodification. Predominantly White audiences can invest their (foreign) currency in the production and dissemination of Black musicking practices, whether in a private home, a regional or national concert hall, at international festivals or through the acquisition of sound recordings and online playlists. Whereas music in Denning’s account is considered as consumer products that create a direct demand for (cultural) capital, the histories of White appropriation of Black musicking practices show that these same practices were considered as an equivalent of natural resources that had to be processed for consumption within a situated yet hegemonic cultural setting. Monetary, cultural and sub-cultural capital have been concentrated within this setting, and providers of natural resources are unable to share in its profits. Thus, practices of extractivism and legacies/presences of coloniality can be made audible through these musicking practices. In this article, I outline the tensions between the sovereignty implied in acts of musicking (as demonstrated in Shwi noMtekhala’s “Ngafa” and in Denning’s “remaking of the musical ear”) on the one hand, and the dependency of these acts of musicking on concentrations of capital on the other. This tension surfaces in how musickers submit to, negotiate and resist commodification, stereotyping and appropriation, since sovereign, emancipatory and dependent dimensions of their musicking acts have extractivist potential.

Maskandafication

In order to foreground the tension between musicking sovereignty and musicking subservience, I focus on the South African music genre maskanda that I researched between 2008 and 2015 with particular attention to its epistemic agency and implications. In maskanda’s turbulent history I observed many instances of maskanda musickers (musicians, listeners, critics, beneficiaries, producers, marketeers) engaging with situations and conditions by re/making them and sublimating them through

their music. Shwi noMtekhalas conception of the song “Ngafa” illustrates this. I also observed numerous instances, to be outlined below, of maskanda being treated as a given that could be commodified at will, subjugating maskanda musickers to positions of subservience and disempowerment. Often these empowering and disempowering dimensions are difficult to disentangle, and they feature maskanda’s colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid histories in almost equal degree. Colonialism continues to be audible in maskanda and related musicking practices.

Maskanda musicking—composing, performing, recording, listening, criticizing, promoting and employing maskanda—is a mode of knowing, a way of making sense of our world with our ears. Musicians do this by taking existing songs, sounds, forms, riffs and instrumental techniques and embellishing them in maskanda fashion. I argue that they regard these songs and sounds as a “given,” as “raw” material that they can do something with and make maskanda from it, often in routinized and standardized manners. Sometimes they credit the maker of this given material, and pay homage in musical and verbal manners; sometimes they do not. In these respects their mode of operation is no different from that of most musicians worldwide. In my forthcoming book about maskanda I employ the term “maskandafication” for these acts of appropriation and embellishment (Titus [forthcoming]).

These acts have always taken place in liminal and precarious environments. uMaskandi (anglicized into the genre name maskanda) is the Zulu pronunciation of the Afrikaans word musikant (musician) indicating both the genre and its purveyor. One way for an umaskandi to re/take command over his own living conditions that constituted “a given” was to remake them into something musical (see also Erlmann 1992). Hundreds of thousands of people were uprooted in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when diamonds and gold were discovered in South African soil. The quick and large demand for cheap labor in mines, farms, industries and harbours was executed through “a barrage of legislation designed to relegate [Black people] to a strictly subordinate role and to exploit [their] labour potential” (Meredith 2007:522). The legal imposition of segregation facilitated an infrastructure of massive forced labor migration. Entire communities became uprooted and were exposed to an immense range of cultural and musical impressions, including languages, rituals, belief systems, food, songs, dances, musical instruments, playing techniques and singing techniques.

Migrants from all over sub-Saharan Africa found themselves in a condition of continuous commute. Migration was largely seasonal, so what migrants encountered at their work places they brought back home to their villages. This implied that experiences of wandering, displacement and masculinity—with husbands and fathers being largely absent from their families—became important tropes in migrant communication and expression. It also enforced a powerful experiential and conceptual dichotomy between rural and urban spaces, and—by implication—between nature and culture as well as between tradition and modernity. This set of dichotomies and the implied relationships between them have been central in the creation and performance of maskanda music and enhanced the powerful sensorial hierarchy between

each end of the spectrum, especially since labor migrants found themselves in between the rural and the urban and in between tradition and modernity, observing both but belonging to neither of them (Davies 1992; Nhlapo 1998; Muller 1999; Titus 2008; Olsen 2014; Titus [forthcoming]).

Even if the name *maskanda* as a denominator of a genre gained currency only gradually, the “*maskandafication*” of experiences, living conditions and other musical practices was in full swing in the early decades of the twentieth century. Existing musical traditions such as *amahubo* choral dance song, gourd bow practices, and dances from various parts of sub-Saharan Africa, the music of British and Boer employers, and the music played on new media (jazz, ragtime on the radio) equally informed the syncretic culture that emerged from this urbanization and migration over a period of several decades. Dating the emergence of *maskanda* is hence an impossible endeavour, just as locating *maskanda* in a specific city or area is problematic. *Maskanda* is often described in general terms as a range of street guitar and concertina practices, carried out by individual musicians (*maskandi* [singular & plural]).

Currently, *maskanda* is played and enjoyed as studio-produced pop music in virtually any public space in KwaZulu-Natal and Johannesburg. Its line-up consists of guitar, bass, and drums complemented with concertina or violin and a backing chorus/dance group. *Maskandafication*—making music recognizable as *maskanda*—hence revolves around specific guitar tunings (with accompanying string resonances) in heptatonic as well as pentatonic modes, bi-tonal scales, the use of a melodic bass with heterophonic textures (audible in the “*Ngafa*” rendering of Marvin Gaye’s “*Sexual Healing*”), sustained nasal vocal techniques, the inclusion of spoken self-praise (*izibongo*) and regimented dance routines (*ingoma*).

Zulu eloquence

The tensions between the sovereignty implied in acts of musicking on the one hand, and the dependency of these acts of musicking on concentrations of various forms of capital on the other can be foregrounded by taking a closer look at how *maskanda* musickers take what they consider to be given and re/make it on their own terms. These *maskandafying* acts of taking and re/making are musical, conceptual and performative, and all have extractivist potential. Crucial in articulating the tension between sovereignty and dependence is *maskanda*’s association with Zulu culture and identity. At its inception in the early twentieth century, *maskanda* could not be attributed to any “people,” “nation” or language group in southern Africa. *Maskanda* was predominantly a solo occupation of wandering guitarists singing about the events and experiences they encountered on their way. They were regularly critical, provocative and humorous in casting their stories, laments and jokes. During the 1950s, however, record companies and media, regulated by the apartheid state, selectively recorded and broadcast predominantly a-political (sometimes censored) *maskanda* songs in a band setting that highlighted *ingoma* dance and war cries, with musicians

clad in ubeshu (animal skin) and/or umbaselwa (aestheticized mining suits) attire. These aspects did not necessarily form a part of maskanda's early performance, but soon acquired the status as unquestioned sonic and visual markers of maskanda (Olsen 2014:29ff). They were "givens" without which maskanda could not be "made." Thus, maskanda increasingly became associated with Zulu culture and identity, an association that lasts up to this day, as "Ngafa"'s video (Xaba & Magubane 2003) demonstrates.

Louise Meintjes and Johnny Clegg have extensively researched Zulu [i]ngoma dance expressing deep Zulu forms of eloquence. Their accounts are particularly sensitive to sonic and kinaesthetic sublimations of experiences and events through long-standing training and exercise. I address four Zulu concepts that underlie these acts of musical and choreographic sublimation and that are still prominent in much maskanda music as maskandafied renderings of ingoma dance and further deep Zulu symbolism. Meintjes has devoted a magnificent monograph to [i]ngoma dance (2017). She draws attention to a number of Zulu concepts that were explained to her by practitioners as "too deep to translate" (2017:46), suggesting an incommensurability between deep Zulu and colonial Euro-descendent modes of expression. One of them is *isigqi*—a sense of power that is valued as an aesthetic principle producing forms of masculine authority and beauty (2017:46). Meintjes demonstrates how [i]ngoma singer-dancers render *isigqi* through their voices and bodies in the dance's finest moments when they "are in control at the edge" (65). As examples Meintjes mentions the hardest hit of the foot in dance, a "hard" hit of a bass drum with a dense core, and a magic moment when a groove absolutely works through tight coordination of dancers, singers, and clappers (48). It is at such a height of artistry that a singer-dancer can express, register, and manage *ulaka*, a formidable as well as "moral or legitimate anger" (65). *Ulaka* resides in the throat (*ilaka*) and takes its name from it. Unlike jealousy or frustration, *ulaka* is a deep and sustained emotive state with a potential to become violent. This potential constitutes its potency and intensity. According to Meintjes, *ulaka* is "part of personhood and of a way of relating in the world." At the same time it "mobilizes unwavering (ethical or moral) action in specific circumstances" (66). Since it resides in the throat, it "is worked at through the craft of song" (*ibid.*). Meintjes' account provides insight into how emotive states, modes of expression and relating, and impetuses for action are stylized, sublimated and trained in [i]ngoma dance-song.

Johnny Clegg demonstrates how the kinaesthetic and musical sublimations realized in dance are simultaneously social and material, and are intended to share a time-space with consociates and contemporaries, a relational ontology that Steven Feld happens to attribute to the physicality of sound *per se* in his concept of "acoustemology" (2015). Clegg observes that "[t]he structure of the dance is saying something (...) about the people who are dancing it" (1984:65–66), but also how social tensions are being expressed and released through dance, and how one is to understand one's own body as well as one's social position through dance (1982:13). Clegg states that experiencing one's body in a certain way through dance revolves

around the concept of *ukuqina*, which encompasses spiritual courage as much as physical firmness. Dancing forces you to make your body firm and not give up when it starts hurting. Clegg explains this concept as part of a larger ideology that he calls *ubukunzi* (bullness). “It is looking at the bull that certain kinds of attitudes, both in dance and in fight, are developed” (1982:13). The bull becomes a symbol of manhood, virility, achievement and courage that not only concerns dance, but behavior within the community, social interaction and social understanding at large. With these examples, Clegg draws attention to the intricate intertwining of social and physical bodies, emphasizing that “the physical experience of the body (...) sustains a particular view of society” and also that “[t]he social body constrains the way the physical body is perceived” (Mary Douglas 1996 [1970]:69 quoted in Clegg 1982:13).

The political, aesthetic and eloquent dimensions of *ingoma* dance put *maskanda*’s commodification in apartheid times—moulding it from a critical storytellers tradition into a dancing band practice (Olsen 2014:29ff)—in another light. After all, this dancing band practice has all sorts of political and agential connotations that many will understand and act upon, even if it has not been designed as a conscious mode of resistance. However, whereas the life times of training, polishing and refining account for their cultural importance as aesthetic principles to some, this *maskanda* may remain unobserved by ignorant others who experience *ingoma* as raw and unpolished. There is a long history of framing Zulu people as being closer to nature, as cohabiting with their animals and cattle, with a propensity for violence, and resorting to the body for expression and communication. Jeremy Martens explains the

near-obsessive focus on “rapacious” habits of “savage” life (...) Natal whites and their imperial overlords felt justified in typecasting isiZulu speaking people as the progeny of pent-up, celibate warriors of [King] Shaka’s “frightfully efficient man-slaying machine”. Such a view helped to justify colonial repression of African peoples in KwaZulu-Natal from the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 (...) and beyond. (Martens 2008:130)

It may be this rift between potential experiences of *ingoma* dance that may explain the claim of its incommensurability with normative (colonial, Euro-descendent) modes of expression that features in the alleged untranslatability of the concepts that reflect and shape *ingoma* practices. During my own fieldwork research, I also often encountered this claim with regard to *maskanda*. “*Maskanda* comes from being Zulu,” *maskandi* Nothi Ntuli asserted. “It cannot be done by somebody who grew up in another location, because [*maskandi*] do something that you grew up with from home.” (Ntuli 2009). Afropop-singer Khoni Miya explained this exclusivity in (imaginary) geographical terms that reinforces the earlier mentioned dichotomy between the rural/pre-colonial/traditional and the urban/colonial/modern. “*Maskanda* is healing you,” she confined to me. “When you are here in Durban, just play *maskande* and feel yourself back there, at home [in the village Highflats near Ixopo]. Because it is the thing from rural areas (...) *Maskanda* is right deep from the homelands. Deep homelands.” (Miya 2009). This dichotomy was also suggested

by maskandi Joe Nkwanyana when he demonstrated to me the differences between rural and township modes of singing. He positioned them as intrinsically different drawing on generational and geographical parameters (J. Nkwanyana 2009).

Thus, deep Zuluness, including the concepts of *isigqi*, *ulaka*, *ukuqina* and *ubukunzi*, occupies a position of “quite-other” (Bloechl 2008:11). Olivia Bloechl observes, with Derrida, Bhabha and Spivak, that this state of alterity is unplotable within hegemonic discourses, including academic research (14). This state of alterity makes the Zulu musical practices and discursive concepts discussed here extremely powerful and simultaneously acutely prone to abuse. They are sovereign in their incommensurability thanks to an array of opportunities for action, including the re/claiming of (acoustic) space, of movement, and of agency over one’s own (or someone else’s) body (see Erlmann 1992). However, they also become subject to brutal epistemic violence to force them within hegemonic discourses as outlined by Martens (2008).

I argue that this intersection of empowerment and disempowerment is situated in sensorial schemes (such as the sensorial distinction between the given and the made) with accompanying “spectral politics” (Ludueña quoted in Ochoa 2014:16) that operate as unarticulated power structures in our thinking (including our research) today. Ochoa’s observation—quoted at the start of this article—that in the attempts to denaturalize potentially repressive cultural constitutions, we actually “often reculturalize [them] by proposing new modes of representation” (2014:21) exposes some of the dynamics of such spectral politics. Maskanda—as I will argue—not only exemplifies, but also violates these sensorial schemes, and in this capacity menaces (colonial) authority.

Even if dichotomies of body-mind, nature-culture, rural-urban, traditional-modern, and oral-written have been debunked intellectually and conceptually, I argue that sensorially they remain active among maskanda practitioners, listeners and maybe also in my own experience of this music. During the apartheid years between 1948 and 1994, racial categories of Blackness and Whiteness were institutionalized up to the smallest physical, geographical, psychological, economical, educational and sensorial detail. As Gavin Steingo points out: “[t]he apartheid policy of ethnic zoning was not merely spatial; it was also, and at the same time, a distribution of the sensible. (...) It produced, in other words, a triangular relationship between bodily postures, cognitive affordances, and practices of sense making” (Steingo 2016:95).

Without wanting to argue that nothing has changed since the demise of apartheid in 1994, I sensed the presence of the above dichotomies in value judgements about maskanda in my communication with maskandi as well as with listeners and producers both within and outside South Africa. Many listeners, both Black and White, asserted that maskanda is suitable music to dance on but not much to think about or reflect on, assuming a mutual exclusivity of dance and thought, of mind and body. The adamant adherence to the categorical distinction between deep and urban Zulu ways of life also reflects the above dichotomies in distinguishing the rural from the urban and the traditional from the modern rooted in experiences of forced labor mi-

gration The skills and knowledge associated with deep Zulu concepts that pertain to dance—isigqi as powerful flow on the edge, ulaka as formidable, potentially violent anger, ukuqina as bodily and mental firmness, and ubukunzi as “bullness”—are hence easily designated to one side of the binary schemes mentioned above: the body-nature-rural-traditional-oral side, excluding it a priori from the other side. In this capacity they can be employed as natural resources or primary products that are in need of polishing and refinement in order to be validated and consumed by audiences that occupy the other side of the “spectral” binary: the mind-culture-urban-modern-written side. Thus, although the apartheid racial categories of Blackness and Whiteness have been debunked and dismissed in most contemporary South African discourses, the sensorial scheme of the given and the made remains intact.

Maskanda practice reflects these spectral politics, but also menaces them. Maskanda musicians consciously take on the task of straddling deep Zulu and urban Zulu ways of life through maskandafication: cladding musical skills, techniques and forms experienced as traditional in allegedly urban and modern musical formats. Pentatonic modes and tunings of the guitar, for instance, were modelled on umakhweyana gourd bow practices. Vocal techniques were directly derived from amahubo a-cappella choral dance song (Rycroft 1977; Impey 1983; Titus 2013). Joe Nkwanyana’s distant cousin, maskandi Bongani Nkwanyana, explained to me that “maskand is not the real Zulu music.” His assertion deviates from Ntuli’s and Miya’s claims, but does not necessarily contradict them, since Nkwanyana acknowledged that “maskand was born of the real music of the Zulus” (B. Nkwanyana 2009b). To him, maskanda’s capacity to straddle and develop various forms of Zulu heritage is much more important than its guardian capacity. He emphasizes maskanda’s difference from what is “real” and hence “given.” He explains how maskanda was and is made.

On the one hand, maskanda continues to possess high social and epistemic status for those who were forcibly removed from their homes and families and excluded from formal education. Through its narratives, musical techniques, ingoma dance routines and spoken self-praise (izibongo), maskanda songs continue to transmit knowledge and personalize public space. The music becomes a portable domain to feel at home in (Olsen 2004:1). Memories of the rural past and rural homes can be vividly evoked through it; they “negotiate and articulate [an individual vision] of urban space and experience in tension with [those of] rural Zululand” (Muller 1999:222). Despite the alleged incommensurability of deep Zulu expression and colonial Euro-descendent culture, maskanda meaningfully straddles these domains.

On the other hand, maskanda’s alleged rural traditionalism clad in urban and modern musical forms, techniques and instruments was employed for colonial and apartheid stereotyping of Black ways of life. Olsen has shown how the (re)imaginings and (re)claimings of rural homes in maskanda performance and adjoining genres were “almost instantly appropriated by the apartheid government in its design of an ethnically divided South Africa. The clearly expressed location of these songs, not just as Zulu music, but Zulu music rooted in a rural past, was ripe for use

as validation of the notion of a Zulu homeland [native reserve]” (Olsen 2014:188). Thus, enactments of homing were transformed into violent forms of domestication.

In hindsight it is obvious that maskanda’s framing as traditional and rural in apartheid times was a direct response to the threat maskanda posed to apartheid in straddling sensorial and expressive domains that were to be kept strictly separate. Maskanda’s “madeness” from Zulu, Boer, Chunu, U.S.-American, Bhaca, and British musical “givens” was to be denied in colonial and apartheid constellations as much as the craftsmanship of ingoma dance was ignored. As Steingo has argued, ideological, conceptual and sensorial dimensions of this separation intersected in this denial (2016:95). This enabled imperial overlords and later apartheid ideologues to reduce the experience of being Zulu to the constructed domains of the body, dance, warriorhood, and rural simplicity (as described by Martens), in order to domesticate Zulu cultural expression as decidedly and fixatedly Other. Erlmann demonstrates how racialized notions of class in Natal were articulated along these lines. “Symbols of the countryside” were mobilized for “the unemployed and the day laborers,” whereas workers who “were more firmly and securely incorporated in the urban work force identified with and at least partially accepted Western cultural models” (Erlmann 1991:57). Referring to research by David Coplan, among others, Louise Meintjes outlines, like Olsen, how “[u]rban-rural stresses implicate other kinds of tensions—generational, political, ethnic, religious, class and so forth—which arise from the way the urban-rural divide has been historically exploited by apartheid exponents” (Meintjes 2003:205).

Extractivism continued?

It is interesting to observe that precisely these stereotypes currently still have national and global appeal in the consumption and production of “African” music (Meintjes 2003:225). They are considered “givens” without which maskanda cannot be “made.” This imagery is prominently displayed in Shwi noMtekhala’s “Ngafa” from 2003 that hit rocket sales almost twenty year ago (Xaba & Magubane 2003). This imagery also features the album *Bawucisha ngo Paraffin* from 2019 by maskandi group Abafana baka Mgqumeni that was released by a Korean label and was chosen as Best Maskandi Album in 2020 (Mseleku & Mseleku 2019), as well as the album *Ungqongqoshe Wongqongqoshe* from 2019 by the maskandi-inspired rapper Big Zulu that was nominated as Best Hip Hop Album (Nene 2019).

These video clips, and the rewards they received from SAMA (South African Music Awards) (Mahlangu 2020), demonstrate that the imagery of warriorhood, rural homesteads, ubeshu (animal skin) attire, and synchronized dance is consistent over this period of time. This imagery does not exclude the often critical and societally urgent messages (amagama) that all these artists continue to express through their music, despite the decades of apartheid censorship mentioned earlier. *Imbizo* (1992), for instance, is a highly political album. Phuzekhemisi and his brother Kethani ef-

fectively confronted members of Parliament as well as local chiefs with the enduring absence of basic amenities for large numbers of South African citizens by reporting and criticizing this in their songs, notably the title song. The album sold hundreds of thousands of copies and Phuzekhemisi had a crucial role in calming people down during ensuing faction fights in the early 1990s when South Africa stood on the brink of a civil war.

The continued stereotypical associations of maskanda as traditional music being rooted in a rural past in which people live closer to nature has multiple implications. They might contribute to the alleged incommensurability of Zulu culture with modernity as propagated in colonial and apartheid times, by feeding into maskanda's former status as a "Zulu Trad." primary product or cheap commodity rather than as a polished consumer good.² However, such associations might also demonstrate how maskanda practices continue to straddle these formerly segregated domains of expression after the demise of apartheid (cultural) policy in 1994. An increasing number of maskandi no longer use imagery that refers in any way to the rural or the tribal, whereas they stick to isiZulu language, dance routines, and musical features (melodic bass, nasal and/or recitational vocal techniques, ululating) that are associated with Zulu expression (for instance in Shwi noMtekhala's "uThando" released in 2020 [Xaba & Magubane 2020]). The opportunities for maskanda musickers to expose themselves to international artistic developments, both as artists and listeners, have grown immensely after the lifting of the cultural boycott in the early 1990s. Maskanda renderings of U.S. American music genres perceived as Black, such as reggae, hip-hop (Majozi 2006), soul, R&B (Xaba & Magubane 2003) and jazz (B. Nkwanyana 2009a), do not primarily mimic existing normative global musical practices, but self-consciously and confidently re/interpret this music from an "African" vantage point (see Titus 2016, [forthcoming]). These maskandafications confirm African cultural authority and normativity through the simultaneous articulation of Zulu tradition and Zulu modernity and its audible, material and experiential overlaps with African American musicking—a double vision in Homi Bhabha's words, or, I would say: a double ear. In this case, a firm distinction between what is given (U.S. songs) and what is made (maskanda renderings) accounts for this empowerment.

Still, the musical commodification that enables such musical dialogues thrives on national and global music industries that again reveal spectralities of the human exploitation and natural extractivism normalized by the nineteenth- and twentieth-century mining industries. Even seasoned talent scouts and producers admit that the business is extremely tough on musicians (Nzimande 2009; Nthethe 2011). Several musicians, including well-educated middle-class ones, reported cases of exploitation to me by a multitude of concert and festival organizers, and they drew comparisons with practices in the South African music industry that prey in particular upon musicians that are ill informed, hooking them with shiny promises into killer contracts (Gonsalves 2009; Nkabinde 2009; Khama 2009). Especially after the lifting of the boycott, there was a significant rise in the demand for local Black musics, both nationally and internationally. Combined with a huge pool of badly educated and eco-

nominally vulnerable Black musicians, this led to a profitable industry thriving on cheap and indentured labor that is facilitated by existing infrastructures of more than a century of forced labor migration.

The career of maskandi Nothi Ntuli, whom I encountered in Downtown Studios in Johannesburg in 2009, illustrates the extractivist tendencies within South African music industries. Ntuli is a highly respected backstage guitarist. Often, the biggest maskanda stars do not play live guitar, even if they are on a live stage and hold a guitar in their hands. Instead, they focus on the dance that has become such an important aspect of the performance (Jenkins 2013). Skilled but invisible guitarists do the playing for them back stage. Ntuli started his career as a backstage guitarist for the legendary maskandi Mphatheni Khumalo (a.k.a. Mfaz'Omnyama [1959–2001]). Today, he remains one of the most regularly asked backstage guitarists. He is covered in sessionist studio work, yet a solo career is an unattainable dream. Ntuli described his life to me as that of a labor migrant in which the mining or domestic labor that kept people from home in the apartheid days is now replaced by studio work.

When I am at home there are no people to play with. (...) In the rural areas, that's where it is difficult to find people to play with. And also studios... it's very hard. (...) So if you don't have a band of your own... like here [in Johannesburg/Jozi] it is a studio, so they know people. They know that so-and-so plays guitar, so-and-so plays bass, so-and-so plays the concertina. So you can call them and tell them: this is what I want to play with bass and I want you to play like this and then it will come together. (...) I don't like staying here. It's the whole money situation. Jozi is too difficult. You need money to stay here. Every month I have to pay 800 rand for a place to stay. When I am at home I don't have to pay a cent. [laughs] (...) Just to make money and when I have it, I go home and come back (Ntuli 2009).

I argue that there is a relation between these practices of economical exploitation on the one hand, and maskanda's continued status as a “Zulu Trad.” commodity on the other. Surely, there are maskanda musicians who earn a proper living from their music, such as iHashi Elimhlope, Phuzekhemisi, Thokozani Langa, and Bongani Nkwanyana, but the large majority of maskandi accept the dire conditions offered to them because that is what they expect. Moreover, this is what they expect to *represent*. Maskanda is supposed to be *about* the migrant experience of being in a continuous condition of commute, propelled by a perennial attempt to make a living. These expectations often surfaced when I conveyed my interest in maskanda: why would an affluent White woman from Europe come to South Africa especially in order to study maskanda? Maskanda aficionados Dennis Hadebe and Selby Ngcobo repeatedly assured me that maskanda is local, it is Zulu, it is “nothing special” (Hadebe 2008; Ngcobo 2008). Maskanda's incommensurability with the outside world is still a tangible remnant of apartheid distributions of the sensible. The set of binaries of body-nature-rural-traditional-oral versus mind-culture-urban-modern-written, anchored in racist oppositions between Black and White people, remains operative on a subterranean level in the appreciation and validation of music as outlined at the beginning of this paragraph.

Maskanda's rough, local or unremarkable commodity status sometimes obstructs the acknowledgement of its skilled craftsmanship affecting the ways in which it is created and produced. Maskandi and producers presented me with an array of examples. Bongani Nkwanyana complained that contemporary maskanda sounds more like (homophonic) mbaqanga. "Their guitar is clumsy. The skill of the instrument has deteriorated beyond recognition" (2009). Producer Lichaba Nthethe indicates how the sound ideal from the studio is rooted in artistic indifference, lamenting the lack of commitment from recording industries in the studio production of maskanda: "I went to a couple of recording sessions where a guy would record a fourteen-track album in a day! And that for me was, like, shocking (...) and the engineer would be sitting on the other side, and he doesn't care, he doesn't care about the quality" (Nthethe 2011).

How can we understand maskanda's skilled craftsmanship and the creative artistry of maskandafication beyond this pernicious set of binaries? During and just after my research between 2008 and 2015 my strategy was to drag maskanda away from its domain of inferior epistemic and artistic otherness into the realm of art. My primary aim was to demonstrate its kinaesthetic sophistication, its musical eloquence, its intellectual depth—which I do in my forthcoming monograph about maskanda (Titus [forthcoming]). Only when I started reading Ochoa's critical approach of the sensorial schemes underlying distinctions between nature and culture (2014), did I realize I was sustaining the set of binaries that I criticized by simply taking maskanda over to the other side. I was also sustaining the underlying assumption about nature being the given and culture being the made. This made me reconsider my own role as a White European researcher of maskanda in a number of encounters with maskanda musicians. One of them I want to address in more detail in order to show the difficulty, if not impossibility, of escaping from the all-pervading expectations that arise from this set of binaries. Even if I intended my research to be responsive and collaborative rather than extractive (see also Impey 2018:34), I found myself benefitting from it in ways that my maskandi colleagues did not. I draw on one event during my fieldwork research that touches on the instance where collaboration and extractivism become difficult to distinguish.

In August 2009, I participated as a backing chorus singer and dancer in the maskanda band of my friend and colleague Khombisile S'kho Miya, sister of the earlier mentioned Khoni Miya. We performed at the Kushikisha Imbokodo Festival in Durban's BAT Centre, which, as the name indicates, was completely devoted to women musicians.³ I was rather visible. It was an exclusively Zulu musicking event in which musicians and audiences shared musical, social, cultural and ideological knowledge that they were all clearly familiar with. The Festival was, however, by no means culturally exclusivist. On the contrary, I had expected more surprise at, and less understanding, enthusiasm and encouragement of my half-hearted attempt to "join the club." Local media picked up on my participation, and a couple of weeks later I and S'kho Miya were invited for an interview at a local radio station Vibe FM in Durban's KwaMashu township (Vibe FM 2009).

In 2009, the station featured a daily show completely devoted to maskanda from 7 to 9am, with the participation of local maskandi. The atmosphere in the studio was professional and relaxed, all staff members were male, and although the audience was addressed in Zulu, the interview with me was conducted in English. The interviewers, DJ Mlungisi and Lungisani, half-jokingly, brought me in as a peculiar specimen of the local maskandi and asked me when my first maskanda album would be released.

They encouraged me to sing with Miya the two-part refrain of her song “Ngilobole,” which resulted in idolatrous calls from listeners, thanking me in Zulu. DJ Mlu and I both emphasized S’kho’s crucial role in my maskanda engagement. During the interview it became increasingly clear to me that it is thanks to S’kho that I have been able to familiarize myself with the music in many different respects. She has helped me to know how maskanda is sung, how an izibongo (spoken self-praise passage) is constructed and should be delivered in public, how a song is being taught to instrumentalists, which dance routines belong to which phrases, and how one needs to dress for a performance. Intentionally or unintentionally, she has also provided insight into the daily lives of many maskandi nowadays, both in her Durban room and in her village that I continue to visit on a regular basis. But most importantly, she has socially included me, making me part of the band and part of her family, a relationship that lasts up to this day and which does not only concern her, but also her community. As many people pointed out to me, she primarily regards me as an *umuntu* (a human being), and only secondarily as an *umlungu* (a White person), two concepts that can often be mutually exclusive for many Black South Africans today. Conversely, I have been able to identify and often dispel the subconscious reified presumptions of stereotypical Zuluness in my mind and attitude, thanks to my relationship with S’kho and Khoni and many more maskanda musickers. In each of our own universes, we have allowed each other to become more human; we have granted each other humanity.

Yet, I was insufficiently able to bring across this insight to the Vibe FM listeners. S’kho kept very silent throughout the interview and she seemed subdued, shy and conspicuously on guard. As vocal and present she can be in the delivery of her music and izibongo for a large audience, here she was almost vanishing in the corner of that studio. S’kho’s seminal role in presenting maskanda to scholars and audiences from outside South Africa seemed to be swept under the carpet during the radio show, simply by the fact that I was receiving the credits for doing that; I was doing the talking, and I was receiving the idolatrous calls from KwaMashu listeners thanking me for it. I have never been able to discuss this agential inequality with S’kho, and ask her whether this was the reason of her silence during our Vibe FM interview, but I am quite certain we both felt it that day. It may have been what Angela Impey calls “eloquent silence” (2018:215) suggesting “the presence of something hidden but unspeakable” yet “culturally recognized and politically understood” (216). Silence may be “a means of protecting personal interests, an expression of anger or rebellion, a survival strategy” (ibid.)

The structures of inclusion and exclusion that were suggested by S'kho's silence, to some extent grow out of the legacy of apartheid's policy of "separate development," but are being sustained through unarticulated presumptions of Europe's cultural, epistemic and epistemological self-sufficiency and superiority more generally. Unreflectively, in typical self-confident White fashion, I assumed that learning these maskanda skills had been my achievement, whereas teaching them successfully had been S'kho's achievement. My learning had been completely dependent on her teaching. But, as Angela Impey points out, these "non-speech/text-based modalities" and the "insights gleaned from sensory and performative registers" (221) have little currency in a technocratic world.

Involuntarily, I had been complicit in the further downplaying of this currency. Since in true maskandi fashion, S'kho had been building bridges between cultural realms that continue to be considered incommensurable, teaching amahubo vocal techniques and ingoma dance steps to the European choral singer and historian of European music that I then was. Surely, I had had a role in this bridge building endeavour, but through my work as an academic writer and an interviewee at Vibe FM I had also had the agency to Whiten up what she had taught me: to consider it as art and to give it a European stamp of approval. This may have been what the listeners in KwaMashu thanked me for. In trying to "emancipate" maskanda I had firmly re-established the sensorial schemes that had banished deep Zulu knowledge and "insights gleaned from sensory and performative registers" (Impey 2018:221) to domains of epistemic otherness in the first place. The question remains how we can critically engage with existing sensorial schemes through which power is distributed and how we can meaningfully adapt them for a more equal distribution of power and agency. As I hope to have demonstrated here, distancing oneself from them discursively and ideologically does not always suffice to dispel them.

Conclusion

This article has foregrounded the importance of indicating the implied hierarchies between what is considered given and what is considered made. The anthropocentric and binary sensorial and expressive schemes that thrive on this dichotomy point at the close intersection of capitalist economics and colonialist politics that converge in extractivist modes of living. The analysis and interpretation of such sensorial schemes prompts us to look into modes of validation and appreciation that reach beyond verbalized ideologies. Maskanda musicking and resulting maskandafications are examples of sonic, embodied and performative modes of knowing that have their own critical and analytical implications, sounding out and making audible exertions and distributions of power and agency that may remain unnoticed through academic modes of (conceptual) interpretation.

Maskanda musickers situate themselves as musicians, listeners, critics, producers and concert organizers by employing normative sensorial schemes: they dis-

tinguish rural from urban, Black from White, traditional from modern modes of musicking (Nkwanyana 2009b; Miya 2009; Ntuli 2009). They also unsettle these schemes by straddling these binaries that, especially in apartheid times, were strictly policed as separate (Erlmann 1991:57; Meintjes 2003:205) and continue to organize music markets and music industries within South Africa and beyond. Affected by experiences of migration, maskanda musickers belonged to neither of these binary poles and therefore could observe both. They were migrants with a double vision (Bhabha 1994:88) or double ear. Their acts of musicking have responsive and relational potential as well as extractivist potential in taking something they consider to be “given” (songs, traditions, styles, techniques, instruments) and re/make this on their own account. By claiming command over this primary material (thus consciously distinguishing between what is given and what is made) they exert power. In this way Shwi noMtekhala reclaim Marvin Gaye’s R&B music as *African* capital with their song “Ngafa.” Not surprisingly, this endeavour resulted in the conception of a new genre name that expanded and even generalized their act of appropriation: maskandiR&B.⁴ My own acts of maskanda musicking have served as an example to demonstrate the difficulty of distinguishing relational from extractivist exertions of power.

As Ochoa already observed, distinctions between nature and culture, human and nonhuman animals, living and non-living entities have been based on a sensorial hierarchy between the given and the made. Apart from their conceptual dimensions these categories are thoroughly embodied which makes them extremely powerful. In subjecting the categories of the given and the made to critical scrutiny I have increasingly started wondering what this powerful sensorial agency encompasses. In this article I have demonstrated how making something, remaking something or claiming to re/make something is an exertion of power and is almost always effective in actually taking command of a musical instrument, a song, or one’s own body. I have also demonstrated how considering something as a given can be a realm of refuge, enabling a longing for, or a trust in the eternal presence of a rural homestead, a form of vocal eloquence, water to drink, air to breath, or the (Black) servant always standing ready to satisfy (White) needs. Yet this eternal presence is an illusion, since everything that is considered given has been made at some point, prior to which it was not there. That temporality also testifies to its present and future fragility.

The sensorial categories of culture, sophistication and humanity are functional in maintaining this illusion of the given as not made, upholding the sensorial hierarchy between the given and the made. For a sustainable future, this illusion and this hierarchy should be interrogated and unsettled, which—as I have demonstrated in this article—is something that maskanda already does. At the same time, sensorial categories of culture, sophistication and humanity can be functional in demonstrating the madeness of what might otherwise be taken for granted. As such they have important critical agency that I cannot afford to forsake. At last, S’kho Miya and I find ourselves in a position to grant each other forms of humanity that we may not have granted each other before. At last, after centuries of de-humanization of Zulu

people, maskanda music and ingoma dance can be explained as sophisticated and cultured eloquence—an eloquence grounded in music and dance’s capacity to be a sublimation of animal (including human) behavior. In my view, this is why distinctions between nature and culture, between human and nonhuman animals, spirits, souls and entities, and between various groups of people remain incredibly important for the shaping of a sustainable future, if we can dispel the sensorial hierarchy between the given and the made that currently feeds into them.

Acknowledging the “madeness” of our worlds—forests, string quartets, baby worms, cave drawings, and maskandafied R&B songs—is one thing. Bearing the consequences of this acknowledgment and fairly distributing these consequences among the inhabitants of the earth is something else altogether. European subjects currently benefit from a long past of being able to pollute the earth with heavy industries and close to limitless mobility compared to many non-European subjects. White subjects currently benefit from a long past of being able to deny people of color a fully-fledged human status. We have entered a situation in which an increasing number of human subjects all around the globe are in a position to control and exploit the earth and its inhabitants for their own benefit, and in which all human beings are at least entitled (even if often unable) to call on this humanity for their rights and comfort. This increases the pressure on nonhuman subjects and the earth more generally. Human animals have been able to subjugate, control and exploit their fellow inhabitants—other animals, other living creatures, entities such as mountains and rivers, spirits, ancestors—by distancing themselves from them physically, physiologically and psychologically.

It is this tension we need to face: some of us will have to give up privileges; others will have to refrain from them before they even started enjoying these privileges. Since these privileges are not limited to being able to fly to the other side of the world for a holiday at some beach, but also encompass productivity, reproductivity, gross national income and welfare systems, refraining from them will hit some (human) subjects harder than others, possibly enhancing existing inequalities of power. This also concerns the discursive and epistemic structures we have internalized to enable and legitimize extractivist modes of living. If I dismiss the categories of nature and culture and refuse to distinguish between them for universalized ethical reasons, I also deny maskanda musickers the participation in this (potentially emancipatory) category of culture, potentially pushing them back into the least favorable subject position that precisely these binaries can indicate: the natural, the less human, the taken for granted.

For me, the only way out of this deadlock is to no longer take anything for granted. We should acknowledge the painstaking efforts with which everything has been made. If collectively and consistently proclaimed, this might cause a shift in the sensorial hierarchy between what is considered given and what is considered made, and by whom they are considered as such, without dismissing the critical and empowering potential of a distinction between these categories.

Acknowledgments

I'd like to thank the anonymous reviewer for their pertinent comments and questions that considerably improved this article. I also want to thank Emily Hansell Clark for her helpful suggestions.

Notes

- 1 Maskanda is the anglicized rendering of the orthographically more correct umaskandi (the Zulu pronunciation of the Afrikaans word musikant). I use the anglicized form in this article to allow comparison with other publications about maskanda, but practitioners and listeners use a range of ways to denote the genre and its purveyors: massekand, maskand, maskande, massakanda, umaskand, etc. I retain this diversity of denotations in citing umaskandi's oral testimonies in this article.
- 2 "Zulu Trad." was a marketing label for music produced, distributed and framed as traditional Zulu music in apartheid times. Music industries, entirely regulated by apartheid cultural policies, produced and released music with visual rather than sonic cues of "Zuluness," such as dance, dress and album artwork stereotypically associated with life in the so-called homelands.
- 3 The organizer of the Festival, S'kho's sister Khoni Miya, translated "kushikisha" to me as the movements women make when they dig and plant food for their children. The term can also be used in a figurative sense: women's movement (Miya 2009). "Imbokodo," the Zulu word for grind stone, also refers to the Zulu saying "Wathint' abafazi wathint' imbokodo" (Strike the women and you'll strike the rock), that was used on 9 August 1956 when 20,000 women gathered at the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against pass laws for women of color. With these references to Zulu tradition and anti-apartheid history, Khoni Miya effectively brought the importance of current female visibility and representation to the fore.
- 4 Nhlanhla Ngwekazi, anchorman of the weekly traditional music show *Moribo*, broadcast on prime time at SABC 2 in 2009 related how "MaskandiR&B was pioneered by Mfiliseni Magubane. (...) For the first time you hear an artist who is backed by kind of modern, young female backing voices (...) they are some of our best female voices in South Africa, so they will start singing backing voices and you will start to hear a few English words in maskanda, like: "my baby, I love you." Magubane took that song from Marvin Gaye "Let's get it on." He took that bass line and that rhythm and sang maskandi in that. Writing his own song, but fitting into that rhythm, and he sang it, and it was like a new sound of maskandi, and it was labeled maskandiR&B, because you started hearing some R&B sounds in maskande" (Ngwekazi 2009).

References

Acosta, Alberto

- 2013 "Extractivism and Neoextractivism: Two Sides of the Same Curse." In *Beyond Development: Alternative Visions from Latin America*. M. Lang and D. Mokrani, eds. Amsterdam: Transnational Institute, 61–86.

- Agawu, V. Kofi
2003 *Representing African Music: Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Positions*. London: Routledge.
- Bhabha, Homi
1994 "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse." In *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 85–92.
- Birnbaum, Larry
2013 *Before Elvis: The Prehistory of Rock 'n' Roll*. Lanham [etc.]: The Scarecrow Press.
- Bloechl, Olivia A.
2008 "On Colonial Difference and Musical Frontiers: Directions for a Postcolonial Musicology." In *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1–32.
- Buthelezi, Mbongiseni
2017 "Why Are You Learning Zulu Again?" *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies* 18 (1):16–19.
- Carrier, James G.
1984 "Cultural Themes in Educational Debates: The Nature-Culture Opposition in Accounts of Unequal Educational Performance." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 5(1):33–47.
- Clegg, Johnny
1984 "An Examination of the Umsanzi Dance Style." In *Papers Presented at the 3rd Symposium on Ethnomusicology*. Andrew Tracey, ed. Grahamstown: International Library of African Music, 64–70.
1982 "Towards an Understanding of African Dance: The Zulu isiShameni style." In *Papers Presented at the [2nd] Symposium on Ethnomusicology*. Andrew Tracey, ed. Grahamstown: International Library of African Music, 8–14.
- Coronil, Fernando
2002 *El Estado mágico. Naturaleza, dinero y modernidad en Venezuela. Consejo de Desarrollo Científico y Humanístico de la Universidad Central de Venezuela*. Caracas: Nueva Sociedad.
- Davies, Nollene
1992 "A Study of Guitar Styles in Zulu Maskanda Music." M.Mus. thesis, University of Natal, Durban.
- Denning, Michael
2015 *Noise Uprising: The Audiopolitics of a World Musical Revolution*. London: Verso.
- Douglas, Mary
[1970] 1996 *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*. London: Routledge.
- Erlmann, Veit
1992 "'The Past Is Far and the Future Is Far:' Power and Performance among Zulu Migrant Workers." *American Ethnologist* 19(4):688–709.
1991 *African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press (Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology).
- Feld, Steven
2015 "Acoustemology." In *Keywords in Sound*. D. Novak and M. Sakakeeny, eds. Durham: Duke University Press, 12–21.
2000 "A Sweet Lullaby for World Music" *Public Culture* 12(1):145–171.

- 1996 "Pygmy Pop: A Genealogy of Schizophonic Mimesis." *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 28:1–35.
 - 1982 *Sound and Sentiment: Birds, Weeping, Poetics, and Song in Kaluli Expression*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Franklin, Sarah
- 2003 "Re-thinking Nature-Culture: Anthropology and the New Genetics" *Anthropological Theory* 3(1):65–85.
- Gaye, Marvin
- 1982 "Sexual Healing." From *Midnight Love*. New York: Columbia LP PC 38197. Accessed 23 December 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auw56ai2z-M>.
- Gonsalves, Neil
- 2009 Personal communication, 4 October. The Rainbow Restaurant, Pinetown, Durban.
- Greene, K.J.
- 1998 "Copyright, Culture and Black Music: A Legacy of Unequal Protection" *Hastings Communications and Entertainment Law Journal* 21(2):339–392.
- Hadebe, Theminkosi Dennis
- 2008 Personal communication, 20 August. 137 Penzance Road, Glenwood, Durban
- Hammond-Tooke, W.D.
- 2008 "Cattle Symbolism in Zulu Culture." In *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present*. Benedict Carton, John Laband and Jabulani Sithole, eds. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 62–68.
- Impey, Angela
- 2018 *Song Walking: Women, Music, and Environmental Justice in an African Borderland*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press (Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology).
 - 1983 "The Zulu Umakhweyana Bow: Ndabishlele Myeza and Her Songs." BA (Hons) thesis, University of Natal, Durban.
- Jenkins, David (a.k.a. Qadasi)
- 2013 Personal communication, 27 March. Skype.
- Khama, Linah (a.k.a. Ebony)
- 2009 Personal communication (together with Bheki Ngcobo), 23 September. Downtown Studios, Johannesburg.
- La Hausse de Lalouvière, Paul
- 2008 "'Death is not the End.' Zulu Cosmopolitanism and the Politics of the Zulu Cultural Revival." In *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present*. Benedict Carton, John Laband and Jabulani Sithole, eds. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 256–272.
- Lott, Eric
- 1993 *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*. New York [etc.]: Oxford University Press.
- Mahlangu, Quincy
- 2020 "And the SAMA Nominees Are..." *Daily Sun* (15 July). Accessed on 8 May 2021. <https://www.dailysun.co.za/Celebs/and-the-sama-nominees-are-20200715>
- Majozi, Mxolisi (a.k.a. Zuluboy)
- 2006 "Hail to the King." From *Masihambisane*. Johannesburg: Native Rhythms CD-NATIVE (WCP) 001. Accessed on 3 March 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLlsXyljVcM>.

- Mamdani, Mahmood, Lyn Ossome and Suren Pillay
2016 "Our Mission." *The MISR Review* 1, 6–8.
- Martens, Jeremy
2008 "Enlightenment Theories of Civilisation and Savagery in British Natal: The Colonial Origins of the (Zulu) African Barbarism Myth." In *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present*. Benedict Carton, John Laband and Jabulani Sithole, eds. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 122–132.
- Meintjes, Louise
2017 *Dust of the Zulu: Ngoma Aesthetics after Apartheid*. Durham: Duke University Press.
2003 *Sound of Africa! Making Music Zulu in a South African Studio*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Meredith, Martin
2007 *Diamonds, Gold and War: The Making of South Africa*. London: Simon & Schuster.
- Miya, Khoni
2009 Personal communication (together with S'kho Miya), 29 October. Musgrave Shopping Centre, Durban.
- Mseleku, Sakhiseni Skhevane and Nelisani Ndlemnyama Mseleku (a.k.a. Abafana baka Mgqu-meni)
2019 "Bawucisha ngo Paraffin." From *Bawucisha ngo Paraffin*, featuring Phuzekhemisi. Seoul: Tox Music. Accessed on 8 May 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7Qjhp4PxdQ>.
- Muller, Carol Ann
1999 "Chakide – the Teller of Secrets: Space, Song and Story in Zulu Maskanda Performance." In *Oral Literature and Performance in Southern Africa*. Duncan Brown, ed. Oxford: Currey, 220–234.
- Nene, Siyabonga (a.k.a. Big Zulu)
2019 "Vuma Dlozi." From *Unqongoshe Wonqongoshe*, featuring Mnqobi Yazo. Inkabi Records. Accessed on 8 May 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88qty0j6cxA&list=RD9ao6Jh7fNRU&index=2>.
- Ngcbo, Selby
2008 Personal communication, 15 August. *En route* Glenwood–Wilson's Wharf, Durban.
- Ngwekazi, Nhlanhla
2009 Personal communication (together with Nomcebo Ngema), 22 September. J. Mofokeng & Associates (JMA) Offices, Melville, Johannesburg.
- Nhlapo, Phindile
1998 "Maskanda: The Zulu Strolling Musicians." Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.
- Nkabinde, Concord
2009 Personal communication (together with Mageshen Naidoo), 28 July. Bangkok Wok Restaurant, Wilson's Wharf, Durban.
- Nkwanyana, Bongani (a.k.a. Bambata)
2009a *Yash'inkani*, featuring Noxolo Radebe and Hugh Masekela, and produced by Bheki Khoza. Johannesburg: Kora Records CD KORA 003.
2009b Personal communication (together with Bheki Khoza), 23 September. Restaurant Mimmos, Eastgate Shopping Centre, Johannesburg.

- Nkwanyana, Joe (a.k.a. Mziwoxolo)
 2009b Personal communication, through interlocutor Nandi Khumalo, 20 October. Tugela, Mandeni, KwaZulu-Natal.
- Nthethe, Lichaba
 2011 Personal communication, 12 July. Bambanani Restaurant, Melville, Johannesburg.
- Ntuli, Nothi
 2009 Personal communication, through interlocutor Ignatia Madalane, 22 September. Downtown Studios, Johannesburg.
- Nzimande, Tshepo
 2009 Personal communication, 23 September. Zuz'muzi Music Offices. 83 Von Brandis-street, Johannesburg
- Ochoa Gautier, Ana María
 2014 "The Ear and the Voice in the Lettered City's Geophysical History." In *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1–29.
- Olsen, Kathryn
 2014 *Music and Social Change in South Africa: Maskanda Past and Present*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
 2004 "Shiyani Ngcobo and Maskanda." In *Introducing Shiyani Ngcobo: Zulu Guitars Dance. Maskanda from South Africa*, sleeve notes. London: World Music Network and Riverboat Records, INTRO101CD.
- Radano, Ronald and Tejumola Olaniyan
 2016 *Audible Empire: Music, Global Politics, Critique*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Rycroft, David
 1977 "Evidence of Stylistic Continuity in Zulu 'Town' Music." In *Essays for a Humanist: An Offering to Klaus Wachsmann*. New York: The Town House Press, 216–260.
- Small, Christopher
 1998 *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.
- SowetanLive
 2007 "Shwi Are the Best Maskandi Outfit" Accessed on 23 December 2020. <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2007-10-04-shwi-are-the-best-maskandi-outfit/>
- Steingo, Gavin
 2016 *Kwaito's Promise: Music and the Aesthetics of Freedom in South Africa*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press (Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology).
- Sterne, Jonathan
 2003 *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Svampa, Maristella
 2012 "Resource Extractivism and Alternatives: Latin American Perspectives on Development." *Journal für Entwicklungspolitik* 28(3):117–143
- Taylor, Timothy D.
 1997 *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets*. London: Routledge.
- Titus, Barbara
 [forthcoming] *Hearing Maskanda: Musical Epistemologies in South Africa*. New York: Bloomsbury.

- 2019 "Introduction: Dwelling in Musical Movement." In *Dwelling in Musical Movement: Making Home in and through Music*. Barbara Titus, ed. Berlin: Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung (world of music new series; 8[1]:7–22).
 - 2016 "'There Is that Cry Sometimes': Negotiations and Exertions of Power in South African Maskanda Music." In *Music Moves: Musical Dynamics of Relation, Knowledge and Transformation*. Charissa Granger et al., eds. Hildesheim: Olms (Göttinger Studien zur Musikwissenschaft; 7), 107–133.
 - 2014–15 "Some Implications of Being Undone by Music: A Response to Christopher Ballantine." *SAMUS: South African Music Studies* 34-35:521–528.
 - 2013 "'Walking Like a Crab': Analyzing Maskanda Music in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Ethnomusicology* 57(2):286–310.
 - 2008 "Global Maskanda, Global Historiography? Some Preliminary Enquiries." *SAMUS: South African Music Studies* 28:43–54.
- Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt
- 2015 *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Vibe FM
- 2009 Interview with Barbara Titus and S'kho Miya on 19 September, Ekhasa Arts Centre, KwaMashu, Durban.
- Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo
- 2013 "Cannibal Metaphysics: Amerindian Perspectivism." *Radical Philosophy* 132 (November-December), 17–28.
- Wald, Gayle F.
- 2008 *Shout, Sister, Shout!: The Untold Story of Rock-and-Roll Trailblazer Sister Rosetta Tharpe*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Xaba, Mandla and Rodgers Magubane (a.k.a. Shwi noMtekhalo)
- 2020 "uThando." From *uThando*, featuring Nathi Mankayi and Mnqobi Yazo; directed by Fatman_Chef and Sycklone. Johannesburg: Sginci Media. Accessed on 8 May 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ao6Jh7fNRU>.
 - 2003 "Ngafa." From *Wangisiza Baba*. Johannesburg: Bula Music 153. Accessed on 23 December 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5PAbByejoTY>.

