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TSONGA FRICTION-BOW MUSIC: COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS

ABSTRACT. — *The musical performances of several Tsonga bow players are compared, analyzed, and discussed. The typical player adapts tribal beer songs so that they become playable on the instrument, and he uses various ingenious compositional techniques to do this, such as octave transposition, stretching and compressing notes so that the rubbing stick can cope with them, lowering a major third to a minor third, and including the desired melody note by representing it as the lower of two simultaneously sounded bow notes.*

The Tsonga are a Bantu-speaking southern African people of whom about 1,200,000 live in Mozambique, and a further 700,00 live in the Northern Transvaal. They appear to be linguistically and culturally distinct from the Tsonga of Zimbabwe, Zambia, and the Inhambane area. They are largely a patrilineal, virilocal people, who propitiate their ancestor spirits and, to a lesser extent engage in polygyny. An early mention occurs in a book first published at Lisbon in 1609: "In some of these lands other tongues are spoken, especially the Botonga, and it is the reason why they call these lands Botonga and their inhabitants Botongas."

Commencing in 1835, invading Zulu under the warlords Zwagendaba, Shaka, and Soshangane (it is from the latter that the term Shangana-Tsonga derives) caused the westerly situated Nhlangu clan to flee from Mozambique into "the hitherto unpopulated Low Veld . . . in the present Pilgrimsrest district, where they are today" (Van Warmelo 1935), and the ranks of these first Tsonga immigrants were soon swelled by a steady influx from other areas. The immigrant Tsonga, being located inland and to the north of most Southern African tribes, were one of the last to come under European influence. The first substantial contact with them was established

by emigrant white farmers under Potgeiter, who had trekked northwards between the Vet and Vaal Rivers, crossing the latter where Potchefstroom now stands. The Transvaal trekkers, after first scattering the Ndebele under Mzilikazi, encountered several splintered Tswana tribes in the Western Transvaal. Proceeding to Ohrigstad and Lydenburg in 1845 they met Pedi there, and eventually the Tsonga and the Venda in the north, the Swazi in the east, the Zulu in the south-east, and the Mapoch Ndebele in the central Transvaal.

In 1853 a Volksraad Resolution instructed the Commandants of the Republic of the Transvaal to grant lands to the Bantu 'conditional on good behaviour', ignoring the fact that the Bantu, of course, already occupied these lands. In 1881 a Native Location Commission appointed by the Pretoria Convention proposed the assignment of 'equitable locations, with due regard to actual occupation', but in 1899 the Anglo-Boer War commenced.

Another Native Location Commission was appointed in 1905, three years after the war's end, and their report (submitted in 1907) dealt conclusively with all Transvaal locations except those at Lichtenburg, Rustenburg, and Marico, all of which had been prescribed by the previous Commission.

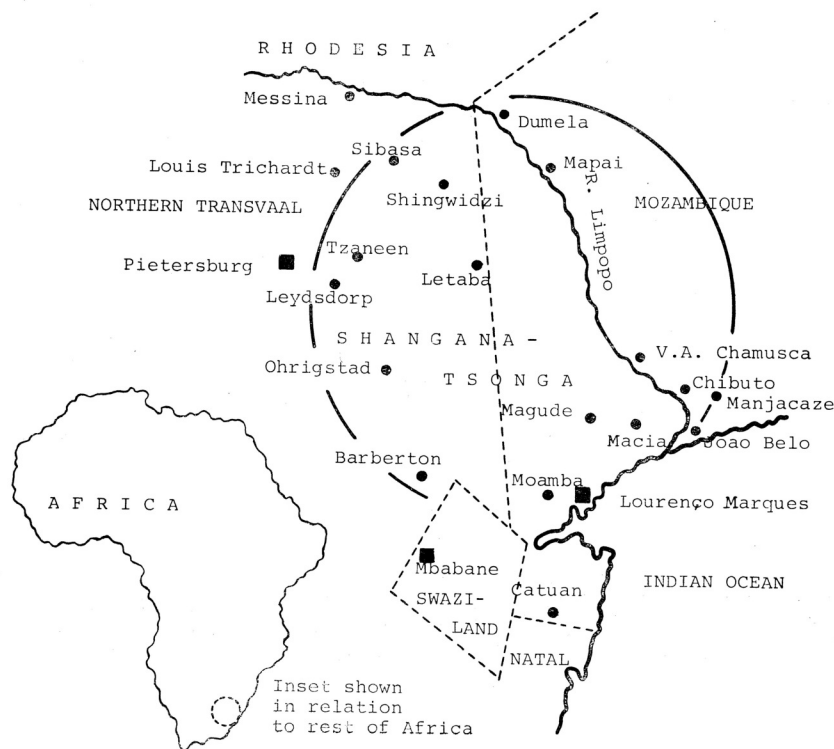


FIGURE 1. Map showing area inhabited by the Tsonga.

The Transvaal Tsonga occupy a 780,000-morgen homeland (annexed in part from Vondaland) largely concentrated in two major blocks bordering on the Kruger National Park, and the eastern Tsonga occupy practically all of Mozambique south of the Rio Save.

Since the overlordship of Soshangane came to an end, the Tsonga have not constituted a permanent and powerful political unit, but have been loosely sub-divided into those same clans that existed prior to the Nguni upheaval. These westward-migrating clans settled in latitudes of the Transvaal corresponding to those of their former homeland, and, today, a south-to-north traveller on either side of the border would encounter a 'spectrum' of Tsonga clans, each related to a similar clan residing across the border. Thus while the Transvaal Tsonga represent distinct groups within one linguistic and cultural unit, they do not themselves constitute a distinct branch of it. N. J. Van Warmelo considers that "... the Tsonga in the Transvaal are, with some exceptions, not organized into tribes at all, but represent a large formless population, the

make-up of which almost defies analysis. Apart from the few Tsonga chiefs, the bulk of them live under headmen of no real rank or standing ..." (Van Warmelo 1935).

Most of the large Tsonga areas in the Transvaal are in fact each ruled by a Chief whose predecessors were Pretoria-appointed, and this Chief is usually "succeeded by his brothers in turn, only when the last brother has died does the succession revert to the sons of the eldest" (Schapera 1966, quoting Junod). Each Chief presides over a council of local headmen, and periodically meets with neighbouring Chiefs to discuss administration problems, boundary disputes, and other matters.

In spite of the century-old dispersal of various Tsonga clans, and their subsequent rehabilitation within a new ecological and ethnological environment, many of the various styles of Tsonga music in the Transvaal today are identical to that of the Tsonga of Mozambique in melody, rhythm, repertoire, and social function, but enriched by Pedi, Venda, and other new influences.

SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE

Comparing the loosely-subdivided and rather formless structure of Tsonga society since its century-old split, to that of the neighbouring Venda, one finds that with the latter "there is an important social division in Venda society between commoners (*vhasiwana*) and the children of chiefs and their descendants (*vhakoloto*)" (Blacking): which is reflected in many Venda musical practices, and that "*domba* (girls' initiation school) and *tshikona* (the national reedpipe dance) represent the interests of rulers" (Blacking 1967). No such sharp distinctions exist within Tsonga society, and thus it is, for instance, that Transvaal Tsonga musical expeditions do not "consolidate the lineage ties of rulers and their families ... and their right to rule". (Note that Blacking is here describing one of the effects of Venda musical expeditions (see page 35 of his article mentioned in References), but extend and reinforce disparate but parallel ascending chains of administrative authority, *unrelated by blood ties* (ascending, because a Tsonga ruler is more council chairman than dictator).

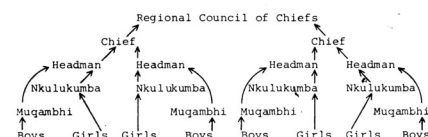


FIGURE 2. Ascending chain of Tsonga administrative authority (nkulukumba is the puberty school supervisor, mugambhi is the drumming school supervisor).

The puberty school supervisor (often the wife of the Chief or the Headman — *nkulukumba* means 'the big one') is a respected village elder appointed annually by the ruler. She possesses an antelope horn (*mhalamhala*) which constitutes her symbol of authority and which is used to summon the beer-bringing novices. The drumming school supervisor (*mugambhi* means 'the song-marker') is a local musician selected from among the Chief's aides, and he, too, is appointed annually. These two school appointees are integral links in the ascending chain of Tsonga administrative authority, and as such wield a certain amount of administrative power.

Two further musical officials must be taken into account — the doctor-proprietor (*n'anga*) of a circumcision lodge and the diviner-organizer (*dzwavi*) of an 'exorcism' rite. These are often outsiders 'licensed' by the Chief in return for beer, cattle or cash payment, and the extent of their musical influence lies somewhere between that of the puberty school supervisor and that of the drumming school supervisor. Seeing that the *n'anga* organizes his private circumcision school once every four or five years, and that the *dzwavi* organizes his 'exorcism' rites nightly for a considerable part of the

year, one is inclined to rank the latter above the former, musically. Circumcision songs are secret and no drums may be used, but 'exorcism' songs are widely-known and play a great part in 'exorcism' rites — the *dzwavi* possessing a set of four *mancomane* (tambourine-shaped drums) which constitute his symbol of authority and which are used by trainee-diviners to produce the appropriate 'exorcism' rhythms.

Tsonga music, regarded in the light of its seasonal applications and discrete social functions, comprises a variety of musical styles that mirror the occupational roles, rivalries, and social allegiances of its performers. Regarded as a whole it exhibits several characteristics which distinguish it from the music of neighboring peoples and which, like the famed Tsonga genealogy-recitations ("The Tsonga ... have a remarkable knowledge of their family genealogies"). (Blacking John, *Venda Children's Songs*, Witwatersrand University Press 1967, p. 31), fulfill the chauvinistic function of reaffirming for congregating immigrant participants the linguistic and cultural unity of a dispersed and widely separated people.

Frequently, large bodies of ancient, elaborate Tsonga story-songs and game-songs can be found surviving intact amidst an alien polyglot (with versions differing only slightly throughout the Northern Transvaal, Eastern Transvaal, Natal and Mozambique). This is as it should be for, like eventual fulfillment of Tsonga aspirations for genuine political independence and adequate, watered homelands, they belong to the children of tomorrow.

In Tsonga instrumental music, acculturation threatens the making and playing of traditional instruments. Perhaps in greatest danger is the renowned Tsonga playing of the *xizambi* notched friction-bow. The Tsonga are unequalled in the performance of this interesting instrument, and I have recorded and transcribed the following examples in an effort to help preserve this valuable heritage.

Several players are compared, and it is noteworthy that these *xizambi* players utilize different ways of adapting Tsonga beer songs for the instrument. The players are Wilson Zulu of Samarie, John Chauke of Sibasa, Elias Khosa of Machekacheka, Joel Mashava of Mhinga's Location, and Njaranjara of the same place. We give the song title as stated by the player, its approximate English translation, the tempo, the metric length of the song, and the interval we have transposed in order to make reading and comparison easy. Where the player sings for a cycle or two, the Tsonga words are given under the appropriate notes. For the benefit of researchers we kept the numbering of the transcriptions the same as it is on the tapes in the ethnomusicology archives of the University of Alaska. Because the first thirteen were less relevant to this study we started the transcriptions at No. 14.

We encountered Wilson Zulu first. He played thirteen short pieces, and then recorded the following twelve adapter beer songs. Of particular interest is his use of variations, octave transposition, and use of the song's ending as an introduction. Note

how the manner of playing the *xizambi* (continuous rubbing of the bow with a notched friction stick) affects the manner of representing beer song melody notes: where the song has a short rest, the bow continues playing, by repeating the previous note for the required length of time. Note how the harmonic property of the bow (use of the series of natural harmonics such as 4ths, 5ths, etc.) means that adaptation can be accomplished by transposing portions of the song up or down a 4th or 5th, and the audience accepts this. Also, the melody note need not be represented by the highest audible *xizambi* note. One of two simultaneously sounded notes suffices to convey the tune, and it is often the lower note which does this.

THE XIZAMBI-PLAYING OF WILSON ZULU OF SAMARIE

(For brevity, his initial thirteen short pieces are omitted.)

Xizambi Transcription 14. *Ximanjemanje* (These Modern Times)
Cycle: 20 ♩



Ximanjemanje consists of an overlapping call and response, each complete cycle of which occupies a total of 20 quavers. This length is derived in part from the number of syllables contained in the text, and the irregular quaver-grouping is derived in part from speech-stress, as follows:

Ximanjemanje xāle ntsungeni māra hāyi āhi ku sāsēka
Ximanjemanje n'wāna manāna mōra hāyi āhi ku sāsēka

The bow accompaniment is of interest in that occasionally either its upper or lower tones may represent the melody, and that it may move in 'contrary motion' to the melody.

Wilson Zulu, on another occasion, recorded a solo version of *Ximanjemanje* wherein he first sang six verses unaccompanied, and then played five cycles of the tune, as follows.

The metrical length of the repeated section in Wilson Zulu's performances of this song differs from those of certain other performers, as follows:

I. *Xizambi*-player Joel Mashava extends his performance for 20 quavers during unaccompanied singing, 8 dotted crotchets during clapping, and 20 quavers during his *xizambi*-playing;

II. *Xizambi*-player Elias Khosa extends his performance for 16 crotchets;

III. Men singers at Messina extend their performance for 8 dotted crotchets;

IV. Girl singers at Ribola extend their performance for 8 dotted crotchets.

Transcriptions of these four performances of the song *Ximanjemanje* are given below, for purposes of comparison.

Xizambi Transcription 15. *Ximanjemanje* (These Modern Times) -- a second *xizambi* performance of the previous tune, by Wilson Zulu.
Cycle: 20 ♩



Xizambi Transcription 16. *Ximanjemanje* (These Modern Times) -- a third *xizambi* performance of the previous tune, this time by Joel Mashava.
Cycle: 8 ♩



Xizambi Transcription 17. *Ximanjemanje* (These Modern Times) -- a fourth *xizambi* performance of the previous tune, this time by Elias Khosa.
Cycle: 16 ♩



An Ensemble Vocal Performance of *Ximanjemanje* (These Modern Times) -- by men singers of Messina.
Cycle: 8 ♩



Of interest is the fact that *Xizambi* player Joel Mashava, when singing and clapping *Ximanjemanje* (Xizambi Transcription 16), employs the metrical length usually employed by ensemble vocal groups when performing that song, i.e., 8 dotted crotchets. When playing *Ximanjemanje* on his *Xizambi*, however, Joel Mashava employs the metrical length used by *xizambi* player Wilson Zulu, i.e., 20 quavers. These 20 quavers are in each instance grouped thus:



Of the two rhythms, this is certainly the more interesting rhythm to play on an instrument exhibiting primarily percussive and rhythmic characteristics.

Different melodies seem to be used for each of the foregoing six versions of *Ximanjemanje*. To the Tsonga, however, most of these melodies are one and the same melody — they merely employ a different selection of 'harmonic equivalents' (a different inversion of the descending pentatonic scale).

Xizambi Transcription 18. *Vimbela Hosi Rihuvahuva* (Sing To The Chief With Praises)
Cycle: 24 ♩



The title of the following transcription, *Sing to the Chief With Praises* (No. 18), reveals one of the uses of *xizambi*-playing — 'court' music. (Court-music here refers to the retaining by a Tsonga Chief of a professional musician for the purpose of singing praises, relaying gossip, providing diversion at meetings, entertaining dignitaries, etc.). It is the player's own composition, as are the remainder of his performances presented here. For an introduction Wilson Zulu uses the concluding 8-quaver phrase of his instrumental version. Note

Xizambi Transcription 19. *Javurisa* (a girl's name)
Cycle: 16 ♩



the interesting cross-rhythm provided by the clap — 8 claps against 12 units of the vocal pattern. This is a standard polyrhythmic formula in Tsonga music, and the performers who are simultaneously singing and clapping in different rhythms are exercising what might be called an ambivalent conception of meter.

In the above transcription, as in the previous one, song-tones are often *instrumentally represented* a 5th (inverted 4th) distant. Note how the *xizambi* version 'stretches' tones at the point where the word *Javurisa* is sung — this is accomplished *within* the meter of 16 dotted crotchets, the tune's overall length remaining undisturbed.

Xizambi Transcription 20. *Galilena* (a girl's name)
♩ = 300
Cycle: 9 ♩
Transpos.: maj 3rd up (fund.)



Galilena, the tune shown in the above transcription, possesses no words other than its title. Formal structure emerges from the re-occurrence of 'open' tones CG. Whereas the top and bottom lines of our transcription show, by their number of repeats, that the piece employs a metrical length of 9 quavers grouped either 4+3+2 or 2+3+4, the second and fourth lines add an 'extra' quaver while still observing the essential melodic contour. Contrary to our normal transcribing practice of aligning the tones vertically in order to show the *rhythmic* concurrence of each line, have in this case aligned the tones vertically so as to show where *extra melody* has occurred.

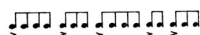
Xizambi Transcription 21. *Xikotikoti Xa Vinjana*
(The Small Tin Sounds)
♩ = 300
Cycle: 9 ♩
Transpos.: maj 3rd up (fund.)



Although the above piece is practically the same as its predecessor, we have included it to illustrate an important idiosyncrasy of *xizambi* tonality — while C and G are fixed guide-notes, D together with its lower harmonic A) and E (together with its lower harmonic B) (We are referring to fingered E—open E is never used), can be 'slid'

up and down to produce Eb (together with its lower harmonic Bb) and F. All that is involved is a lateral hand-shift away from the 'string'-end. This shortens the 'string' and raises the pitch of fingered tones. In *Galilena*, therefore, Wilson Zulu merely lowered the Eb/Bb and F, and renamed the piece *Xikotikoti Xa Vinjana*. This indicates a significant Tsonga compositional maxim — changing the 'in-between', fingered tones in a *xizambi* piece is alone sufficient to destroy the identity of that piece and produce a new tune.

The song in *Transcription No. 22* (below) consists of three 6-crotchet sections totalling 18 crotchets, the whole being followed by an instrumental vamp of 6 crotchets. Note how Wilson Zulu heightens rhythmic interest during the latter by phrasing the quavers irregularly, thus:



Xizambi Transcription 22. *Ho Na Na Khombo E Basani*
(We Are Unfortunate at Basani)
♩ = 145
Cycle: 24 ♩
Transpos.: maj 3rd up (fund.)



In *Transcription No. 23*, Wilson Zulu not only groups quavers irregularly (8+4+1+3), but he stretches and compresses alternate cycles of the tune. The 8 cycles shown comprise a total of 128 quavers, which averages out at 16 quavers per cycle.

The opening quaver-groups in the above piece are 'out of meter', but from the third line onward the meter is nominally 16 quavers per line. We say nominally, because there are two unaccounted-for quavers in the second bar of the fourth line. By comparing the melodies line for line, however, it will be seen that these two quavers are 'extra' and that the lines as we arranged them constitute the successive cycles of the melody.

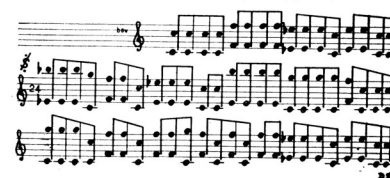
Xizambi Transcription 23. *A Hi Ka chwa Ka Wena*
(Your Playing is Very Good)
♩ = 340
Cycle: 16 ♩
Transpos.: maj 3rd up (fund.)



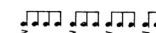
Xizambi Transcription 24. *Mugambhi* (The Composer)
♩ = 340
Cycle: 16 ♩
Transpos.: maj 3rd up (fund.)



Xizambi Transcription 25. *Timbamba Ta Valungu*
(Clothing of the White Man)
♩ = 145
Cycle: 24 ♩
Transpos.: maj 3rd up (fund.)



In the above transcription, Wilson Zulu groups the quavers into interesting and exciting rhythms such as the following:



Although the *melodies* of Wilson Zulu's non-vocal compositions can by no means be regarded as inconsequential, the salient feature of his performances is their exploitation of the instrument's *rhythmic* possibilities.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS WITH RESPECT TO THE XIZAMBI-PLAYING OF WILSON ZULU

Wilson Zulu utilizes six main musical procedures:

- I. Octave transposition;
- II. Use of the ending as an introduction;
- III. Instrumental representation of song-tones at the 5th (inverted 4th);
- IV. Instrumental representation of song-tones, by one of two simultaneously-sounded *xizambi* tones;
- V. Instrumental representation of a vocal rest, by repeating the previous *xizambi* tone;
- VI. Creation of instrumental variations.

He does *not* do the following commonly used *xizambi* procedures:

- a) represent vocal, gaps by playing 'harmonic equivalents' of the previous *xizambi* tone;
- b) interpret songs by using a descending tone-row;
- c) drastically change a song's rhythm in the instrumental version;
- d) change 'major' to 'minor' when effecting an instrumental adaptation.

A prominent feature of Wilson Zulu's *xizambi*-playing is its rhythmic vitality. Within the context of a 16- or 32-unit cycle he employs thrusting, jagged accents that mask the basic pattern and build up tension. Wilson Zulu carries the principle of irregularity beyond that normally indulged in by Tsonga musicians — he *adds* to one cycle and *subtracts* from another, leaving the hearer in constant anticipation of when the music will re-enter phase. This is probably his greatest contribution to Tsonga *xizambi* music.

THE XIZAMBI-PLAYING OF JOHN CHAUKE OF SIBASA

John Chauke is a *xizambi*-player working in the copper mines of Messina. He owns a carefully-carved instrument, brought with him from the Sibasa area. He plays it during the evenings and weekends at beer-drinks, and most of his repertoire is of his own composition.

The above piece is unique in this collection of *xizambi* pieces in that it features a short, clearly-stated theme, which is then played or sung in

Xizambi Transcription 26. He Machangana Ndza Famba
♩ = 120 (Changam: 1 Am Going)
Cycle: 4 ♩ Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

various ways and gradually developed. Chauke first taps rather than rubs the notched bow, producing a clipped but musical 'popping' sound — this style of performance was not used by any other player. He then reverted to conventional playing,

Xizambi Transcription 27. Mpoti Wani Many Nakhumbi
♩ = 130 (Mpoti Thrusts Me To The Wall)
Cycle: 7 ♩ Transpos.: nil (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 28. Khoma-khoma
♩ = 278 (Hold On)
Cycle: 14 ♩ Transpos.: maj 2nd down (tension adjustment)

Xizambi Transcription 29. A Ku Famba Ka Nwawavani
♩ = 129 (The Wandering Of The Streetwalker)
Cycle: 7+7+7+7 ♩ Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 30. A Hi Famba Xitolo
♩ = 316 (Let's Go To The Store)
Cycle: 14 ♩ Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

changing the quavers into paired semiquavers. After next singing the piece he played it again in another rhythm, changing the semiquavers into dotted semiquavers. The resulting impression is one of perfect form and musical unity.

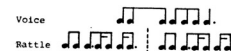
Eighteen further xizambi performances by John Chauke will now be briefly discussed, and our

findings summarized. The transcriptions themselves will then be given in one group.

In Xizambi Transcriptions 27–29, Chauke's instrumental F represents his vocal C. In Xizambi Transcription 30, instrumental D represent vocal A. The metrical length in all four of these pieces is two bars of 7-unit rhythm, generally grouped thus:



Note, in Xizambi Transcription 29, how Chauke simultaneously sings and plays in different rhythms, thus:



In Xizambi Transcriptions 31 and 32, Chauke's instrumental F represents his vocal C, and in No. 33

Xizambi Transcription 31. U Dunga Hi Wena U Nge Onha Muthi
♩ = 106 (Va Mitha You Are The One Who Destroys My Village)
Cycle: 8 ♩ Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 32. Salanini N'wena Nhani
♩ = 104 (Goodbye Child-of-My-Mother)
Cycle: 8 ♩ Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

instrumental C represents vocal F. In Nos. 35 and 36, instrumental D represents vocal A. Note how, toward the end of No. 34, the voice descends C-to-F while the bow ascends C-to-F — the latter ascent being due to the unavailability of low F on the xizambi. All six of Xizambi Transcriptions 31 to 36 utilize a metrical length of 8 dotted crotchets.

Xizambi Transcription 33. Vanga Dlaya N'wena Tatana
♩ = 112 (They Killed the Child-of-My-Father)
Cycle: 8 ♩ Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 34. Nsati Wa Vanhu
♩ = 116 (I Am Already Married)
Cycle: 8 ♩ Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 35. Ni Vona Ku Tshuka Ni Ku I Tombi
♩ = 104 (Maungile I See the Girl Who's Like a White)
Cycle: 8 ♩ Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 36. Hava Naveja Lava Yaku Nananga
(We Admire Those Going to the Desert)
Cycle: 8
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 37. In this piece, based on a metrical length of 16 dotted crotchets, Chauke maintains a steady triplet rhythm on his *fahlawana* rattles while singing. The singing, however, consists mainly of paired quavers, thus:

Xizambi Transcription 37. Ngolovana Yi Va Famba Hi Malahla
(The Small Train Travels On Coal)
Cycle: 16
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 38. This piece consists of a short 4-crotchet theme which is alternately sung and played. In the played portions, instrumental F represents vocal C.

Xizambi Transcription 39. This piece consists basically of a short theme 4 dotted crotchets in length, but it is unusual in that Chauke adds an

Xizambi Transcription 38. Mufambi Wa Joni
(The Traveller To Johannesburg)
Cycle: 4
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 39. Swini Kumile Manana Hivo Ninge Lovu
(All This Because Of My Bad Leg)
Cycle: 10
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 40. Unga Tlula Tluli Dsovo Ra N'wanga
(Ninga Ti Singa (Don't Jump On The Skin, It Is For My Child))
Cycle: 18
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

extra instrumental dotted crotchet after each section, thus:

Xizambi Transcription 40. In this piece Chauke represents vocal A and C by instrumental D and F respectively, at the point where *u na ma* is sung. Note that the grouping of 9 pairs of quavers is unusual, but that 6 groups of 3 each is common, as is shown in the following piece.

Xizambi Transcription 41. It was earlier suggested that the melodies of some Tsonga traditional songs derive from the speechtones of their song-words. That this is not *always* so is shown in No. 41 — the words *Ka-mu-za ma-ni wa* are syllabically set to quavers in the first half of the song, but in the last half of the song the music is given over entirely to melismatic non-lexical syllable singing.

Xizambi Transcription 42. This piece extends 32 crotchets, and neither the 22-crotchet instrumental section nor the 10-crotchet vocal section are separable — the two sections must be played consecutively as one whole. In many of his pieces, Chauke appears to prefer a jerked rhythm, thus

This preference may be due to Chauke's awareness of the rattles' rhythmic potential.

Xizambi Transcription 43. In each transcription presented in this volume, the metrical length attributed (by the author) to a piece, is the *minimum* basic pattern to which the performance can be reduced. Chauke, however, often so interestingly and musically varies his second cycle, that the work appears to be in bipartite form, and thus may often be considered to consist of *double* the number of units we have indicated. In No. 43, for instance, the words in the final bar of the second cycle (i.e., the final bar of the piece) constitute a mere repetition of previously-sung words, but the melody to which they are set constitutes a *musical answer* to the melody in the corresponding bar of the first cycle.

Xizambi Transcription 41. Kamuzamani Wa Jui
(For The Son Of Jui)
Cycle: 6
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 42. Madziva Ndlela Mhoni Wa Jabulani
(Madziva Ndlela, Mother Of Jabulani)
Cycle: 32
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 43. Ndzi Famba (I Am Going)
Cycle: 12
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

Xizambi Transcription 44. In this piece, comparison of the first voice-line with the third voice-line reveals that vocal gaps may be accompanied by either of two instrumental tone colours, as follows:

I. An 'empty' (caesura-filled) area toward the end of a vocal section that precedes another vocal section is generally accompanied by the *rattles* alone;

II. An 'empty' area toward the end of a vocal section that precedes an instrumental section is generally accompanied by *buccal resonance*.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS WITH RESPECT TO THE XIZAMBI-PLAYING OF JOHN CHAUKE

Many aspects of John Chauke's *xizambi*-playing are unusual — they are as follows:

- a) his occasional tapping of the arc rather than rubbing;
- b) his maintenance of interesting accompaniments (i.e., 2+3+2 with the rattle stick) while singing *across* the rhythms of same;
- c) his interpolation of extra 'vamp' bars between sections;
- d) his use of fingered F as 'tonic'.

Xizambi Transcription 44. Vani Ruketela Vani Vuia Nyika
A = 120 (You speak insulting things)
Cycle: 6 ♩ Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

musical score for Xizambi Transcription 44, featuring vocal and rattles parts.

With regard to d) above, many *xizambi*-players use open-tones C and G as 'guide-notes'. While these tones do not always function as 'tonic', when they appear to do so it is probable that the player is aware it. Kubik considers that in Azande harp music "there is a clear key note" (Kubik 1964) and that "most of the horizontal Zande harp themes end on the tonic." (Ibid, p. 53.)

John Chauke's *xizambi* playing, like that of Wilson Zulu already discussed, utilizes the following procedures:

- I. Instrumental octave-transposition of vocal tones;
- II. Instrumental representation of song-tones at the 5th (inverted 4th);
- III. Creation of instrumental variations.

THE XIZAMBI-PLAYING OF ELIAS KHOSA OF MACHEKACHEKA

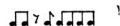
The tension of Khosa's bow is adjusted so that lower partials are favoured at the expense of upper partials, and for this reason he plays many third-

Xizambi Transcription 45. Codini (a man's name)
A = 120 (fund.)
Cycle: 16 ♩ Transpos.: min 3rd up (fund.)

musical score for Xizambi Transcription 45, featuring vocal and rattles parts.

harmonic G's and no sixth-harmonic G's. His music exhibits several unique rhythmic and melodic characteristics, and the following two examples suffice to demonstrate these.

This entire piece is based on two simple yet effective ideas, one rhythmic and one melodic: a) use of the same nuclear rhythmic pattern

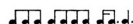


in every bar; and b) alternation between a tone and its similarly fingered lower harmonic 4th. The latter results partly from the former, because an unvarying rhythm needs melodic motion to provide musical interest, but the *type* of melodic motion found here is derived from motor-sensory impulse. Khosa's use of motor-sensory impulse incurs frequent use of B (lower harmonic of fingered E), a tone rarely used by other players.

Xizambi Transcription 46. Mina Ni Vona Naxangu
A = 119 (I See All The Misery)
Cycle: 16 ♩ Transpos.: min 2nd up (fund.)

musical score for Xizambi Transcription 46, featuring vocal and rattles parts.

In the above piece, as in the previous piece, Khosa bases every bar on the same rhythmic motive, which in this case goes thus:



This is an intriguing way of phrasing the 12 quavers of a rhythm based on 4 dotted crotchets. Note that Khosa's first bar is a quaver short — partial bars often occur at the beginning in instrumental pieces.

The voice sounding simultaneously with the buccalresonated *xizambi* tones is *Khosa's own*. This is quite an accomplishment, for constant mouth-adjustment is needed during resonance, as well as concentration on the required harmonic. To sing triplets thus while producing his own opposing instrumental rhythm of is no mean feat.

In the second vocal bar Khosa accompanies vocal A by playing instrumental D. He is capable of playing A, for he did so in the previous piece. Khosa played D at this point, not because he considers it to be suitable 'harmony', but because he considers it to be synonymous with the A — a 'harmonic equivalent' (controlled test was conducted).

When accompanying vocal gaps, Khosa neither reiterates his previous tone nor plays substitutions (procedures followed by other players). Instead, he creates complementary melodic figures that line up with the oncoming phrase.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS WITH RESPECT TO THE XIZAMBI-PLAYING OF ELIAS KHOSA

Many of Khosa's procedures are the same as those already found in the work of others — substitution by 'harmonic equivalence', vocal rhythm contrasted with instrumental rhythm, etc., but his use of nuclear rhythmic ideas and motor-sensory-based melodic ideas shows considerable ingenuity. In addition, Khosa's simultaneous singing and playing makes him unique among known *xizambi* players.

THE XIZAMBI-PLAYING OF JOEL MASHAVA OF MHINGA'S LOCATION

In *Xizambi Transcription 47*, the voice belongs to Mashava's companion, whom he accompanies on the *xizambi*. In Nos. 48—53, however, the voice is Mashava's own, and during the sung portions buccal-resonance ceases, leaving only an instrumental accompaniment consisting of rattles (and the continuously-sounding fundamental C). On another occasion, when Mashava was without his *xizambi* friction bow, he recorded six of the seven pieces again, this time employing only his unaccompanied voice. In order to show possible relationships between these two sets of recordings, we follow *Xizambi Transcriptions 48—53* with transcriptions of their related non-*xizambi* pieces, numbering the latter 49A, 50A, etc.

Xizambi Transcription 47. In this *xizambi*-accompanied song, the vocal quavers of Mashava's companion are grouped in pairs, thus their phrasing crosses that of the instrumental triplets thus:



Occasionally, instrumental D accompanies vocal A, and instrumental G accompanies vocal C, thus 5ths (inverted 4ths) are here used as 'equivalents'.

Xizambi Transcription 48. Here, the unusual tonality of the first line is entirely due to parallel 5ths produced by the physical and musical characteristics of the *xizambi*, and it is created only incidentally while Mashava meticulously matches his upper harmonics to the song-tones they represent. Note the irregular division of this 16-crotchet composition 3+4+3+6.

Xizambi Transcription 47. Ha N'wi Vona Khosa A Ku Tlatlala
A = 208 (He sees Khosa Falling Like A Pumpkin)
Cycle: 8 ♩ Transpos.: 4th up (fund.)

musical score for Xizambi Transcription 47, featuring vocal and rattles parts.

Xizambi Transcription 48. U N'wana Mani?
A = 240 (Whose Child Are You?)
Cycle: 16 ♩ Transpos.: 4th up (fund.)

musical score for Xizambi Transcription 48, featuring vocal and rattles parts.

No. 48A. An Unaccompanied Vocal Version of the Above
A = 240 (fund.)
Cycle: 16 ♩ Transpos.: maj 2nd up

musical score for No. 48A, featuring vocal parts.

Xizambi Transcription 49. The sixth harmonic G's of this *xizambi* piece represent vocal C's, but it must be remembered that instrumental C is always present with G — the latter cannot be sounded on the *xizambi* without incurring concurrent sounding of the second harmonic C of inadmissible fundamental C.

Note that, while Mashava employs duple meter in his *xizambi* version

1/24 ♩

he employs dotted crotchet meter in his unaccompanied vocal version shown in No. 49A.

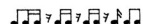


While the overall metrical lengths of these meters are the same (allowing for notation method), their internal grouping of tones is different.

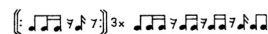
Xizambi Transcription 49. Kwale Vhenkeleni
♩ = 232 (There At The Store)
Cycle: 24 ♩ from ♩ on Transpos.: 4th up (fund.)

No. 49A. An Unaccompanied Vocal Version of the Above
♩ = 300 Transpos.: 4th up
Cycle: 8 ♩

Xizambi Transcription 50. Mashava occasionally uses an interesting 'fragmented' rhythm, thus:



In another piece that we shall examine (No. 51), he varies this pattern thus:



The aforementioned effects are produced by using sharp, jagged thrusts of the *fahlwana* rattlesnake.

Note that the *xizambi*-accompanied vocal version uses only the first line of his unaccompanied vocal version shown in No. 51A. Note that, in the latter, Mashava's final line is a 4th below his first line, the two lines being regarded by him as 'equivalent'.

Xizambi Transcription 50. N'wana Wa N'anga
♩ = 262 (Child-of-the-Herbalist)
Cycle: 24 ♩ Transpos.: 4th up (fund.)

No. 50A. An Unaccompanied Vocal Version of the Above
♩ = 191 Transpos.: min 2nd up
Cycle: 12 ♩

Xizambi Transcription 51. Mashavaza Saisa No L'hawula
♩ = 224 (Mashavaza Shook Hands With Girls But Never Won Them)
Cycle: 32 ♩ Transpos.: 4th up (fund.)

No. 51A. An Unaccompanied Vocal Version of the Above
♩ = 260 Transpos.: min 2nd up
Cycle: 12 ♩

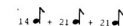
Xizambi Transcription 52. The overall metrical length of the repeated section in this transcription, including both played and sung sections, is 24 crotchets, but this is preceded by a 4-crotchet instrumental introduction, a 6-crotchet vocal section, and a 6-crotchet instrumental section. Considering certain melodic, rhythmic, and textual differences in the 6-crotchet sections, a 36-crotchet metrical length might just as well be applied to this work.

Note that Mashava's *xizambi*-accompanied vocal version uses only the fourth line of the unaccompanied vocal version shown in No. 52A.

Xizambi Transcription 52. Ndza Lumbumba, Ndzi Na Maxangu
♩ = 127 (I Wander, In Frigible)
Cycle: 24 ♩ Transpos.: 4th up (fund.)

No. 52A. An Unaccompanied Vocal Version of the Above
♩ = 304 Transpos.: 4th up
Cycle: Free

Xizambi Transcription 53. This piece, like many of John Chauke's *xizambi* pieces, is based on a metrical length involving units of 7 — in this case,



Note that the *xizambi*-accompanied vocal version consists of the text *salani manani* repeated at different pitch levels in a musical question-and-answer style, using the same triplet phrasing as appears in the unaccompanied vocal version shown in No. 53A.

Xizambi Transcription 53. Salani Manani
♩ = 232 (Goodbye, Mother)
Cycle: 14 ♩ + 21 ♩ + 21 ♩ Transpos.: 4th up (fund.)

No. 53A. An Unaccompanied Vocal Version of the Above
♩ = 304 Transpos.: min 3rd up
Cycle: Free

In several of his pieces (Nos. 8, 16, 50, 52, 53) Mashava represents vocal E by instrumental E♭ — a procedure often followed by *xizambi* players.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS WITH REGARD TO THE XIZAMBI-PLAYING OF JOEL MASHAVA

Joel Mashava produces interesting 'fragmented' rhythms by means of sharp, jagged thrusts of the *fahlwana* rattlesstick; he makes frequent use of the principle of tone-substitution by 'harmonic equivalence'; and he transforms 'major' vocal tonality into 'minor' instrumental tonality.

THE XIZAMBI-PLAYING OF NJARANJARA OF MHINGA'S LOCATION

Njaranjara is the companion of Joel Mashava referred to in our discussion of *Xizambi* Transcription 47. Both are highly-respected members of the Chief's Council, and they often accompany each other's singing.

Xizambi Transcription 54. Note that the 30-quaver metrical length

/ from the ♩ on.

of the instrumental section and the vocal section is unusually divided thus:

$\{ 11 \text{ voice} + 19 \text{ } \text{♩} \text{ xizambi} \}$

Xizambi Transcription 54. *Xingomungomu*
♩ = 252 (The Giant Ogres)
Cycle: 30 ♩
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

No. 54A. An Unaccompanied Vocal Version of the Above
♩ = 126
Cycle: free
Transpos.: maj 3rd up

Xizambi Transcription 55. The 8 dotted crotchets of this piece are divided between a 6-unit instrumental section and a 2-unit vocal section — these divisions functioning rather like the call and the response of Tsonga traditional songs. They are not, however, known by the same terminology. In vocal music the call and the response are known as the *ritoleritsanana* (small voice) and the *ritolerikulu* (big voice) respectively. In *xizambi* music the di-

visions are referred to by terms which distinguish between the player's discrete actions — *ku chaya* (to play it) and *ku yimbelela* (to sing it).

Xizambi Transcription 55. *Xihumtse Na Va Xondongori*
♩ = 138 (He Recited the Circumcision School Laws to the Initiate)
Cycle: 8 ♩
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

No. 55A. An Unaccompanied Vocal Version of the Above
♩ = 138
Cycle: free
Transpos.: 4th up

Xizambi Transcription 56. The repeated instrumental C's at the end of this piece represents the repeated vocal G's at the point where *dluva-dluva* is sung.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS WITH RESPECT TO THE XIZAMBI-PLAYING OF NJARANJARA

In two of his three *xizambi* accompaniments (Nos. 54 and 56) Njaranjara juxtaposes duplet- and triplet-grouped quavers. Similar juxtaposition by

Xizambi Transcription 56. *Nhongani N'inini Makoti Dluva-dluva* (A Fly Buzzes, The Vultures Flutter For Meat)
♩ = 138
Cycle: 8 ♩
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

No. 56A. An Unaccompanied Vocal Version of the Above
♩ = 122
Cycle: 8 ♩
Transpos.: maj 3rd up

other players is usually motivated by a desire to exploit the *xizambi*'s rhythmic potential, but in Njaranjara's case it is seen to derive from the rhythm of the song-words — his instrumental duplet/triplet juxtaposition occurs only where his voice-line does likewise.

THE XIZAMBI DUETS OF JOEL MASHAVA AND NJARANJARA

In order to play in duet with Njaranjara, Joel Mashava re-tuned his *xizambi* so that its open tone was a 5th distant to that of Njaranjara's *xizambi*. He did not do this solely by tightening or slackening the *nala* 'string', for there is an optimum tension on each *xizambi* which best produces its harmonics. He re-tuned by carefully shredding off a sliver from the *nala* 'string' along its edge, end to end. This action narrowed the vibrating medium and was used in conjunction with tension adjustment.

Xizambi Transcription 57 (Duet). *Nsati Wa Rilaveta* (The Jealous Woman)
♩ = 96
Cycle: 16 ♩
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

1st 8 groups were warm-up. Starts 9th group.

9th group

1st 16

2nd 16

3rd 16

4th 16

5th 16

6th 16

7th 16

8th 16

9th 16

10th 16

11th 16

12th 16

13th 16

14th 16

15th 16

16th 16

17th 16

18th 16

19th 16

20th 16

In the above duet, the second *xizambi* enters across the penultimate dotted crotchet of the first *xizambi*, each performer's contribution lasting 16 dotted crotchets but being staggered by 5 quavers. The quavers of the second *xizambi* fall on the accents of the first *xizambi*, thus:

$\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$

This Tsonga *iambic* phrasing is common and may apply elsewhere; it is said that (Venda) dotted crotchet rhythm is never accented thus

$\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$

(Blacking 1967).

The original melody of *Nsati wa rilaveta* is being carried by the second *xizambi*, and this is confirmed by comparing the latter with the following performance of the same tune, by *xizambi* player Xafatuka Mabasa of Mawambe's location.

Xizambi Transcription 58. *N'sati Wa Rilaveta* (The Jealous Woman) -- a second *xizambi*, performance of the above tune, this time by Xafatuka Mabasa.
♩ = 96
Cycle: 16 ♩
Transpos.: maj 6th up (fund.)

16

16

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16

This pattern consists of two sections which, because of their mixed duplet/triplet groupings, can each be viewed as either 6 crotchets in length, or 4 dotted crotchets in length. Note the irregular accentuation and the intriguing rhythmic asymmetry of these two equal-lengthed sections — this 24-quaver pattern constitutes the subjective or 'inherent' rhythm of the two *xizambi* contributions combined. (The 'inherent' rhythms of Tsonga *xizambi* duettists, while constituting a means of arriving at a given *rhythmic* pattern, do not constitute a means of arriving at a given *melodic* pattern, as do the 'inherent' rhythms of Kiganda xylophone music.)

Xizambi Transcription 60 (Duet). Xingomungomu
(The Giant Ogres)
♩ = 264
Cycle: 120 ♩
Transpos.: maj 2nd down (fund.)

The duettists re-enter phase every 120 quavers

The second performer enters on the first performer's fourth quaver (third cycle), and every *four* repetitions of the first performer's 30-quaver cycle (every *five* repetitions of the second performer's 24-quaver cycle) will find the juxtaposed phrases

back in this position, rather like the cyclic phasing encountered in Indian drumming.

Tsonga *xizambi* duets are, in the main, *rhythmically* oriented, and the players are intensely aware of their rhythmic relationship to each other. Melodically, this is not so, for as Nketia observes in connection with Tanzanian Gogo music, "simultaneous occurrences of sounds may or may not be intended to relate structurally to a common point of reference even though they may be meaningful clusters in terms of the separate roles assumed by individual performers in a given musical situation." (Nketia 1967.)

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS WITH RESPECT TO THE XIZAMBI DUETS OF JOEL MASHAVA AND NJARANJARA

In these duets, the intervallic relationship between the two instruments (a 5th, or inverted 4th) parallels the intervallic relationship found between the voice and its *xizambi* accompaniment in many of our 60 transcriptions, and serves to emphasize the importance of the concept of 'harmonic equivalence' in the Tsonga musical system.

The primary role of *rhythm* in *xizambi*-playing (due to the essentially percussive nature of the instrument) is particularly emphasized in duet-playing. The rasping against the notched bow, and the rattling of the seeds on the rattlestick, are prominent constituents of the *xizambi* sound, and the rhythmic patterns yielded by them function as a 'grid' against which voice and/or buccal resonance or another *xizambi* provide interest.

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