A HISTORY OF DANCE AND JAZZ BAND PERFORMANCE IN THE WESTERN CAPE IN THE POST-1945 ERA

by
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CONTENTS:

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ABSTRACT

This thesis considers aspects of jazz and dance band performance in Cape Town between the 1930s and the 1960s, with special reference to the post-1945 period. It examines ways in which local dance and jazz musicians and audiences responded to political, social and cultural change in this period by considering key institutional constraints, the impact of broader political, social and cultural change, and local responses to this change. Primary data was collected from oral biographical material, archives, official printed sources, and newspaper reports.

Dance band and jazz musicians in this period faced two major institutional barriers. Firstly, in forming an integral part of postwar secondary industrialisation in South Africa, a few dominant record companies helped to establish an industry with racially and ethnically delimited markets by the 1960s in the Western Cape and other regions. Secondly, the degree of access to the musical profession enjoyed by musicians was subject to political constraints. Where they had few prescriptive advantages earlier in the century, by the 1960s, White musicians in Cape Town had secured privileged access to work opportunities. Black musicians, on the other hand, gradually had to create their own work opportunities as key openings in the profession became closed off to them.

Furthermore, since the 1930s, broader social and political changes had an impact on musical performance in a number of

significant ways. Firstly, performance events such as social dances, became part of the intensely political climate of the postwar years. Secondly, some audiences viewed performance events as diversions, opting for the glamour and social glitter offered by forms of American jazz on records and in films. Thirdly, in the 1950s and 1960s, a relatively small group of African, Coloured and White musicians began experimenting with indigenous jazz styles and with 'serious' American jazz influences. This movement challenged the dominant racial order in Cape Town in the 1960s.

Finally, in addition to the defining features of dance and jazz cultures in the city's mainly Coloured townships, this study pays some attention to how musicians responded to social and political changes. From examining how music-making activities among Black musicians were organised between the 1940s and the 1960s, it is evident that the world of dance bands and jazz bands was bounded by the role of race and ethnicity, both in the activities of musicians and in relations between them. Coloured dance music was particularly bounded by notions of Coloured ethnic consciousness. In illustrating aspects of this consciousness, the study closes with a glimpse of one musician's efforts to change some of the fundamental conventions which underpinned the local tradition of dance band music between the 1940s and the 1960s. It concludes with an evaluation of the contemporary meanings of jazz culture in Cape Town.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Reviewing the scope of urban history in South Africa, Christopher Saunders has recently suggested that studies of popular culture and leisure offer a unique opportunity for scholars of Cape Town's history.[1] The forms of leisure and popular culture which have emerged in the city represent a field not yet adequately treated by historians. These themes, Saunders argues, could best be considered through the prism of history, especially given its concern with change and continuity. This dynamic focus, together with the historian's 'eclectic methodology', could help show how the development of forms of leisure and popular culture might become part of a future synthesis of Cape Town's integrated urban history.[2]

The present work considers a specific aspect of Cape Town's modern social and cultural history. In it, we consider primarily the activities of dance and jazz musicians and the environment in which they performed in the Western Cape in the postwar period.[3] In scope, this study includes the professional as well as the social aspirations of musicians

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[1]C. Saunders, Writing History: South Africa's Urban Past and other Essays, Pretoria, 1992, p.36. The term 'leisure' denotes the pursuit of musical or cultural activity during time away from work. Its connotation of musical activity as popular entertainment is stressed.

[2]C. Saunders, Writing History, p.42.

[3]Dance bands existed for the purpose of entertaining audiences for social dancing. They are understood to include styles such as ballroom dance music, Victorian style waltzes and quadrilles and indigenous variations such as vastrap and tickey draai.

and audiences concerned with entertainment, leisure or the performing arts in the mainly Coloured townships of Cape Town. What, in fact, were the priorities of local musicians? What were their preoccupations, and how did significant cultural institutions relate to these? By considering such questions, we hope to be able to move closer to an understanding of popular music culture in the Western Cape and of how these cultural forces can be understood in relation to developments in other regions.[4] This thematic focus arises from a number of basic concerns outlined in this chapter.

Popular music and leisure at the Cape

The popular culture of the underclasses at the Cape since the beginning of the twentieth century has generally been under-represented in historical work by writers and scholars. In fact, the history of musical performance among Cape Town's Black communities has not been treated seriously in major scholarly work.[5] Instead, Cape Town has been depicted mostly in popular literature as the home of a Coloured working class abounding in natural leisure and revelry; and possessing a

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[4]See C Saunders, Writing History pp. 23-25. Saunders also appealed for consideration of the city in its wider regional context, and for a balance between institutional history and social history.

[5]Only Gerald Stone and Shamil Jeppie, respectively, have produced work on the coon carnival and on dance bands in the 1950s. See G. Stone, 'The Coon carnival', Unpublished Mimeo, Abe Bailey Institute of Interracial Studies (n.d.), and S Jeppie, 'Aspects of Popular Culture and Class Expression in Inner Cape Town, circa. 1939-1959', MA Thesis, UCT, 1990.

domesticated and quaint musical heritage.[6] These simplified images of Cape Town's history, as Nasson has observed, have a power in local popular consciousness, derived from 'their capacity to simplify realities ... to provide meanings and stereotypes which we can grasp easily and comfortably.'[7]

In this sense, they become poor substitutes for grappling with the more complex and disputed issues in the history of Cape Town and its people. This realisation provides an important underpinning of the present study. For, in fact, stereotypes of musicians had not disappeared from public discourse by the 1960s. In 1964, an Argus reporter pleaded for the preservation of the Sithole brothers (kwela pennywhistlers) on the streets of Cape Town, in terms suggestive of what John Western has called the 'imperial possessive':

> let their music be heard in its natural setting. Let it

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[6]Such representations were made by amateur historians such as Lawrence Green. Green described generic Coloured working class characters who would have existed in the 1860s -- such as 'April the musician' and 'Coenraad Moes the Fishmonger'. See L. Green, Grow Lovely, Grow Old: The Story of Cape Town's Three Centuries, the Legends, Traditions and Folklore, the Laughter and Tears, Cape Town, 1951, p.81. Green indebted himself to I.D. Du Plessis, who had an illustrious career as a self-styled authority on 'Malay' history and culture. See S Jeppie, 'Historical Process and the Constitution of Subjects: I.D. Du Plessis and the Reinvention of the Malay', BA(Hons) Thesis, UCT 1987. Colonial representations of the pre-industrial city have been documented. For a recent example, see J. Pastoor 'Depictions of Cape Town's underclass in the 1830s', Paper presented at the Cape Town History Workshop, 1991.

[7]B. Nasson, 'Oral history and the reconstruction of District Six', in S. Jeppie and C. Soudien (eds.), The Struggle for District Six: Past and Present, Cape Town, 1990, p.49.

> become so much a part of this city that when we are away we think of them. We preserve our game, our scenery and our buildings. We have established our flower sellers and strive to find a site for the barrow boys. Even our coons are fighting to overcome what seem insurmountable difficulties. Let us not forget this other heritage and the hours of joy and relaxation this music has given us.[8]

One aim of this work is to help place the musical activities of Cape Town's underclasses in a more nuanced historical perspective which will help to correct some of this simplified imagery.

By giving consideration to day-to-day aspects of music-making, cultural historians can help to enrich our understandings of popular performance, particularly among Coloured and African musicians and audiences in Cape Town in the twentieth century. For example, by considering aspects of how musical competence was acquired by dance and jazz musicians at the Cape, one can cast some light on their views of the world around them, and on the shaping of their own musical activities. More eloquently stated, studies of urban African popular music can profit from exploring 'the dialectic of individual creativity,

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[8] Argus 11/1/1964. See J. Western, Outcast Cape Town, Cape Town, 1981, p.15. For a comparative view, see T. Fiehrer, 'From quadrille to stomp: the Creole origins of jazz', Popular Music 10,1 1991 for a consideration of historical jazz stereotypes in New Orleans.

cultural aesthetics and collective processes of music making.'[9]

Such an approach has been used only to a limited extent in recent studies of popular leisure and culture in modern Cape Town.[10] It should also be noted that the cultural activities of the underclasses during the nineteenth century have been discussed primarily as secondary aspects of popular class expression. Andrew Bank, for example, has viewed the leisure activities of slaves as indicators of their different cultural identities. He argues that in the early nineteenth century, slaves had generated a weakly-developed and ambiguous cultural identity. Accordingly, the economic absorption of slaves into a predominantly free urban underclass was reflected in their 'ties of intimacy' with Europeans and free Blacks, through the

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[9]V. Erlmann, 'A conversation with Joseph Shabalala of Ladysmith Black Mambazo: aspects of African performers' life stories', The World of Music 31,1 1989, p.31. Also, see R. Joseph, 'Zulu women's bow songs: ruminations on love', Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies 1,1 1987, for a consideration of the notion of creative subjectivity in a rural African context.

[10]Elements of such an approach have been employed in studies of other regions and periods. For example, see M Anderson, Music in the Mix: The Story of South African Popular Music, Johannesburg, 1981; H Becker, 'The professional jazz musician and his audience', Denisoff, R. Serge and Petersen, Richard A. (eds.), The Sounds of Social Change: Studies in Popular Culture, Chicago, 1972, for a sociological study of musicians in a jazz band; D Coplan, 'Marabi culture: continuity and transformation in African music in Johannesburg, 1920-1940', African Urban Studies 6 1979; In Township Tonight: South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre, Johannesburg, 1985; L Dahl, Stormy Weather: The Music And Lives of a Century of Jazzwomen, London, 1984; V Erlmann, 'A conversation with Joseph Shabalala of Ladysmith Black Mambazo: aspects of African performers' life stories', The World of Music 31,1 1989.

secular and religious networks of Islam, and, most of all, through 'a culture of leisure that spilt over from the canteens into the streets of the city.'[11]

It is arguable that this presents an incomplete picture of the cultural life or leisure activities of the emerging underclasses in Cape Town since the early nineteenth century.[12] References to leisure among the underclasses are often used interchangeably with historically narrow conceptualisations of popular revelry. As such, they often do not deal with learning rituals, creative processes, and other material aspects of performance. When limited to a viewing of popular cultural activity within an external perspective, discussions of leisure may lack an appreciation of important dimensions of the cultural experience of musical performers. While not consciously collaborating in the generation of historical myths, this uni-dimensional approach to popular culture may still help to perpetuate what Kofi Agawu has called the 'motif of the music-making African -- with its

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[11]A. Bank, 'The disintegration of slavery at the Cape: 1806-1834', Paper presented at the Africa Seminar, UCT Centre for African Studies, 1991, p.10. Also, Robert Ross has argued that the 'individualisation' of slaves entering the Cape, and the absence of familial stability, mitigated against the formation of a distinct identity. R. Ross, Cape of Torments: Slavery and Resistance in South Africa, London, 1983, p.16.

[12]A critique of Bank's use of the concept of familial 'stability' asserts that "Cape slave historians ... too easily assume an identity of physical and social space." See P. Van Der Spuy, 'Slave women and the family in Cape Town after the abolition of the slave trade', Paper presented at the Cape Town History Workshop, 1991, p.8.

implication that leisure abounds'.[13]

Closer to the regional peculiarities of the Cape, we may note a parallel in the literary representation of underclass character. Thus, the notion that 'hottentots' had no cultural identity formed a component of a discourse of native idleness at the Cape, as John Coetzee has observed of such constructions:

> Since it is not custom but absence of custom, not recreation but absence of recreation, this idleness usually finds its place in ... Hottentot character.[14]

Some attention has been paid to the material facets of leisure in studies of more recent periods. In one example, Shamil Jeppie has documented the 'formative social experiences of some musicians.'[15] He briefly focused on the formative

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[13]K. Agawu, 'Representing African Music', Critical Inquiry 18,2 1992, p.248. It should be noted that historical evidence of the cultural activities of slaves at the Cape is not readily available. Yet, professional musicians have been a feature of musical life at the Cape at least since the slave orchestras of the eighteenth century See G. Kubik, 'The Southern African periphery', p.10. For example, a popular guitar-like instrument, the ramkie, was introduced to the Cape by the slaves of Malibar -- who thus had some musical influence locally. Also, English country dances were a feature of social life in Cape Town in the mid-eighteenth century, while Black dance bands entertained White guests in the early 1820s. See D. Coplan, In Township Tonight: South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre, Johannesburg, 1985, p.11.

[14]J. Coetzee, White Writing: On The Culture Of Letters in South Africa, Johannesburg, 1988, p.16.

[15]S Jeppie, 'Aspects of Popular Culture', p.78.

social experiences of musicians in District Six during the 1950s,[16] providing passing consideration of traditional dance music in the 1940s and 1950s, and also the social activities and symbolism surrounding the annual coon carnival which occurred in District Six. The performance of music was described as the fabric of an inner city working class cultural expression. This, together with the work of other young social historians of Cape Town in the 1980s, looked at ways in which musical taste and talent were developed in the inner city and sketched the social context in which these were played out.[17]

Leisure activities such as dance music were depicted as forming a vibrant epicentre of popular class expression. Discussing the social production of musicians, Jeppie concluded that:

> music offered a means to improve the powers of concentration and the skill of composition; and it was both a cultural resource and an edifying leisure

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[16]See S Jeppie 'Aspects of Popular Culture', pp.75-103.

[17]For example, see R. Gassert, '"Bop Till You Drop": An Oral Study of Popular Musical Cultures in Cape Town, from the late 1940s to the early 1960s', History III Long Paper, UCT, 1988; T. Schreuders, 'The social and intellectual life of the Left in Cape Town during the Second World War, as specifically reflected in the Guardian, in H. Bradford and B. Nasson (eds.), South African Research Papers 5, UCT, 1988; and I. Jeffrey, '"Their Will to Survive": A Socio-Historical study of the Sharptown Swingsters', BA (Hons) Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1985.

activity. Learning and leisure thus often overlapped.[18]

However, dance music also often offered temptations which had less edifying effects.[19] And Jeppie's work veers close to glossing over these more coarse dimensions, to say nothing of the learning process and rites of passage of young dance musicians at the Cape.

Following studies of leisure among slaves, studies of Cape Town's urban underclasses have tended to simplify ethnically important aspects of popular culture and its social and political milieu.[20] Inevitably, a difficulty arises that popular cultural expression may be discussed in terms which fail to take proper account of historical complexity. Yet, the internal organisation of live dance and jazz music explicitly lends itself to such discussion.[21] For instance,

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[18]S. Jeppie, 'Aspects of Popular Culture', p.85.

[19]For example, Jimmy Adams referred to alcohol consumption among musicians in dance bands. Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

[20]The terms 'race' and 'ethnicity' have specific meanings in this thesis. The use of racial categories Coloured, African, Indian and White rest foremost on the system of legal classification that was, until recently, applicable in South Africa. On the other hand, ethnicity is understood as the conscious efforts of groups to create a common identity and a sense of difference from other groups. It is a political idea which seeks to establish a sense of cultural commonness and difference. See the discussions of race and ethnicity respectively by E Boonzaier and by J Sharp in South African Keywords: The Uses and Abuses of Political Concepts, E. Boonzaier and J. Sharp (eds.), Cape Town, 1988, p.65 and p.81.

[21]It should be noted that since the 1930s, bands which were regarded as jazz bands often played dance music as well. The reverse was often not the case. See C. Ballantine Marabi

(continued...)

by the 1940s, dance bands had developed a degree of operating uniformity. By then, African jazz musicians (and those elsewhere) had certainly become more self-conscious in performance, as the performing conventions of their music became entrenched by fashion and the stylistic and ideological inclinations of its exponents.[22] This feature of dance bands offers an opportunity to focus on tangible processes of music-making: such as the methods of instruction that musicians used, the ways in which access to the craft was regulated, the relationships which governed performance situations, and the judgements about aesthetic and stylistic matters which musicians employed both in groups and individually. Thus, the history of the band format is potentially useful to the social historian interested in the operation of social consciousness (and identity) in musical performance activity.

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[21](...continued)
Nights: Early South African Jazz and Vaudeville, Johannesburg, 1993, p.5, for a reference to marabi as a dance and an ingredient in the later African jazz style. Mindful of this, the term, jazz in this work denotes the influence of American or South African jazz and dance styles as the context will suggest. See G. Schuller, Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development, New York, 1968 for a working definition of American jazz.

[22]See C. Ballantine, Marabi Nights, p.60; and R. Thomson, 'Dance bands and dance halls in Greenock, 1945-55', Popular Music 8,2 1989.

Identity and musical performance

The present work argues that, since the 1930s, dance music was often seen and understood by its contemporary practitioners and audiences as a performance style unique to Coloureds. Such expressions of identity in performance were often ambiguous.

This obviously raises another important theme: namely the particular notion of local identity and its relation to the performance of popular music. Why has identity been an historically significant theme in studies of Cape Town? For a start, because Coloureds comprised by far the largest section of the city's underclasses, scholars of Cape history have explored Coloured political identity in the twentieth century. In fact, identity has been at the centre of the history of Coloured politics since the late nineteenth century.[23]

Cape Town was unique with respect to Southern Africa's regional political economy. It had a small African population -- not more than 10% of the total for most of the nineteenth century. It also experienced a tradition of nineteenth-century Cape Liberalism which influenced the texture of both

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[23]See G. Lewis, Between the Wire and the Wall: A History of South African 'Coloured' Politics, Cape Town, 1987, I. Goldin, Making Race: The Politics and Economics of Coloured Identity in South Africa, Cape Town, 1987, M. Adhikari, 'The sons of Ham: slavery and the making of Coloured identity, South African Historical Journal, 27,1992.

White and Black politics into the following century.[24] Cape Town also developed a separate economic path from that of the Witwatersrand. Situated at the tip of the African continent, it operated as a colonial port of call for passing ships, a market and shipping centre for the farming interior, and a site of merchant capitalist development. Unlike the Witwatersrand, the Western Cape did not undergo a direct mining revolution. The region lacked the direct developmental benefits of industrialisation, as cheap African labour, machinery, markets and other resources became concentrated on the Witwatersrand. Cape Town's labouring classes therefore have a different genealogy and have different cultural traditions to that of their counterparts on the Witwatersrand.

Naturally, Coloured identity has significant links with Cape slavery, making its complex origins several generations deep. But in general terms, an identifiable identity crystallised during the 1880s and has been present in developing or ambiguous forms since then. As a settled part of this, it has been argued that the assimilation of slaves from diverse origins into colonial culture came to form an important component of a common Coloured identity. Alongside this, there was also a common Black underclass culture resulting from intermingling with deprived Africans and a common

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[24]See T. Davenport, South Africa: A Modern History, London, 1991, pp.106-108 for a discussion of the Liberalism debate in the Cape Colony and Natal.

dispossession in relation to poorer Whites.[25]

For this period, Bickford-Smith has described an important tension between analyses of an underclass, concerned with a sense of its 'Blackness' on the one hand, while on the other, there was a developing sense of exclusive 'Colouredness'. Furthermore, there were also distinctive Griqua, Malay, and Hottentot ethnicities. These tensions tended to reveal a dynamic ethnic identity and thus, there is no conclusive evidence of a determinate or fixed Coloured identity emerging at the turn of the century.[26]

Nevertheless, a set of social and cultural values did start to congeal into a rough identity during the earlier twentieth century.[27] This process was naturally never unambiguous. On the one hand, since the 1880s, liquor, labour and residential legislation tended to distinguish between Natives and other non-Whites. On the other hand, in the case of the White population at the Cape, there was a 'special characteristic' of segregation that distinguished only between Whites and

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[25]See M. Adhikari, 'The sons of Ham: slavery and the making of Coloured identity, South African Historical Journal, 27,1992.

[26]See V. Bickford-Smith, 'Slavery, emancipation and the question of Coloured identity, with particular attention to Cape Town: 1875-1910', Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Collected Seminar Papers Vol. 19, 1992.

[27]I. Goldin, Making Race: The Politics and Economics of Coloured Identity in South Africa, Cape Town, 1987, pp.11-36. For example, while the official inclusiveness of the term 'Coloured' was abandoned by 1904, perceptions of a 'Coloured Africander' as distinct from 'native' African were emerging.

'non-Whites'. Furthermore, there was a hardening tendency to fuse Muslim and Christian identity under a common Coloured label.[28] This was especially so in the case of the African People's Organisation which was founded in 1902, based on an articulation of elite concerns common to both Muslim and Christian sensibilities.

Any discussion of popular leisure expression in Cape Town therefore needs to take into account the dynamic relationships between political, ethnic, cultural, religious, socio-linguistic and other aspects of individual and group expressions of contrasting identities. The following notion is a useful starting point when considering the formation of specific identities:

> For there to be an identity, society, culture or ethnic group, it is not necessary for all parties to agree on what constitutes this culture; it is sufficient that they are able to establish the terms of identity as a problem about which they are able to bargain and negotiate.[29]

In important work, Bickford-Smith seems to bear out the claim that different identities could co-exist as mediated entities and that it is more useful in Cape Town urban history to view identity as a multifaceted process, rather than a single

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[28]V. Bickford-Smith, 'Slavery, emancipation, and the question of Coloured identity', pp.22-23.

[29]J. Amselle, 'Tensions within culture', Social Dynamics 18,1 1992, p.54.

determinate historical entity.[30] Furthermore, following Ross, identity was not a simple reflection for in Cape Town, social relations, even in the pre-industrial period, had been 'heavily influenced by all sorts of other considerations, including physiognomy, clothing, language, religious affiliation, even food.'[31]

Accepting this, it follows that different aspects of human expression and even social institutions can provide valuable insights into the historical making of identity.[32] Accordingly, a study of musicianship within the field of popular culture and leisure, musical performance in particular, may offer useful perspectives on expressions of Coloured identity in Cape Town.

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[30]See V. Bickford-Smith, 'Slavery, emancipation and the question of Coloured identity'.

[31]R. Ross, 'Structure and culture in pre-industrial Cape Town: a survey of knowledge and ignorance', in W. James, and M. Simons, (eds.) The Angry Divide: Social and Economic History of the Western Cape, Cape Town, 1989.

[32]See R. Ross, 'Structure and culture in pre-industrial Cape Town: a survey of knowledge and ignorance', in James, Wilmot and Simons, Mary (eds.) The Angry Divide: Social and Economic History of the Western Cape, Cape Town, 1989 for a discussion of identity at the Cape. See also G. Stone, L, An Ethnographic and Socio-semantic analysis of Lexis among Working-Class Afrikaans-speaking coloured Adolescent and Young Males in the Cape Peninsula, 1963-1990, UCT MA Thesis, 1991 for a discussion of 'disreputable' identity among Coloured males.

The industrial development of popular music

A self-evident theme in this study is the history of popular culture from the point of view of the vocational or professional concerns of musicians. This focus has the potential to add an important dimension to our understanding of how popular culture developed in the Western Cape, and in a national context as well. And we already have a developing literature on professionalisation. Veit Erlmann has argued that the development of a local record trade was central to the spread of Black American musical influences among urban Africans.[33] As a material concern for many dance band and jazz musicians, it is important to see the influence of a record trade on the professional context in which musicians found themselves. In addition, Coplan discussed the role which White musicians played in helping to marginalise rough Black musicians to the periphery of musical institutions.[34] Muff Anderson has also explored the racial character of the recording industry.[35]

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[33]V. Erlmann, African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance, London, 1991, p.178.

[34]See D. Coplan, 'The African musician and the development of the Johannesburg entertainment industry: 1900-60', Journal of Southern African Studies 5,2 1979.

[35]The present work maintains a subtle but important distinction between the recording industry and the record manufacturing industry. The former will normally be used when referring to issues of access and ideology in the recording of popular music, while the latter will refer to the development of technological capacity, markets and trade in gramophone records.

These perspectives constitute essential background material in the more central project of producing studies of the history of modern urban African music and performance. A present intention is to illuminate the activities and aspirations of a particular grouping of musicians and in so doing, throw historical light upon the professional and vocational experience of jazz and African jazz among mostly Coloured and African musicians in the Cape. An obvious complimentary consideration is the role played by White musicians in assisting the segregation of musical performance, and the overall development of popular music in relation to the consumer development of South Africa's secondary industrial capacity before and after the Second World War.

The established White musical profession and the gramophone record industry constituted an important part of the wider political and commercial environment in which black musicians found themselves in the postwar years. To musicians, these institutions presented a range of political and material constraints.

Historically, the gramophone record importing and manufacturing trades came to have a profound impact on South African popular music. Since the 1940s, the gramophone record manufacturing industry began to grow at a rapid rate, making a huge impact on the popular musical forms which emerged in urban South Africa in the postwar years. While many of these manufacturing developments were centred around the industrial

regions further north, they also had an impact on popular music in Cape Town in at least two ways. In the first place, manufactured music helped to give shape to African jazz in the 1940s and 1950s, as recordings spread to the African townships of Cape Town. Secondly, dance musicians in Cape Town itself also sought opportunities to record as a means of developing their musical work into a viable profession.

By the 1960s, Cape Town had a consolidated, well-founded cultural establishment with links to major public cultural institutions such as the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). This establishment represented a political obstacle to the expressive ideas of Black musicians and an institutional barrier against the free development of Black popular musical performance in the city. Such barriers formed a central tenet of the marginal position of black musicians in the city. Indeed, the influence of an official musical establishment in the city was epitomised by the workings of the exclusively White Cape Musicians Association.

In summary, this study considers the modern history of dance band and jazz performance in Cape Town; with a view to contributing to the cultural history of the Western Cape. It does so by attempting to place the concerns of musicians at the centre of events. These concerns included the social networks within which musicians operated, the vocational constraints faced by professional jazz musicians and

musicians' consciousness of the effects of change and continuity in the world around them.

Definitions and key concepts

Finally, it is necessary at this preliminary point to briefly define a number of key concepts and general points of understanding. For instance, it should be noted that in presenting its argument, this work is not concerned with an examination of musical forms in any explicit musicological detail, nor with their relationship with a shifting social context. While this may be a fascinating theme for future research on popular music in Cape Town, it is not the focus of this study, which, instead, concentrates upon musical performance from the point of view of the social and professional aspirations of musicians.[36]

In view of this emphasis, the term 'performance' should be clarified. In general, performance is understood as an

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[36]See D. James, 'Musical form and social history: research perspectives on Black South African music', Radical History Review 46,7 1990 for a review of this theme in relation to studies in South African popular music. The present work remains as faithful to established usage as possible. The use of musicological insights in the study of popular music in Southern Africa has a discursive history. See K. Agawu, 'Representing African Music', Critical Inquiry 18,2 1992, K.J.H. Nketia, 'On the historicity of music in African cultures', Journal of African Studies 9,3 1982. For a comparative reading on the relationship between issues of history and form, see U. Schönherr, 'Adorno and jazz: reflections on a failed encounter', Telos, 87, 1991.

expression of popular consciousness and of social structure.[37] That is, performance events are visualised as occasions where musical ideas and social consciousness are expressed in practice. The term can therefore be used both to examine aspects of how musicians practised their vocation, and to consider how they, in turn, viewed their music. As Veit Erlmann has suggested, in the longer history of Black popular music during the twentieth century, the performance situation became intertwined 'with the strategies of musicians ... in a society whose workings they did not control.'[38]

By asking questions about the operations and cultural tenets of local music-making, the historical study of performance may help to reconstruct vital aspects of local popular consciousness, and through this, help to highlight connections between musical performance and its social context more clearly. For this reason, Erlmann has suggested that studying the history of Black South African musical performance can especially reveal 'little known layers and niches of consciousness that help to shed light on the nonmaterial, subjective forces and symbolic processes that have shaped South African society.'[39]

Given this assumption, we have to consider the most useful

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[37]See V. Erlmann, African Stars, p.5 and p.12 for discussions of the term.

[38]'Preface' in V. Erlmann, African Stars, p. xvii.

[39]'Preface' in V. Erlmann, African Stars, p. xviii.

kinds of historical evidence by which such layers and niches of consciousness might become visible to scholarship. In the present work, evidence is derived from several sources, including newspapers, manuscript collections, and oral testimony. Here, oral evidence has been particularly valuable in depicting aspects of consciousness, because of its individual texture and immediate nature. It can represent the complex workings of consciousness through anecdotes, statements and the fragmentary testimony of historical narrative.

Tradition is also an important concept.[40] Because it is submerged in collective identity, commonly held notions of tradition are often used as a means of historically mobilising political support for particular interests. For this reason, defining tradition is often the subject of contested interpretations in given contexts. In particular, because of their relative social status, access to intellectual resources and political power, various Black elites within White dominated society, have attempted to give particular definitions to traditions for their own purposes of advancement, with mixed results.[41]

Equally importantly, the notion of tradition as a constant,

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[40]In this study, tradition is understood as being concerned with the construction of images of the past and with the ways in which historical continuity is created in popular consciousness. See V. Erlmann, African Stars, p.12.

[41]See V. Erlmann, African Stars, pp.71-76.

unchanging practice has often been more fabricated than real; invariably intended to achieve political and cultural ascendancy for the interests of particular social classes. Erlmann has rightly asserted that 'cultural traditions are socially constructed arrangements of behaviour that can be reinterpreted, developed, or even invented. That is, they are continually constituted in social practice.'[42] Within defined traditions, change has also occurred over time as a result of the work of innovative individuals or by a consensus of different social classes. Understanding tradition as such a dynamic entity can help to clarify how processes of change and continuity have unfolded in the twentieth century.

If continuity and change in tradition are influenced by the efforts of individuals within social classes, how are we to understand the relationship between social and economic class on the one hand and culture on the other? Here, we may combine elements from a number of definitions of culture to develop a broad working definition. Robert Thornton has understood culture as a set of resources in constant flux, dependent on a set of variables in a given society.[43] Furthermore, Edward Said has understood culture to mean two things. Firstly, it refers to practices having relative autonomy from the economic, social and political realms, which are concerned with aesthetic pleasure and meaning. Secondly,

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[42]See V. Erlmann African Stars, pp.10-11.

[43]See R. Thornton, 'Culture: a contemporary definition', South African Keywords, pp.26-28.

culture consists of a refining and elevating element: 'each society's reservoir of the best that has been known and thought.' Culture in this sense can be a source of identity, 'and a rather combative one.'[44] Moreover, for Said, culture might embrace the activities of all categories of people in a given society.

Accordingly, this study conceptualises culture as having a relative autonomy from the category of class.[45] Scholars of South African popular music such as Erlmann have argued that it is unsatisfactory to define the world of musicians in terms of economic and social class position.[46] The cultural choices made by South African performers cannot be reduced to class positions or to any other single conceptual category. In fact, the concept of homogeneous class formation in Africa has been deemed inappropriate by many scholars of performance; and hence the concept of class-based cultural forms is regarded as being almost meaningless by scholars such as Erlmann and Christopher Waterman.[47]

The term 'popular' has been employed to address the problem of

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[44]See E. Said, Culture and Imperialism, London, 1994, pp.xii and xiii.

[45]In fact, Christopher Waterman has argued that cultural phenomena can influence other social processes; see his Jùjú: A Social History and Ethnography of an African Popular Music, London, 1990, pp.4-6.

[46]See Erlmann, African Stars, p.179.

[47]See Erlmann, African Stars, p.179 and C. Waterman, Jùjú: A Social History and Ethnography of an African Popular Music, (London, 1990), pp.4-6.

linking class and culture in the Southern African context, because of its conceptual flexibility. That is, it facilitates the discussion of culture by avoiding inflexible dependence on the conceptual category of class and by implication, on leisure as 'class expression'. The term popular relates to cultural strategies which were adopted across class interests, and avoids the problematic notion of class-based cultural expression in South African studies.

Finally, the term 'popular culture' is used in an inclusive sense. It is used as opposed to folk culture, which has been understood to have been imposed by 'modernising' African elites.[48] On the other hand, traditional culture has also been claimed by elites in attempts to forge cultural hegemony. Against this, 'popular culture' captures the dynamic cultural syncretism of the urban South Africans in the twentieth century.[49] By association, popular music represents the range of musical syncretism, new electronic forms of musical performance, 'neo-traditional' and other influences -- all acting in the field of musical performance.[50]

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[48]V. Erlmann, '"Horses in the race course": the domestication of ingoma dancing in South Africa: 1929-39', Popular Music 8,3 1989, p.260.

[49]V. Erlmann, 'Horses in the race course', p.260.

[50]See R. Middleton, Studying Popular Music, pp.1-33 for a genealogy of the term 'popular music'. In South Africa, the term has been used to describe the place of performance in mediating social relationships. See V. Erlmann, 'Horses in the race course', p.260 for a useful discussion of the term 'popular'.

CHAPTER TWO: SHORT OVERVIEW OF STUDIES IN DANCE BANDS AND JAZZ PERFORMANCE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY UP TO THE 1940S

This chapter presents an overview of themes in literature on South African urban popular music from the turn of the twentieth century to the 1940s.[1] These were the founding years of indigenous South African jazz, and, as Christopher Ballantine has noted, a time of radical newness in politics and in African culture, since the music produced here formed a basis for future developments.[2]

In general, we may ask how, and to what extent, key issues identified in the preceding chapter are addressed in major scholarly work on South African popular musical performance.

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[1]This is not an exhaustive literature survey. The purpose is to pinpoint key issues which are of direct concern to the present analysis. For a brief survey of approaches see D. James, 'Musical form and social history: research perspectives on black South African music', Radical History Review 46,7 1990 and H. De Jager, 'Music and change in black urban culture during the first half of the 1960s', Paper presented at the History Workshop, University of the Witwatersrand, 1984. Also see K. Agawu, 'Representing African Music', Critical Inquiry 18,2 1992; and G. Kubik, 'How my research developed', Paper presented at the Fourth Symposium on Ethnomusicology, Grahamstown, 1984 for examples and overviews of research approaches. General African history also influenced the study of African popular music; see K.J.H. Nketia, 'On the historicity of music in African cultures', Journal of African Studies 9,3 1982 for an examination of this influence. Also, see C.A. Waterman, Jùjú: A Social History and Ethnography of an African Popular Music, London, 1990 for a major recent work of history and ethnomusicology. There have also been calls for a comprehensive review of international literature on the subject; see P. Oliver, 'That certain feeling: blues and jazz ... in 1890?', Popular Music 10,1 1991.

[2]C. Ballantine, Marabi Nights: Early South African Jazz and Vaudeville, Johannesburg, 1993, p.2.

First, there is an obvious need to examine corresponding connections between the activity of music making and the aspirations of musicians. That is, to ask how musicians related to large cultural institutions and organisational conventions such as the record companies and the musical profession. Secondly, what were the social and professional aspirations of dance and jazz musicians? Also, we need to address what kind of interaction may have existed between Cape Town's musicians and those in other regions.

The development of regional styles since the 1890s

The issue of differentiating regions is important to any study of South Africa. For the present study, it is clear that historically South Africa's styles of popular performance are regionally interlinked. For example, there are two key factors accounting for the development of township musical styles during the twentieth century. Firstly, many of the musicians operating in the early twentieth century were frequent travellers who spread developing styles of music as they travelled. Secondly, the development of secondary industry in Southern Africa facilitated the spread of peddling music as urban townships emerged early in the present century. Industrial manufacturing aided the growth of technological capacity, infrastructure and the development of commodity markets for these musical styles. In addition, Southern Africa also formed a market for international gramophone record companies. This provided the basis for a patchwork of

musical styles in Southern Africa during the twentieth century.

Indeed, Gerhard Kubik has classified Southern Africa as an identifiable musical region, infused by the cultural impact of economically driven long-distance migration into South Africa in the nineteenth-century. Originating from lands on South Africa's northern and eastern periphery, it resulted in an influx and reflux of people and goods and the spread of a common southern African township culture[3]. This common culture was evident in the new forms of urban music which emerged in the 1940s and 1950s in South Africa, in which significant contributions came from neighbouring countries, particularly Rhodesia. Most of these new musics such as jive, marabi, tsaba tsaba, and vula matambo began to display a common stylistic outlook, dominated by idiomatic innovations made by musicians in South Africa itself. From the 1940s onwards, Kubik claims, it was thus possible to distinguish a Southern African stylistic region of popular urban music.[4]

However, our present knowledge of the historical growth of urban South African popular music has been gleaned overwhelmingly from studies with a focus on the main

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[3]G. Kubik, 'The Southern African periphery: banjo traditions in Zambia and Malawi', The World of Music 31,1 1989, p.3. For a comparative study which places emphasis on regionalism in popular music, see D. Russel, Popular Music in England 1840-1914: A Social History, Montreal, 1987.

[4]G. Kubik, 'The Southern African periphery', p.3. For a survey of modern urban African styles of music, see B. Bergman, African Pop, London, 1985.

industrial areas, such as the Witwatersrand region. Little attention has been paid to how the Cape (and other smaller regions or sub-regions) has fitted into the emerging picture of popular performance in the twentieth century. Instead, the Cape has been characterised as a passive colonial springboard for musical styles and traditions which evolved influentially in other regions. This rather flat depiction fails to provide a sense of how such regional interaction may have occurred and a taste of the historical transformation that accompanied this interaction.[5] Yet, Alfred Khumalo, for example, who learnt to play the guitar before the Boer war in 1899, has provided a tantalising Transvaal insight into this interaction:

> I was advised by my late uncle, who had just returned from England ... to learn the guitar ... But I couldn't get a proper tutor, so I learnt the old fashioned way, you know, like it was played at that time by those Cape people.[6]

The suggestive existence of this kind of cross-regional influence has yet to be fully explored in the work of scholars

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[5]Roger Deacon and Christopher Saunders have both considered the issue of regional imbalances in South African historiography. See B. Bozzoli, and P. Delius, 'Radical History and South African society', Radical History Review, 46,7 1990; R. Deacon, 'Hegemony, essentialism and Radical History in South Africa', South African Historical Journal 24 1991; and C. Saunders, 'Radical History the Wits History Workshop Version -- reviewed', South African Historical Journal 24 1991.

[6]D. Rycroft, 'Black South African urban music since the 1890s: some reminiscences of Alfred Khumalo (1879-1966)', African Music, 7,1, 1991, p.13.

of South African performance.

It follows, then, that studying aspects of regional musical activities in the Cape can help to elucidate themes in the historical study of South African popular music. More broadly, for instance, Christopher Saunders has recently argued that there exists a need for studies of micro-phenomena in the formation of urban history in South Africa.[7] The concept of micro studies may also offer a clearer focus on regional styles of performance. They can usefully describe the local reception of changes brought about by inter-regional influences, urbanisation and other social, political and economic phenomena.[8]

For example, a number of references in some of Coplan's studies help to re-create a prototype of a Cape musician. Characteristically, Cape musicians had regular contact with urban semi-professional musicians who were emerging in the

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[7]See C. Saunders, Writing History: South Africa's Urban Past and other Essays, Pretoria, 1992.

[8]See JH Nketia, 'On the historicity of music in African cultures'. Nketia has outlined a trend towards regional studies of African cultures. See S. Martin, 'Music in urban East Africa: five genres in Dar es Salaam', Journal of African Studies, 9,3 1982 for an example of such a study; also his 'Brass bands and the Beni phenomenon in urban East Africa', African Music, 7,1 1991. Similarly, Deborah James has attested to this trend; see her 'Musical form and social history: research perspectives on black South African music', Radical History Review 46,7 1990. Veit Erlmann's work offers an example of such regional focus at work. See his African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance, Chicago, 1991. Also, see M. Jackson, 'Tiger Dance, terukuttu, Tango, and Tchaikovsky: a politico-cultural view of Indian South African music before 1948', The World of Music 31,1 1989.

Witwatersrand region in the early twentieth century. Coplan suggests that the Johannesburg oorlams mense were guitarists and violinists who brought tickey draai music and dance styles from the towns of the Cape and the diamond fields of Kimberley.[9] These styles, evolving out of the mixture of cultural influences which made up a distinctive 'Western Province' culture, broadly common to Whites and Coloureds in the Western Cape, pointed to defining features of Cape Town's musical history.[10] Such features point to a suggestive correlation between Cape musical influences and Coloured ethnicity.

Such understandings were not wholly bounded among musician communities. For example, a strong tradition of keyboard-playing in the Cape was linked to the earlier arrival of church organs and the small harmonium with nineteenth century English Settlers.[11] By the late 1920s, a shared ethos was emerging, and small marabi and jazz bands featuring keyboard,

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[9]D. Coplan, 'Marabi culture: continuity and transformation in African music in Johannesburg, 1920-1940', African Urban Studies 6 1979, p.52. Musicians of this type had been earning a living as entertainers of South Africa's proletariat under the Dutch East India Company in seventeenth-century Cape Town. Their position in relation to the rest of the slave population remains an object of conjecture. Later, Xhosa-speaking instrumentalists came to function as a link between Black American and local African and 'Coloured/ Afrikaans' musical styles.

[10]D. Coplan, 'Marabi culture', p.54. An early recording of the tickey draai was made by a small Coloured and Xhosa string and concertina band called "Okay Dance" by The Vincent Steza Dance Band.

[11]D. Coplan, In Township Tonight: South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre, Johannesburg, 1985, p.37.

guitar, percussion and brass instrumentalists drawn from various ethnic groups were performing at parties throughout the slumyards and other African locations:

> To this day, ... African jazz musicians insist that the best pianists come from the Cape, guitarists from Zulu Natal, and brass and reed players from the Transvaal.[12]

Cape Town's role in this emerging picture of South African popular music and its history needs to be explored more fully, for regions facilitated interaction between musicians, audiences and institutions, all of which contributed towards the development of national styles. They also retained obvious peculiarities. Both of these aspects need to be explored to obtain a fuller picture of the growth of indigenous popular music in Southern Africa. Producing information about the under-researched Cape region may hopefully be a first small step towards achieving this.

The legacy of American minstrelsy and vaudeville since the nineteenth century

Black South African dance band and jazz performance was profoundly influenced by its American, and particularly its Black American equivalent. Overall, it provided a powerful ideological underpinning for Black jazz in South Africa. As this thesis suggests, the Western Cape was no exception, since

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[12]D. Coplan, 'Marabi culture', p.59.

early Black American visitors (musicians, performers, writers, and others) came to influence Black South African performance in both stylistic and in ideological terms. As Ballantine has argued, 'the missionary presence, cultural and educational contacts and economic interests were the main conduits which transmitted American examples, and through which they were sought.'[13]

South Africans developed sustained musical contacts with Black Americans by the end of the nineteenth century, as a deepening awareness of race in Cape society in the 1880s coincided with the arrival of American minstrel and vaudeville troupes.[14] Orpheus McAdoo's troupe, which visited in the late nineteenth century, helped to highlight issues of racial identity for local audiences and musicians. Since minstrelsy and vaudeville was an important underpinning of African jazz, the American connection underpinned the status of African (and American) jazz as socially relevant music. Minstrelsy represented what Africans could achieve by emulating American negro spirituals and other styles. The musical ideas and

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[13]C. Ballantine Marabi Nights, p.18. For a comparative account of politics in Black American music, see L. Jones, Blues People, Connecticut, 1980.

[14]See V. Bickford-Smith 'A special tradition of segregation in Cape Town in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries', in James, Wilmot and Simons, Mary (eds.) The Angry Divide: Social and Economic History of the Western Cape, Cape Town, 1989. Bickford-Smith characterised Cape society in the nineteenth century as geared to preserving traditional class distinctions between the predominantly White elite and the predominantly Black underclasses. By the early twentieth century, it was increasingly becoming imbued with a strongly racial character.

images of these visitors influenced local styles of music and generally also left a deep impression on urban Africans -- especially a 'longing for freedom, justice and universal fraternity'.[15]

The American connection is therefore an important part of urban musical traditions in South Africa in the twentieth century. Minstrelsy and vaudeville have been included among a range of factors which constituted a musical connection, alongside the considerable literary and intellectual trans-Atlantic connection between Black South Africa and Black America.[16] Other factors include printed sheet music, phonograph recordings and other artifacts imported from America. Drawing on this, the cultural and political symbolism of jazz and dance band performance was often articulated in terms of its relation to America, particularly Black America,[17] a connection which formed the basis of the link between the two styles of jazz.[18] Indeed, vaudeville troupes provided part of the entertainment for what Ballantine

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[15]C. Ballantine, Marabi Nights, p.4.

[16]See T. Couzens, '"Moralising leisure time": the transatlantic connection and Black Johannesburg 1918-1936', in S. Marks and R. Rathbone (eds.), Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa, London, 1982 for a discussion of this intellectual tradition.

[17]Aspects of the connection between Black musicians and American jazz are described in C. Ballantine, '"Africans in America, Harlem in Johannesburg": The ideology of Afro-America in the formation of Black jazz and vaudeville in South Africa before the mid-1940s' in A. Tracey (ed.), Papers presented at the Seventh Symposium on Ethnomusicology, University of Venda, 1988, pp.5-10.

[18]C. Ballantine, Marabi Nights, p.13.

has referred to as 'Concert and dance'.[19]

Later, in the 1930s, the decisions taken by African musicians to stress African -- as opposed to European and American -- influences in their music was one important step in asserting a new affiliation with Black American vaudeville and minstrelsy. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, groups such as the Bantu Revue Follies sought to mix European flavour with African lyrics and costumes. Vaudeville was thus Africanised or used in neo-traditional African performance.[20]

Historically, minstrelsy and vaudeville are clearly part of the syncretism and mixture which have come to make up some key performance styles at the Cape. Probably the best example of this influence was the coon carnival, explicitly modelled on blackface minstrelsy. For instance, during the late nineteenth century, the amateur Coloured folk music enthusiasts, the Dantu brothers, took into their home a number of Orpheus McAdoo's touring minstrel troupe who decided to stay on in South Africa.[21] Equally, a far wider range of influences coexisted in the Cape by the end of the Second World War. Versions of older and more genteel Victorian

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[19]C. Ballantine, Marabi Nights, p.6 and p.12. Ballantine has documented the emergence of early South African jazz from the 'Concert and dance' performance practice: "characteristically a vaudeville entertainment from 8pm to midnight, followed immediately by a dance which ended at 4am."

[20]C. Ballantine Marabi Nights, p.60.

[21]See G. Stone, 'The Coon carnival', Unpublished Mimeo, Abe Bailey Institute of Interracial Studies (n.d.). See also L. Green, Grow Lovely, Grow Old, p.193.

styles, such as the waltz and quadrille, were popular among Black audiences in Cape Town as well as in other regions. Locally, these coexisted with vaudeville, big band jazz, and local dance music such as langarm and the vastrap.

These styles echoed certain social values, sometimes in ambiguous ways.[22] As we argue later, the social aspirations of Coloured musicians reflected an ambiguous cultural identity. For jazz and dance musicians identified with Black American styles, often very consciously. A perception of racial and ideological bonds with Black America was part of a quest to express a meaningful Coloured identity. In this sense, it was equally part of an expression of 'Blackness' (as opposed to another part which yearned for respectability and equality with Whites).[23]

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[22]See R. Middleton, Studying Popular Music, pp.11-12. Middleton asserts that the waltz was an 'internally contradictory form'. It "cut across classes, and, as a practice, [was] inscribed in the overall relations of cultures and classes."

[23]See V. Bickford-Smith, 'Slavery, emancipation and the question of Coloured identity, with particular attention to Cape Town: 1875-1910', Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Collected Seminar Papers Vol. 19, 1992.

Development of the gramophone record industry: 1920-1939

Large institutions such as the record industry and the SABC profoundly influenced the development of postwar popular music in South Africa. An area which has rarely been the focus of attention,[24] it constitutes a gap in scholarship which this thesis starts tentatively to address.[25]

The interaction between an emerging music industry and musicians turning to neo-traditional performance styles was an important one. This relationship virtually defined the music and the musicians which emerged in urban South Africa, not least the ethnic and racial character of South African popular music. Gramophones, which were a new medium of distributing music at the turn of the twentieth century, helped to cultivate a new urban African audience for American music from at least the 1920s. Furthermore, without the trade in gramophones and gramophone records, American music may not

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[24]For example, Ballantine has estimated the neglect of African music by record company officials. Ballantine's focus was on the beginnings of South African jazz, and therefore did not seek to explore or contextualise this 'scandalous' attitude among large record companies. The record industry and other cultural institutions have not been studied in their own right. See C. Ballantine, Marabi Nights, pp.2-3.

[25]Scholars in other countries have begun to fill this gap in studies of popular music. See S. Frith, 'The making of the British record industry: 1920-1964', in J. Curran, et al, (eds.), Impacts and Influences, London, 1987, and P. Gronow, 'The record industry: the growth of a mass medium', Popular Music 3, 1983. See M. Anderson, Music in the Mix: The Story of South African Popular Music, Johannesburg, 1981, for an earlier example where some attention was paid to the political role played by the record industry in South African popular music.

have made as significant an impact on South African popular music as it did.

This thesis also suggests that the music industry was an integral part of secondary industrial development in Southern Africa.[26] In this sense, it defined popular music by altering the material world in which it flourished in the years preceding the Second World War and the postwar period. In particular, it helped to define the styles of music and linked these to particular audiences using the criteria of the dominant political, economic and social order. That is, it created markets which were substantially based on racial criteria. It also supplied the forms of music for these markets and the musicians who were to produce this music. The gramophone record industry played a crucial role in shaping the ethnic and racial character of South African popular music.

Relentlessly, the industrial development of popular music changed the character of urban popular music. After the Second World War, dance bands in South Africa and abroad became marginalised from the entertainment industry (in America and Britain particularly), a decline which coincided with the rapid growth of the American and British record

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[26]Christopher Saunders argued that general historians should begin to give industrialisation its due role in South Africa's history. See C. Saunders, 'The history and historiography of South African industrialisation: some reflections from the outside', Paper presented at the Biennial National Conference of the South African Historical Society, University of Natal, 1989.

industries. This process involved the assimilation of old musical practices and the marginalisation of those practices and traditions which did not lend themselves to assimilation.[27] As Richard Middleton has argued, 'in postwar music, the consumptive and productive aspects of popular music became more unified and interdependent ... [and] the circulation of musical messages [came] to look more like a continuous co-production process, with inputs at many points.'[28]

Professional opportunities for black musicians in early popular music up to the 1930s

The musical profession represents another such institution. Here, professionalism among Black musicians in South Africa has a history which could be studied in its own right. Coplan, for example, has referred to a 200-year old tradition of professionalism among Cape musicians.[29] Furthermore, the professionalism of McAdoo's visiting minstrels is known to have made an impression on local audiences and musicians.[30]

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[27]See R. Thomson, 'Dance bands and dance halls in Greenock', pp.143-55.

[28]See R. Middleton, Studying Popular Music, London, 1990, p.61.

[29]D. Coplan, 'The emergence of an African working class culture', in Shula Marks and Richard Rathbone (eds), Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa, London, 1982, pp.358-75.

[30]McAdoo was a shrewd impresario who brought the company from the United States of America. His ability to impress a variety of audiences and his skilful manipulation of audiences

(continued...)

Where there was an economically sustainable audience demand, dance bands often played host to professional musicians.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, dance music became popular among African and Coloured elites, with many bands staffed by professional and semi-professional musicians. Increasingly, achieving professional status was seen as a 'way out of the ghetto'.[31] Yet, it is also important to note that professionalism was not limited to performing for an elite audience. In the 1920s, professionalism took root in cottage liquor and entertainment enterprises in African and Coloured townships, as marabi musicians earned their keep travelling between township skokiaan parties. Thereafter, Coloured and Xhosa professional musicians were to ply their trade on the Witwatersrand.[32]

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[30](...continued)
has also been ascribed to this status. See V. Erlmann, '"A feeling of prejudice": Orpheus McAdoo and the Virginia Jubilee Singers in South Africa, 1890-1898, Journal of Southern African Studies 14,3 1988.

[31]There was also a growing audience demand for more 'sophisticated' musical performance in the 1920s and 1930s. See C. Ballantine, 'Music and emancipation: the social role of jazz and vaudeville in South Africa between the 1920s and the early 1940s', Journal of Southern African Studies, 17,1 1991. Efforts to forge links between the liquor trade and professional musicianship were assisted by attempts to legislate or regulate the association between liquor and dance band music; especially among the labouring classes. See T. Couzens '"Moralising leisure time": the transatlantic connection and black Johannesburg 1918-1936', Shula Marks and Richard Rathbone (eds), Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa, London, 1982 and comparatively, T. Davis, 'The moral sense of the majorities: indecency and vigilance in Late Victorian music halls', Popular Music 10,1 1991.

[32]D. Coplan, 'Marabi culture', p.54. In the mid-1920s, tickey draai was being performed by 'Coloured-Xhosa' string and concertina bands at African 'socials'.

Yet, this professionalism has not been much discussed in scholarship as a developing convention or practice.[33] In particular, the relationship between White and Black musicians has not been considered in a systematic manner.[34] Here, Black professionalism faced many constraints, failing to take root significantly in cities outside of the Witwatersrand area. Inevitably, by the 1930s, cities like Durban, for example, saw a marked decline in the activities of professional jazz musicians[35]. While the decline or low level of live performance professionalism was by and large true of other urban areas, the issue of professionalism among musicians particularly in relation to the gramophone record industry still needs to be considered.

In part, this thesis considers institutional history on two counts. It charts how secondary industrialisation produced an

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[33]See H. Becker, 'The professional jazz musician and his audience', Denisoff, R. Serge and Petersen, Richard A. (eds.), The Sounds of Social Change: Studies in Popular Culture, Chicago, 1972, for a comparable sociological discussion of American jazz musicians.

[34]For notable exceptions see D. Coplan 'The African musician and the development of the Johannesburg entertainment industry: 1900-60', Journal of Southern African Studies 5,2 1979 and M. Anderson Music in the Mix, for an account of the relationship between professional musicians and record companies. For a useful comparison, see L. Zion, 'Disposable icons: pop music in Australia, 1955-63', Popular Music 8,2 1989. Zion discussed the decline of professional dance musicians in the postwar years in Australia in the face of a new commercialism in Australian popular music.

[35]See V Erlmann, African Stars, p.92. Durban's stratum of working class and middle class audience support for dance music and jazz was too small to support full time professional bands in the 1930s. Equally, there is no evidence that the level of professionalism among Black musicians in Cape Town since the 1930s was anything but negligible.

indigenous record trade in South Africa under the dominance of a few major companies. It also examines the operations of a White musicians' union in Cape Town in the 1960s, thereby considering the efforts of a White musicians' sectoral interest to secure a stranglehold on opportunities in the regional musical profession.

Race, ethnicity and national consciousness in African and Coloured dance music and jazz since the 1930s

Undoubtedly, dance music and jazz has generated interest among social historians,[36] with much emphasis upon its social and political significance. Jazz has also been viewed as an emerging national art form.[37]

No less, self-evidently, racial and ethnic considerations have played a role in the history of the musicians' profession in South Africa's main cities, although these factors have seldom

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[36]Dance bands have been a favoured vehicle for social histories of urban communities. These studies have revolved around the decline of dance band activity in the face of a rapid rise of American media capital and the images and array of mass cultural influences that came with it. Two illustrations of this genre are M. Hustwitt, '"Caught in a whirlpool of aching sound": the production of dance music in Britain in the 1920s', Popular Music 3 1983, and R. Thomson, 'Dance bands and dance halls in Greenock, 1945-55', Popular Music 8,2 1989.

[37]For example Gunther Schuller's two-volume history has traced the progress of American jazz from a 'folk music' to 'art music'. See G. Schuller Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development, New York, 1968 and G. Schuller The Swing Era: The Development of Jazz, 1930-1945, New York, 1989.

been the subject of sustained research.[38] Yet, this sense of race and ethnicity was crucial in helping to define some of the popular music in the urban centres.

For instance, in response to growing demand among African audiences, Coloured bands such as Sonny's Jazz Revellers, provided American dance music in African townships on the Rand in the 1920s and 1930s. Elsewhere, before the late 1920s, the only ballroom bands available in Johannesburg were bands comprising White or Coloured musicians.[39]

Alongside these trends, African dance bands developed during the 1920s,[40] a period in which there is no mistaking the ascendancy of dance band culture. In the 1930s, many African dance bands in the Witwatersrand also took advantage of a new market for professional dance music performance. This challenged a perceived monopoly by Coloured dance bands and inspired the formation of middle-class African bands in Johannesburg. The Merry Blackbirds, formed in the early 1930s, was an example of this development.[41] Simultaneously,

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[38]Melveen Jackson provided some tantalising evidence of this phenomena in her study of Indian musicians recording at the SABC in the 1940s. See M. Jackson, 'The advent of the "Indian" orchestra and a local Indian record company: music into the Indian South African economy', Papers presented at the Seventh Symposium on Ethnomusicology, Grahamstown, 1988.

[39]C. Ballantine, 'Music and emancipation: the social role of jazz and vaudeville in South Africa between the 1920s and the early 1940s', Journal of Southern African Studies, 17,1 1991, p.142.

[40]See V. Erlmann African Stars p.11.

[41]C. Ballantine, Marabi Nights, pp.51-52.

African swing bands began to proliferate in a development parallel with the decline of marabi culture in the 1930s.[42]

Furthermore, dance band and jazz music also formed part of a developing nationalist sentiment in the interwar years, in which, since the 1920s, music played a social role in assisting a sense of Black emancipation -- at least for a section of urbanised Africans. And, indigenous movements in African popular music also took root. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, a new tendency was evident among African musicians in which performers, such as the Bantu Review Follies, consciously tried to express themselves in indigenous forms. Using American vaudeville style, they infused it with an 'Africanness' by singing sentimental songs, jazz, madrigals and ditties -- all of them in the native vernacular.[43]

In particular, African jazz musicians became more politically self-aware in the 1940s,[44] through an emerging indigenous African jazz idiom. Here, a number of stylistic elements (among others marabi and American swing) were fused into a coherent indigenous jazz style. This development of an indigenous African jazz was a major development in South Africa's urban cultural history. It was a key form of musical expression for urban African popular classes: more politically assertive, and consciously brash.

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[42]C. Ballantine, Marabi Nights, p.6.

[43]C. Ballantine, 'Music and emancipation', p.148.

[44]C. Ballantine Marabi Nights, p.57.

Existing historical studies have tended to suggest that ethnic consciousness was a feature of relations between dance and jazz musicians since the 1930s, and that this was superseded by a focus on African nationalism, which in turn influenced the indigenous jazz movement in the 1940s. Through ensuing discussion of the organisation of dance band and jazz performance the present work will consider another pervasive dimension. This was the perceptions of African jazz and African musicians which existed among Coloured musicians in the Western Cape, and the impact of indigenous jazz on the dance musicians of the region.

In sum, this overview has prompted questions in a range of areas. It has stressed the importance of looking at local conditions in beginning to unravel the more general story of South African popular cultures. Secondly, it has underlined the necessity of taking account of the legacy of American influence from the later nineteenth century. Thirdly, it suggests that more attention needs to be devoted to institutional histories and professional opportunities for black musicians in the early popular music industry up to the 1930s. The gramophone record industry as a key institution needs to be understood as part of South Africa's industrial development if we are to understand how popular music relates to the era of industrialisation and its attendant social change in the postwar era.

Finally, what happened to dance music in the Cape, and why did

many of Cape Town's Black musicians not become part of the drive to create indigenous forms of jazz and dance music? Of this, it can be noted that while African jazz certainly took root in the Cape, it was not on the scale of elsewhere until the 1960s. This can mostly be attributed to the particular historical conditions in the Western Cape, including the fact that the largest part of its black population was Coloured, with popular classes long brought up on langarm, vastrap, and the waltz. Jazz had to insert itself into this dominant performance spectrum. How the development of African jazz related to this and other developments in the Cape will form the stuff of subsequent chapters. But first, we consider a crucial factor: the gramophone record industry.

CHAPTER THREE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GRAMOPHONE RECORD INDUSTRY, CIRCA 1900-1970

South Africa, as a maturing capitalist economy, has been distinguished historically by the fact that the vast majority of its labouring classes have been excluded from political and social institutions over the course of the twentieth century. Blacks have almost invariably occupied marginal positions within the economy.[1] Beyond this, the process of exclusion embraced virtually every institution of public social, cultural and political life: including the sphere of popular music and the record industry.[2]

Certainly, in the 1950s and 1960s, urban Black musicians faced exclusion and marginalisation from processes of influence or control in the recording and broadcasting industries. They were left on the sidelines as a swelling tide of change accompanied the successes of the trade in music -- especially after the Second World War. This relationship has in fact profoundly influenced the longer history of South African popular music. Indeed, Veit Erlmann has argued that the intense interaction, between the formal music industry and growing numbers of urbanised musicians since the 1920s was a fundamentally important relationship in the development of

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[1]C. Bundy, Remaking the Past: New Perspectives in South African History, Cape Town, 1986, p.77.

[2]See C. Ballantine Marabi Nights: Early South African Jazz and Vaudeville, Johannesburg, 1993, pp.1-3.

South Africa's styles of urban popular music.[3]

By considering examples of the major record companies, this chapter will suggest that the impact of this industry on Black music was especially pronounced in the period following the Second World War. How, then, did these companies develop over this period? The local gramophone record import trade, which had sprung up with modest roots in the late nineteenth century, was now being transformed into an indigenous record manufacturing industry. In other words, it developed indigenous production capability and local markets. By the 1950s, it had also already developed the capability to carry sufficient local and international products for that market -- upon which a significant part of its sales had come to depend.

This indigenisation developed by means of two connected processes. Firstly, the major companies became increasingly mechanised and monopolised by a few large companies. In this they were underwritten by the broader investment interests of mining and manufacturing capital. The major record companies also followed the general trend towards local manufacturing -- especially after the Second World War.

Secondly, mechanical production generated new needs for the large record companies. The expansion of productive capacity through mechanisation compelled companies to search for or to

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[3]V. Erlmann, African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance, Chicago, 1991, p.178.

develop new markets in the early 1950s. From the 1950s, as they rationalised record production methods, these companies encouraged personnel in their recording studios to invent new ethnic styles. This venture corresponded with the increasing presence of an African workforce in major industrial cities. The recreational and consumptive patterns of better-paid strata within this workforce represented a major record-buying market.

As a result of the large-scale standardisation of styles which occurred, only a handful of new musical styles remained economically viable. The most prominent culmination of standardisation was mbaqanga jive.[4] Indigenous jazz, on the other hand, was almost completely marginalised from the central business of the recording industry by the 1960s. In general, professional opportunities were closed to jazz musicians who did not have the opportunity or inclination to take part in the implicit ideological work of tribalising African popular music. Music that was not ethnically or tribally-specific seemed naturally to be left out of marketing plans. Finally, this drive for markets also helped to foster a small Coloured regional market for recorded dance band music in the Western Cape.

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[4]This had no relationship to the mbaqanga of the African big bands. The former eventually dwindled into obscurity at the end of the 1950s.

The Early Advent of Local Record Manufacturing

Gramophone records achieved the status of mass musical commodities after the Second World War.[5] Previously, they had been categorised by the trade administration as electrical hardware. In fact, in the early 1920s, most of the international companies involved in the booming trade in music-making and selling did so through their involvement in the general trade in new electrical hardware. Musical hardware was part of a merchandise which also included lamps, and other gadgetry.

Nevertheless, by the start of the Second World War, shellac 78 r.p.m records had become the basis of an expanding international entertainment enterprise branching off into radio, cinema and gramophone records -- with a firmly developing base in South Africa. No longer regarded merely as imported novelty items, records had become the central organising principle of a specific South African manufacturing industry.

There was, of course, a longer history behind this. South African traders had first started importing gramophone records

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[5]See E. Eisenberg, The Recording Angel: Music, Records and Culture from Aristotle to Zappa, London, 1988, for an entertaining account of music as a commodity in the twentieth century.

in the late nineteenth century.[6] For instance, local Cape Town entrepreneurs such as Aaron Polliack and Paul Bothner started musical instrument stores in Cape Town in the late nineteenth century. Starting with imported musical instruments, they later branched into gramophones and records as well.[7]

Most of these local traders imported British records. Naturally, South Africa's economic and political order had a range of commercial ties with British imperial domination at the turn of the century. In these relations, Britain was a leading partner in the international phonograph industry. The phonograph had become well established by 1910, and was represented by the two biggest companies, the American Victor Talking Machine Company and the British Gramophone Company. In general terms, this trade had a strong British imperial character.[8]

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[6]At the time, sound and visual gadgetry were conceived as novelty items. See Dept. of Customs and Excise, Annual statement of Trade and Shipping of the Union of South Africa 1909. Phonograms were listed as novelty items along with 'magic lanterns' and other gadgets. Also, see T. Gutsche, The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa: 1895-1940, Cape Town, 1972, pp.5-6.

[7]Polliack started in Hanover Street, Cape Town, in 1898 and extended to Johannesburg in the early twentieth century. However, the earliest importer was Mackay Brothers, established in 1888 in Durban. See South African Financial Yearbook (Hereafter SAFY) 1948, pp.693-95. Also, E. Rosenthal, Fish Horns and Hansom Cabs: Life in Victorian Cape Town, Johannesburg, 1977, p.32, for a photographic reproduction of the Polliack family at the shop in Cape Town.

[8]See D. Laing, 'A voice without a face: popular music and the phonograph in the 1890s', Popular Music 10,1 1991, p.4.

However, this relationship was changing. In the early 1900s, the South African state was 'already a dominion rather than an underdeveloped colony,'[9] and a new political and economic order was beginning to emerge. A cornerstone of this new order was the emergence of indigenous industrial development. This was rooted in the mining revolution and in the incremental development of local manufacturing. Popular music production became a small part of this emerging order.

South Africa did not, at this stage, host local record production in any significant measure. The recording and pressing technology which was the basis of record manufacturing, remained confined to the advanced industrialised nations up to the First World War. Their technological advantage allowed them to penetrate and control markets in the Southern African region. In fact, by the mid-1920s, American and European companies were expanding to most regions south of the Sahara.[10]

In the longer term, the creation of a favourable manufacturing infrastructure was to be an important prerequisite for the relocation of record manufacturing plants, and the extension

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[9]R. Christie, '"Slim Jannie" and the forces of production: South African industrialisation, 1915-1925', in University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Collected Seminar Papers, 8, 1977, p.98.

[10]P. Gronow, 'The record industry: the growth of a mass medium', Popular Music 3 1983, p.62. There was a tendency among British industrialists to develop the British Empire's resources and to encourage 'peripheral industrialisation' during the war. See R. Christie, '"Slim Jannie" and the forces of production', p.99.

of appropriate technology. Indeed, during the 1920s, an industrial, political and social infrastructure was emerging.[11] The Pact government contributed, in some measure, to the creation of favourable conditions for the development of a home market for manufactured goods.[12]

Despite laying this groundwork in the longer term, the end of the 1920s forced a number of important changes upon the import trade. For a while the South African music import trade had flourished, with import volumes rising steadily throughout the decade.[13] But the 1929 depression saw a sudden drop in the import activity of the record firms. The depression caused both contraction and some restructuring in the international and local music trade.

In this climate, new international alliances were formed. These were deemed necessary for the survival of the larger companies, and, indeed, became the foundation for the monopolies which emerged after the war. As international companies concluded a number of mergers to minimise increasing competition and operating costs, a trend towards monopolisation became increasingly evident. For example, in

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[11]B. Freund, 'The social character of secondary industry in South Africa', Paper presented at the African Studies Seminar, University of the Witwatersrand, 1985, p.25.

[12]W. G., Martin 'Region formation under crisis conditions: South vs Southern Africa in the interwar period', Journal of Southern African Studies, 16,1 1990, p.115.

[13]Annual statement of Trade and Shipping of the Union of South Africa, 1909-1910. Rising from under 50 000 pounds in 1909, the import trade exceeded 450 000 pounds by 1929.

1932, the Columbia Gramophone Company and the Gramophone Company merged to form Electrical and Musical Industries (EMI). This merger absorbed a number of its major international competitors.

In 1936, the merger of local companies, Polliack and Mackay Brothers, followed that of their respective parent companies and the two won rights to Columbia and His Master's Voice (HMV) labels.[14] These companies were licensed subsidiaries of the British companies EMI and Decca.

Within an emerging industrial landscape in the post-depression 1930s, the electrical goods and record import industry was visibly undergoing modernisation. An image of such change is captured by the following depiction of commercial Cape Town:

> H. Polliack & Co. of 94 Adderley Street sold musical instruments and the range of electrical appliances which were now coming onto the market. An Electrolux refrigerator was available for 25 pounds. Polliacks was proud of its status as a skyscraper, all five floors of it.[15]

In an important sense, Polliack represented the urban vitality of the inter-war electrical revolution and its technological

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[14] SAFY 1951, pp.849-50.

[15] A. Walker, ''Out on a limb': the economy of Cape Town, 1934-1941', Paper presented to the Cape Town History Workshop, 1990, p.10.

prowess. Through the 1930s, there was also a growing general local awareness that the music trade was entering an era of modernisation. Modernisation particularly embraced bigger, more powerful conglomerates in the popular music business. In general, postwar manufacturing was becoming characterised by coordinated international production, monopolisation, an increasing concentration of foreign investment in secondary production, an increase in direct investment and emphasis on longer term investment.[16]

After the Second World War, local and international record companies benefitted from the duopolistic control entrenched during the 1930s. For example, British Decca's turnover increased eightfold between 1946 and 1956.[17] In turn, the increased operational capabilities of the new, merged Polliack group, had made possible a steady increase in import volumes through the mid-1930s and beyond. Alongside this growth in British companies, the United States consolidated its emerging position as the leading record producing country in the world.

Local companies also started to develop greater productive capacity, and this helped to set the backdrop for the postwar consumer boom in the trade. The largest companies in South Africa, Gallo, Polliacks and Bothners, were listed on the

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[16]See G. Bloch, 'The Development of Manufacturing Industry in South Africa: 1939-1969', MA Thesis, UCT, 1980, p.145.

[17]S. Frith, 'The making of the British record industry: 1920-1964', in J. Curran, et. al (eds.), Impacts and Influences, London, 1987, p.287.

Johannesburg Stock Exchange shortly after the end of the war.[18] These companies set about rationalising their operations and importing new technology to effect greater productivity. For example, the new magnetic tape technology introduced in 1948, made it cheaper to produce records and was also more widely accessible than had been the case previously. This innovation provided the initial impetus for a new age of mechanisation in the South African record trade.

Moreover, South Africa's new gramophone manufacturing capability developed in a climate of direct investment by an expansive world industry by the late 1950s. A number of companies concluded local manufacturing agreements with parent companies, EMI and Decca respectively. For example, African Consolidated Sound Industries was set up locally by Bothner, in conjunction with EMI international, to coordinate the manufacture of gramophone records.[19] Similarly, during 1954, extensive technological expertise was sent to South Africa by British Decca to assist Gallo in developing local manufacturing capacity.[20]

However, despite these developments, competition and distribution presented the growing industry with problems in what was still a small domestic market. To overcome such constraints, companies sought to expand their markets into

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[18] SAFY 1951, pp.849-50.

[19] SAFY 1952, pp.231-32.

[20] SAFY 1955, pp.438-39.

lower income areas. This meant targeting the growing potential of urban and rural African markets.

They also again tended to combine their efforts in new monopolies starting at the end of the 1950s and culminating in the 1960s. In 1957, for example, Bothner and Polliack merged most of their musical and home appliances concerns under the new name, the Bothner Group. While Gallo dealt mainly in musical concerns, Bothners became a highly diversified company operating in a hire purchase home appliances market, of which gramophone records and gramophones were a component.[21]

By the end of the 1950s, the record manufacturing industry had established a manufacturing, retailing and distribution infrastructure, and had potential for long-term, large-scale investment. In 1959, therefore, Polliacks was described as a progressive company, but an import tax on gramophones affirmed the open secret that the record industry had 'growing pains to overcome.'[22]

This drive for long term stability directly influenced a new marketing ethos in urban popular music. Regional economies of scale in the record industry prompted concerns to maximise

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[21]Financial Mail 1,20 1959, p.830. Also, Polliack and Bothner were also members of the SA Refrigerator and Radio Appliance Association which was affiliated to the Cape Chamber of Commerce in the postwar years. South African Federated Chamber of Industries Archive, Minutes and Correspondences, BC 848, UCT Manuscripts and Archives.

[22]Financial Mail 1,5 1959, p.190.

local turnover, and thus reduce operating costs, such as distribution.[23] Hence, in the mid-1950s, Gallo initiated a number of operations to expand its distributive base, utilising the Johannesburg festival, starting a Music in the Parks scheme, and the expansion of guitar and record sales into East and Central Africa.[24]

Long-term stability went hand-in-hand with rationalisation. This involved two processes within the record industry during the first half of the 1960s. Firstly, the larger companies became specialised and vertically integrated. This entailed the streaming of related operations such as hire purchase sales, and large scale capitalisation through financial backing. Secondly, new distribution networks were developed to suit mechanised production. Problems of distribution had a peculiar difficulty for gramophone records in South Africa, because of economies of scale and this led to different types of retail distribution. These distribution networks were eventually centred around the use of department stores and record bars.[25] By 1960, consumerism had arrived in South African popular music.

Naturally, it became necessary to specialise and re-integrate record production into the consumer market. But certain teething problems persisted. For example, over-extended

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[23] SAFY 1957, pp.413-15.

[24] SAFY 1957, p.415.

[25] SAFY 29/12/1959, pp.421-23.

trading in the hire purchase market resulted in a crisis for the Bothner Group at the start of the 1960s. An increase in retail outlets and small-scale hire purchase sales was used to counter a declining demand for consumer goods such as records and record players.[26] But, it was clear that the diversity of the group had become a liability, and it suffered substantial losses between 1961 and 1964.[27]

In 1963, a consortium backed by mining finance houses took control of the Bothner stock, and Paul Bothner resigned as chairman of the board.[28] Under the new leadership, a drastic pruning exercise took place. With large financial resources, this group went about streamlining operations, reorganising management and undertaking vigorous sales campaigns. By 1965, the group, now known as Wit Industrials, had drastically cut losses and realised its first net profits in a number of years. This was broadly part of the Afrikaner advance in manufacturing industry through large scale investment via finance companies, with the Sanlam group in the vanguard.[29]

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[26]Financial Mail 1,20 1959, p.830.

[27]For example losses totalled R260 865 in 1961 and R929 583 in 1962. SAFY 1963, pp.190-91.

[28]The popular musicians gathering place and most well known music shop in Cape Town was named after Paul Bothner. See Cliffie Moses interview, 19/11/1991.

[29]G. Bloch, 'The Development of Manufacturing Industry', pp.121-25. Sanlam also owned 25% of Phillips South Africa. Federale Volksbeleggings, a subsidiary of Sanlam, had a 42% stake in Phil Morkel, in which Wit Industrials had a 37% share.

An increasingly competitive market compelled large companies such as Gallo to realign operations in keeping with international trends. From R180 000 in 1961, net profits totalled R218 000 in 1963[30] and R535 000 in 1967.[31] Indeed, the Gallo company enjoyed steady profit increases throughout the decade. An alliance with Japanese electronics company, Tokyo Shibaura Electric Company (Toshiba) for the local assembly and distribution of Toshiba transistor radios further raised Gallo's margins.[32]

Alongside this were other developments. From the restructured Bothner Group, the Teal record company now emerged as one of the largest in South Africa. It had become a wholly-owned subsidiary of the mining finance companies which had assumed leadership earlier in the decade. With new-found operational efficiency, and with a larger capital base, the company was effectively in competition not only with its main rival Gallo, but also with its former parent company, EMI.

By 1975, the major record companies in South Africa controlled 80% of the South African industry and therefore constituted a market oligopoly.[33] They now had the weight to effect sweeping changes in the public profiles of popular music.

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[30]SAFY 1966, pp.244-46.

[31]SAFY 1968, p.232.

[32]Financial Mail 18,4 1965, p.249.

[33]H. Ipp, and B. Lewis, 'The Marketing of Budget LPs to the Coloured People', MBA Thesis, Graduate School Of Business, UCT, 1975, p.73.

This was to be no more apparent than in the new marketing practices adopted during the period -- namely budget promotion and ethnic marketing. For in the final analysis, the rise of postwar manufacturing created conditions for, and was becoming the means of, the installation of an indigenous postwar gramophone record industry.

Ideology and markets in overview in the postwar years

Cultural and economic matters often converged in the growing market for popular music in the postwar era. They converged not least in the realm of ideology -- the broad sphere of social practices and institution-building. Here, a question arises: at which point did major record companies act ideologically in the pursuit of profitability? Without trying to separate ideological from economic considerations, we may give some consideration as to how markets for music products developed from the point of view of record company industrialists. Bearing in mind the contextualising account of local mechanised production, a range of events and initiatives can help to begin to assemble a picture of the music industry as it was developing the ideological aspect of its postwar domestic profile.

In one sense, record imports were a material embodiment of ideological dominion within South Africa's Union identity. The cultural influence of the import trade had been felt by

White and Black audiences in the 1920s.[34] This was a period of far-reaching cultural change, which spread to the African townships and helped to introduce a wave of new music. It exposed audiences to foreign musical influences such as early minstrel jazz and American films for White and Black audiences. For example, during America's mass consumption 1920s, film and gramophone companies released recordings by Al Jolson in bold commercial ventures which highlighted new technological innovations.[35] The electronically amplified human voice was becoming a central factor in the emerging mass culture of the first half of this century. It was now possible for smaller groups of musicians to entertain larger (paying) audiences.[36]

In South Africa, this was facilitated by ideological change in the popular music industry. New methods of production and control aided transformation, and power was speedily assimilated (and shared) by Afrikaner and English interests in national popular media industries. One cornerstone of the early industry had been the ideology of racial paternalism embodied in Gallo's efforts to secure an indigenous Afrikaner and Bantu entertainment profile. This notion of entrepreneurship and defined cultural responsibility has been

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[34]V. Erlmann, African Stars, p.74.

[35]T. Gutsche, The History and Social Significance, p.205. Such as the 'Panatrope' which accompanied the release of Al Jolson's The Jazz Singer in 1928.

[36]D. Harker, One for the Money: Politics and Popular Song London, 1980, pp. 31-37.

echoed in Shorten's ideologically crude but evocative history of the company. Shorten's study is highly suggestive of the structure of sentiment within the record industry towards Bantu imagery. From Shorten's perspective in 1930 for instance, Eric Gallo had a keen appreciation of indigenised needs:

> decided that South Africa ... should have its own songs recorded ... Gallo ... had in mind particularly the Afrikaans-speaking section of the population ... Then there were the Bantu, great music lovers, ... But there was no written music and no recordings of these [traditional] songs. Fortunately, however, Gallo's ... counted the Bantu among its best customers.[37]

After the Second World War, the emerging sphere of popular music was politically circumscribed by a White classical establishment which was indifferent to popular music but ironically dependent on its commercial success. Consistent with the views expressed by the International Federation of

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[37]J. Shorten, The Johannesburg Saga, Johannesburg, 1970, p.650. Belinda Bozzoli has argued that an emerging manufacturing class had been fostering an ideology of pioneership and entrepreneurship during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and that they were comprised of immigrants with artisanal skills, or 'colonials' who had accumulated capital through trading. See B. Bozzoli, 'Ideology and the manufacturing class in South Africa: 1907-26', Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Collected Seminar Papers, 5, 1973.

Phonograph Industries (IFPI),[38] its local perceptions defined popular music as a necessary evil in an evolutionary path towards cultural upliftment for White and Bantu alike. Representatives of the South African industry, especially through prominent members such as Eric Gallo, sometimes liked to see themselves as shouldering the responsibility of selling inferior popular material to South Africa's natives in the ultimate interest of the future higher good of upliftment.

Elite South African ideological control had strong antecedents in Britain and growing prototypes in the USA. During the 1920s, the African Broadcasting Company (ABC) had been structured along lines inherited from American and British experiences. However, structures where cultural bias was defined -- such as programming, language usage and decisions about musical taste -- were mainly British in character. By the 1930s, the loyal imperial alliance of Afrikaner and English interests, as exemplified in the 1936 Broadcasting Act, was providing the basis for the subsequent forging of the SABC as the generator of a new national body of cultural material. The technical ability of the corporation to store its production on discs -- and thus to exercise definitive control over programming activity -- was an important mechanism for its agenda of cultural and ideological

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[38]IFPI, The Industry of Human Happiness, London, 1959. South Africa, through the Association of South African Phonograph Industries (ASAPI), was a member of the IFPI.

control.[39]

Naturally, the record companies played an integral part in shaping the appearance of new musical forces. This was an economic process as well as an ideological one. The drive for increased market share and profit motivated, at least in part, attempts by record companies to create ethnically pure musical items. The most famous example of such market-driven ethnic creations was mbaqanqa.[40] By the 1960s, mbaqanqa represented the successful consolidation of the drive for long-term stability. Earmarked for a mass production governed by magnetic recording technology, it was thus the first neo-traditional musical idiom in South Africa to have been organically associated with the industrialisation of urban popular music. Such attempts to streamline the marketing of a variety of recorded styles were largely successful.[41]

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[39]G. Hayman, and R. Tomaselli, 'Ideology and technology in the growth of South African broadcasting: 1924-1971', in J. Muller et. al. (eds.), Currents of Power: State Broadcasting in South Africa, Cape Town, 1989, p.33.

[40]Originally, mbaqanqa referred to popular indigenous African jazz prior to the late 1950s: usually a combination of marabi influences and American big band swing. In the 1960s, it came to be applied to a new commercial style that combined urban neo-traditional music, marabi, and other styles. The term was often used in a derogatory sense to refer to this new 'commercial' hybrid. See B. Bergman, 'Mbaqanga', African Pop, London, 1985.

[41]Similarly Melveen Jackson has examined how a record company helped to forge "a new formal definition of urban South African Indian music; see his 'Tiger Dance, terukuttu, Tango, and Tchaikovsky: a politico-cultural view of Indian South African music before 1948', The World of Music 31,1 1989', p.72.

Music which formerly had been recorded more or less as it was played on street corners and in halls, was now 'subject to studio arrangement and processing.'[42] By pursuing such commercial objectives within an ideological frame of reference, record companies played an instrumental role in creating indigenous music markets in the Southern African region. Moreover, the production of uniform mbaqanqa records reflected the final consolidation of White cultural hegemony within radio and other music media. This was accompanied by the contraction of popular independent musical styles. Hence, one can cite the marked dependence of street kwela on the sale of pennywhistles, which had spawned the initial kwela craze. In the late 1950s, the withdrawal of this instrument from the local market accelerated the active decline of the loose street tradition; and the music became assimilated into approved recording culture.[43]

Manufacturing industrialisation and the spread of consumption markets created conditions for sectional ownership of performance, and ideological control over popular music. And, in turn, the political changes which accompanied industrialisation helped to put in place White cultural

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[42]D. Coplan, 'The African musician and the development of the Johannesburg entertainment industry: 1900-60', Journal of Southern African Studies 5,2 1979, p.152.

[43]See D. Coplan, In Township Tonight, pp.157-60. Also, Malawian kwela was directly affected by South African mbaqanqa jazz and only indirectly by its American counterpart. Malawian youth modelled their music on the kwela styles which were being spread northwards to Malawi via radio, film and records. See G. Kubik, Malawian Music: A Framework for Analysis, M. Strumpf (ed.), Univ. of Malawi, 1987.

hegemony with its foundation in large institutions such as the SABC and the markets of its entertainment allies -- the record companies.

A market in the Western Cape in the 1960s and 1970s

In the Cape, the marketing of popular music is best epitomised by the marketing of budget langarm records to Coloureds in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Langarm became an objective of a drive to accomplish local standardisation and the distinctive development of a local Coloured consumer market. In recording langarm dance musicians in the Cape -- along with new young Coloured beat musicians -- record companies were attempting to consolidate and market an identifiably Coloured ethnic musical identity. Over time, this designation, though never conclusive or all-embracing, had contradictory results. For it provided impetus to a generation of educated Coloured youth, activists, musicians and intellectuals to stigmatise langarm music as degrading.

By the early 1960s, local post-Sharpeville political conditions had stabilised sufficiently for the major companies to establish a phenomenal local growth course in a stable economic climate. Also, their market was partially defined as a Coloured market. And, by the 1970s, despite the continuing importance of international and monopoly financial interests in the industry, a particular role had emerged for local record marketing in this environment:

> Most of the records sold in South Africa are international and the major record companies are bound by their overseas principals to release certain international products irrespective of local expected demand or requirements. Although contractual obligations therefore often determine the release of certain products, overseas principals ... do suggest that the strength of a local subsidiary lies in its ability to promote local and indigenous products.[44]

Racially-based marketing had become entrenched in the Cape during the 1950s and 1960s, when successful Coloured dance bands had customarily made records at least once a year. With the rapid development of a Coloured beat subculture during the latter half of the 1960s, one saw the creation of a first generation of individual Coloured recording stars in the early 1970s. Thus, the hit 'Please Stay', by the young local pop star Jonathan Butler, sold 70% of its total to the Coloured market.[45] Marketing assumptions seemed to suggest a musical definition of an inherent Coloured ethnic identity:

> Langarm music, which is instrumental ballroom or straight dance music normally led by a saxophone, was specifically purchased by Coloured people. One of the most popular groups recording this style is 'Jimmy's Grand Six',

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[44]H. Ipp and B. Lewis, 'The Marketing of Budget LPs', p.75.

[45]H. Ipp and B. Lewis, 'The Marketing of Budget LPs', p.77.

> produced by Mr Selby, and which is aimed at the Coloured market to the exclusion of the White market. Mr. Selby stated that a critical factor of this music was its 'danceability', which he believed was of great influence in determining the Coloureds' record purchasing habits.[46]

Equally, marketing beliefs could carry a sense of ambiguity. According to Selby, Coloureds and Whites almost inherently shared similar musical taste. Also, he inferred that the musical tastes of White and Coloured consumers were similar, based on the fact that they shared a preference for a commercial good product.[47] On this basis, mainstream musical markets were designated as a potentially common pool for some understandings of musical taste. Discussion implied that Coloured consumer markets were perhaps capable of being assimilated into a larger regional White market at the Cape -- as opposed to the predominant and rigidly split African and White markets of the rest of the country.[48]

To sum up, then, in the period following the Second World War, the local gramophone record import trade, which had sprung up from modest roots in the late nineteenth century, was

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[46]H. Ipp and B. Lewis, 'The Marketing of Budget LPs', p.77. Crucially, his respondents had in common a "slightly embarrassed" acceptance of langarm.

[47]H. Ipp and B. Lewis, 'The Marketing of Budget LPs', p.77.

[48]H. Ipp and B. Lewis, 'The Marketing of Budget LPs', p.117.

transformed into an indigenous record manufacturing industry. This indigenous industry arose from the development of mechanical capacity and from the development and expansion of national urban and regional markets and in countries further north. This transformation radically changed the overall face of popular music in South Africa. As part of this process, the Western Cape became a distinct regional market in this new indigenised industry. And, in the early postwar era, it was structured in market terms by the record companies to reflect the dominant racial order in the region. These national and local developments tended to stifle the independent growth of jazz as a viable musicians' vocation, as we will argue in ensuing discussion.

At the most basic level, there was no market for jazz in the Western Cape in the terms defined by the popular music industry. Of obvious importance here was that audience demand for jazz could not have been numerically great. In fact, up to the time of its demise as a popular form in the 1960s, the music seems to have had a limited reach in Coloured communities. As we show later, its adherents were restricted to a relatively small group of enthusiasts which included middle class professionals, intellectuals, activists, artists, and journalists. Yet up to then, jazz had managed to evolve and survive in popular minority terms.

Ultimately, the largest audiences for popular performance, even in culturally lively areas such as District Six, seemed

unresponsive to the jazz boom. Firstly, audiences had been immersed in established dance band and other musical traditions since at least the 1920s. Secondly, a new generation of postwar youth increasingly turned to American 'rock 'n roll'; in addition to their jazz indifference, they also rejected the old-fashioned dance music of their parents. Finally, while coming to terms with such popular indifference, both traditional dance band music and jazz were to be dealt a further blow by the erosion of their social milieu in District Six under apartheid.

CHAPTER FOUR: WHITE MUSICIANS AND THE PROFESSIONAL ESTABLISHMENT IN CAPE TOWN, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE 1960S

Since at least the late nineteenth century, music-making in South Africa has been regarded as a vocation.[1] For example, it provided a livelihood for travelling vaudeville performers, marabi pianists and dance musicians who entertained elites in the cities. Early professional musicians were sustained in employment through companies as individuals, through payment for musical services by performance agencies who depended on this for an income. They included White and to some extent Black musicians.[2]

Particularly after the Second World War, the boundaries of the profession were more formally delimited. White dance band musicians and other declared performing artists now staked a claim upon professional status. In fact, performing arts were being established in South Africa's major cities, and professional musicians were beginning to enjoy some prestige.

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[1]Professional musicians have been a feature of musical life at the Cape at least since the slave orchestras of the eighteenth century. See G. Kubik, 'The Southern African periphery: banjo traditions in Zambia and Malawi', The World of Music 31,1 1989, p.10. Also, English country dances were a feature of social life in Cape Town by the mid-eighteenth century, while Black dance bands entertained White guests in the early 1820s. See D. Coplan, In Township Tonight: South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre, Johannesburg, 1985, p.11.

[2]As the case of Orpheus McAdoo might suggest, this could have been the case at least in isolated instances. See V. Erlmann, African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance, London, 1991.

The performing arts were also being listed in sections of the press as being synonymous with the developmental vision of Grand Apartheid.[3] In this, White South African and foreign European musicians occupied a common privileged position as professionals in this new order.

This chapter considers measures taken to protect the White-controlled musicians' profession in the 1960s -- particularly in Cape Town itself. In this decade, the mainly White Cape Musicians' Association sought to secure a lion's share of musical work opportunities for White musicians and also managed to secure recognition of their professional status.

Musicians in the early entertainment establishment

Between the beginning of the present century and the end of the Second World War, the entertainment sector changed significantly. Traditional popular theatres, a common feature of entertainment for White audiences, were gradually overtaken by silent bioscopes.[4] A number of such theatres -- most of

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[3]For example, the Cape press clamoured for a "gigantic plan for the cultural, intellectual and educational development of our people." See Argus 5/6/1962. Also, some commentators relished over the general decline of mass oppositional politics in the wake of the Sharpeville massacre at the beginning of the decade. Leader captions such as "70 turn out for politics, 2000 for jazz" -- a reference to an anti-Sabotage Act demonstration that was held in East London and a 'Native' jazz concert at the same venue the next day -- exemplify this.

[4]This included changing the face of the local White-controlled entertainment industry -- ideologically linked to the British 'empire'. For example, names such as the Alhambra, the Empire and the British were popular choices for

them racially segregated -- existed in Cape Town in the early twentieth century.[5] However, a few years later, silent bioscopes had become fashionable among Cape Town's Whites -- replacing theatres as the basis of an auditorium entertainment industry.

With this, the status of musicians also changed. In bioscopes, musicians were certainly not professionals in the formal sense -- as understood for musicians after the Second World War. They did not constitute an elite group who could demand social recognition and comfortable salaries. Instead, for the pianists who furnished the musical accompaniment in the early silent films, bioscopes seemed merely to sustain them in regular humdrum employment.

In fact, they were regarded as labourers in these silent music theatres. Theirs was a mechanical rather than an artistic occupation. Thus, the early marathon bioscope musicians:

> thumped out sentimental or rousing tunes as occasions demanded day and night ... 'Bioscope music', a peculiar brand of cacophony, exists as a generic term in modern

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bioscopes in South African towns, mimicking counterparts in nineteenth-century England. See D. Russel, Popular Music in England 1840-1914: A Social History, Montreal, 1987, p.84.

[5]For example, in 1903 'respectable' Coloureds were being excluded from the Tivoli Variety Theatre, and some bioscope cinemas also excluded Coloureds. V. Bickford-Smith, 'A special tradition of segregation in Cape Town in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries', in W. James and M. Simons (eds.), The Angry Divide: Social and Economic History of the Western Cape, Cape Town, 1989, pp.49-50.

> times. Its interpretation of 'suitability' was very obvious but it undoubtedly vitalised the early silent dramas. Its performances made heroic demands in point of strength and musical memory; but in time many [musicians] ... alleged that they developed an 'instinct' for suitable music and could play appropriate tunes without even looking at the screen or previewing the films.[6]

It is not surprising that the small band of White musicians who worked in these mostly middle class theatres were considered to be equivalent to technical staff -- as the existence of a Transvaal Musicians and Cinematograph Operators Union testified. Moreover, relations between musicians and the entertainment bosses could be soured by work arrangements. In one recorded case,

> In October 1910, the pianist of the Vienna Bioscope in Eloff Street Cape Town, sued his employers for withheld wages. He alleged that he had played with such industry and vigour that his hands had collapsed and that, rather than lose his job he had engaged a proxy. The management dismissed both the proxy and himself and he therefore demanded £7 or two weeks wages. He lost the case.[7]

In the early 1910s, the silent bioscope industry had started

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[6]T. Gutsche, The History and Social Significance of Motion Pictures in South Africa: 1895-1940, Cape Town, 1972, p.104.

[7]T. Gutsche, The History and Social Significance, p.104.

to encroach on the traditional stronghold of the theatre. New innovations such as bio-vaudeville were introduced on an experimental basis, to launch a popular electronic and mechanical theatre. In adopting bio-vaudeville, the cinema had intruded decisively on the sphere of legitimate entertainment, challenging the trade of the theatre proper and the music hall. A handful of individuals such as I.W. Schlesinger eventually gained control of the theatres and the distribution outlets, and also merged these with the major film distributing agencies. Thus, they ultimately gained overall control of the music hall business, the cinemas, and the distribution company, African Films Trust.[8]

In 1918, a musicians strike in Schlesinger's organisation revealed a labour crisis in the bioscopes and the music halls. A dispute had been prompted by the closure of cinemas during the height of the Spanish influenza epidemic in Cape Town. The musicians' demands included pay during the closure period, a wage increase and job protection for union members. In turn, the 100 strong Transvaal Musicians' and Cinematograph Operators Union expressed token support for the Cape Town strikers.[9]

The Cape Musicians Association and Bioscope Employees Union formed a Musicians Committee which raised funds for the

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[8]E. Mantzaris, 'Another victory for trade unionism', p.115.

[9]E. Mantzaris, 'Another victory for trade unionism', p.122.

strikers by organising bioscope shows advertised as 'Musicians v. Bioscope Entertainment' comprising 'an orchestra of 50 musicians on strike.'[10] A job preference clause, prescribed in a draft proposal, outlawed the employment of non-union musicians. It was, however, replaced at the first negotiations by a non-binding undertaking on the part of the Trust to consult the union before making a decision about musician employment.[11]

It is conceivable that White musicians felt threatened by the prospect of bioscopes employing Coloured non-union members, as the strike occurred when racial craft unionism in the Cape was already fairly entrenched.[12] If, in general terms, the relationship between White and Coloured artisans was characterised by a 'particular ambiguity and uneasiness' in the first decades of the century, concerns about job status and protection might have impinged upon an artisanal music trade.[13]

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[10]T. Gutsche, The History and Social Significance, p.159.

[11]E. Mantzaris, 'Another victory for trade unionism', p.125.

[12]See P. Van Duin, 'Artisans and trade unions in the Cape Town building industry: 1900-1924', W. James, and M. Simons, Mary (eds.) The Angry Divide: Social and Economic History of the Western Cape, Cape Town, 1989, p.97. The First World War created more opportunities for Coloured artisans, as Whites enlisted in the army. After 1918, this position was not reversed. Coloured artisans, were urged by the African Peoples' Organisation (APO) to secure their jobs by undercutting Whites. The Apprenticeship Act was promulgated in 1922.

[13]D. Kaplan, 'Industrial development in the Western Cape, 1910-1940: Composition, causes and consequences', Paper presented at the Western Cape Roots and Realities Conference,

The Cape Musicians' Association (CMA) in the 1960s

At least half a century later, White musicians occupied a considerably improved and more secure position. What was the basis of that transition in status? While musicians in the early entertainment industry did not seem to enjoy a wholly satisfactory relationship with theatre and cinema interests, in the 1960s, by contrast, the Cape Musicians Association (CMA) was seeking an accommodation with municipal cultural authorities established under Grand Apartheid. The shift was marked most characteristically by the decline of the old elite amateur classical societies and the formation of larger, professional orchestras after the 1930s.

For example, during 1939, the formation of a 78-member super-orchestra in Johannesburg had occurred as a result of the combining of the amateur Johannesburg Symphony Society and African Consolidated Theatres (ACT) Colosseum Orchestra and the broadcasting orchestra.[14] Shortly afterwards, the Johannesburg Musicians Union banned amateurs from the new orchestra. The official reason given was a fear that standards would fall. Hence Fairplay complained in the Rand Daily Mail:

UCT, 1986, p.21.

[14]Rand Daily Mail 11/11/1939. The orchestra was designed to perform "more exacting works." This material was found in the Thelma Gutsche Papers, BC 703, UCT Manuscripts Archive.

> As matters stand now, and are likely to stand until the Musicians Union edict is revoked, they will never again perform at those concerts of which they may be called pioneers.[15]

In the 1960s, White musicians had similar protective needs to those of their forebears in the silent theatres. These were secured through a municipal professional establishment of the later 1960s founded on racial exclusion and segregation. Here, White musicians had exclusive access to the lion's share of cultural resources, with Coloureds a minimal share, and from which Africans were excluded. If such a discriminatory structure had not been wholly systematic in the early twentieth century, it had certainly hardened by the Second World War; and, by the 1960s, it reached its zenith with the activities of the CMA and its representations to the state legislature.

As was the case with the political and social order in Cape Town, musicianship was considered a purely Coloured and White phenomenon.[16] Its definition as a craft had been first

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[15]Rand Daily Mail 1/7/1939.

[16]In this scheme, Cape Town's workforce was defined as characteristically Coloured, a view enshrined in the historically rooted 'correlation of class and colour' in the Cape, and in the Coloured Labour Preference Policy. The policy was designed to curb African influx to the Cape, to bolster Coloured participation in the job market and to secure a region of White numerical supremacy. See W. James, and M. Simons, 'Introduction', p.vii, and R. Humphries, 'Administrative politics and the Coloured labour preference policy during the 1960s', W. James, and M. Simons, (eds.) The Angry Divide: Social and Economic History of the Western Cape,

affirmed by White musicians in a 1918 strike activity, providing the Cape Town music profession with a perceptible labour history.

In the 1960s, legislation was proposed concerning performers working in the provincial state-funded arts, the SABC, and in relation to international law. The old National Theatre Organisation was to be dissolved and replaced by four provincial organisations controlling theatre, opera, music and ballet. Thus, the Cape Performing Arts Council was formed and undertook to draw on local as well as international professional artists.[17] New Cape and Transvaal performing arts bodies, and the SABC, used the skills of a large number of foreign musicians and needed to update copyright and performing rights legislation.[18]

A confident claim was made for South Africa's place in the

Town, 1989, p.169.

[17]Argus, 11/6/1962.

[18]New copyright legislation was passed in 1965. See O. Dean, Handbook of South African Copyright Law, Town, 1990, Service 2, 3/20. It should be noted that some copyright and royalty conventions for Black session musicians were instituted after the Second World War. See D. Coplan, In Township Tonight, p.160. Countering a claim by Yvonne Huskisson, Coplan has asserted that this earlier periodisation is important. See Y. Huskisson, The Bantu Composers of Southern Africa, Johannesburg, 1966, and D. Coplan, 'The African musician and the development of the Johannesburg entertainment industry: 1900-60', Journal of Southern African Studies 5,2 1979, pp.136-61. For a comparative view, see S. Frith, 'Copyright and the music business', Popular Music 7,1 1988.

international cultural landscape.[19] This was echoed in the assertion that South African cultural exports now included sufficient intellectual material to warrant a serious concern with international copyright. From the following year onwards, up to 1963, the Copyright Bill came under scrutiny and these debates resulted in the passing of the Amended Copyright Act of 1965.

Separate racial provisions for entertainment had bolstered the protectionist tendencies which had surfaced earlier in the music halls.[20] White musicians in the Cape and their counterparts in the Transvaal and Natal were to appeal to this job culture legacy on a number of occasions during the 1960s.

A parliamentary hearing on performing rights heard in 1965 that, unless a law was promulgated to protect the larger emerging occupation of artists,

> the benefits to be derived from their various talents would be lost to society. At this stage it was becoming

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[19]Nevertheless, signals to the contrary appeared occasionally in these initial stages. A report mentioned the intention of the powerful British Musicians Union to take a strong position on segregated audiences. See Argus 5/12/1963.

[20]In a similar vein, White artisans in the building trade in the 1960s, dependent upon state support for their survival, were strong supporters of job reservation. See O. Crankshaw, 'Apartheid and economic growth: craft unions, capital and the state in the South African building industry', Journal of Southern African Studies, 16,3 1990, p.517 and p.504. Legislation was promulgated shortly before the economic boom of the 1960s, and the result was the "unique coincidence of the tradition of craft unionism, the implementation of labour apartheid, and capitalist economic growth."

> a social problem in many countries of the world that the average performing artist ... [was] not making a living out of this kind of work.[21]

In practice, to be a professional musician meant being a White performing artist. The CMA represented White professional and semi-professional musicians working in hotels and restaurants in Cape Town. In 1963, the association had 230 active members under the leadership of Ted Fraser. In turn, the CMA, Transvaal Musicians' Union (TMU) and Natal Musicians' Association (NMA) represented 'all professional musicians in South Africa', and the three organisations were affiliated to the International Federation of Musicians.[22]

In 1965, a new copyright law was promulgated, reflecting the dramatic increases in the size of the gramophone record industry and the increasing political power of large media interests.[23] A parliamentary committee also started hearing evidence from the three provincial musicians unions on the implications of the copyright law for musical performers.

A.E. 'Ted' Fraser represented the unions at the hearings.

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[21]Republic of South Africa, Report of the Select Committee on the Subject of the Performers' Protection Bill, Pretoria, 1965, p.7.

[22]Report of the Select Committee on the Subject of the Performers' Protection Bill, Pretoria, 1965, p.10.

[23]The move was also a response to international copyright deliberations in the early 1960s, which culminated in the Berne Convention in 1965.

Fraser seems to have wielded substantial power within the White professional entertainment establishment, and was a noteworthy figure. Not only was he the secretary of the CMA, but also held that position in the European Liquor and Catering Trades Association. As such, he played a major role in influencing the policy of the cultural establishment of both the municipality, the state via the SABC, and local liquor merchants during the 1960s. Ted Fraser was also a keen amateur liquor brewer and a professional classical, jazz and brass band musician.[24]

In the 1960s, musical performance remained ambiguously categorised as a manual extension of mechanised cultural production such as cinematography and gramophones, and yet also as a musical performance in its own right. The notion of live music, as distinct from its mechanised counterpart, was now emerging within changing productive practices in popular music.[25]

A mutual alliance between the White unions and the Association

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[24]This was part of his known profile as a member of the men-only 62 Club. This was Cape Town's first multi-racial private club. As the name suggests, it was formed in 1962 and was modelled on earlier White clubs such as the Owl Club. It was composed mainly of professionals, intellectuals and middle class socialites, and held regular activities of an 'edifying' nature such as classical music performances, lectures and literature readings. Any political allusion or discussion was explicitly barred from its proceedings. I thank Bill Nasson for this latter detail. The 62 Club, Minutes and membership lists, BC 926, UCT Manuscripts Collection.

[25]See S. Thornton, 'Strategies for reconstructing the popular past', Popular Music, 9,1 1990, p.93.

of South African Phonograph Industries (ASAPI) was evident in the fee of R4000 which was paid annually to the three unions to compensate for losses incurred in sales of fixated performance and to invest in training:

> This money has assisted the Cape Musicians' Association to establish the Pro Arte Music Society in the Cape. My Association was appalled by the number of overseas chamber music artists who were being brought to this country to the detriment of South African musicians. This money has also been used by my Association for the promotion of live music, to provide employment for musicians, to encourage the teaching of music to South Africans here in the Cape, and for bursaries.[26]

The central issues in the copyright and performing rights hearings thus emanated from the needs of orchestra musicians and musicians who had registered profitable copyright material. In addition, the hearings revealed a long-term concern to consolidate the political constitution and protection of musicianship as a professional White occupation. It was primarily in this group that a concern with performing rights arose, and to a lesser extent with the dance band musicians who worked in White city hotels. As Fraser asserted:

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[26]Report of the Select Committee, p.20. The Pro Arte Society was later assimilated into the Cape Performing Arts Board (Capab).

> The few musicians who would not be members of our Association would be musicians who are not worth their salt anyway. We feel that the manufacturers prefer to negotiate with and engage established musicians. All the reputable musicians are members of our Association, and we feel that those few musicians who are not members ... are not worth considering.[27]

Fraser insisted on protection against the cumulative effect of the mechanised reproduction of music, and not protection from the manufacture of gramophones. In effect, it was the notion of performance which was the main object under consideration in this process:

> My Association needs protection against those people who use gramophone records for broadcasting purposes -- the South African Broadcasting Corporation or the restaurant owner -- or those people who, instead of employing an orchestra, make use of gramophone records for dances, receptions, etc.[28]

It was clear that the CMA meant to strike an accommodating bargain through the legislature. Its dealings with the Cape Town municipality suggested a moderate and compromise-seeking

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[27]Report of the Select Committee, p.25.

[28]Report of the Select Committee, p.32. Fraser reasoned that record companies made their business mainly from private domestic sales, and only a small proportion from sales to institutions. The SABC was the largest consumer of records in terms of copyrightable usage.

approach. Typically, during 1965, the CMA took up the case of one David Woodman. Woodman had been replaced as principle clarinettist by a Kenneth Lee. The CMA claimed that no reason was forthcoming from the City Council Staff Committee as to why Woodman's contract was not renewed. Fraser warned that the CMA would 'notify the International Federation of Musicians of the terms under which the Cape Town City Council employed its musicians.'[29] However Fraser was also careful to point out that:

> This is not an attempt to get musicians to boycott the orchestra, but we feel it is in the musicians' interest to know that, if they take a job with the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra, they will have a maximum of only nine months [job] security.[30]

This attitude, though critical of the authorities, contrasted markedly with the militancy of the striking musicians in the early silent bioscopes.

Disputes of this nature were often not resolved without some continuing contention. Attempts to win professional recognition, protection from competition, or improvements in working conditions were often met with resistance on the part of city authorities. This was the case in the three major centres -- Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg.

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[29]Argus 14/1/1965.

[30]Argus 14/1/1965.

For example, it is clear that foreign competition potentially posed a threat to local musicians. During 1966, the CMA became part of a dispute between three regional White musicians' organisations on the one hand -- the CMA, the NMA, and the TMU -- and a professional agency called the Don Hughes Organisation on the other. The latter operated as an employment agency for foreign musicians, claiming a total membership of more than 300. Hughes appealed to the Minister of the Interior to reconsider a ruling which allowed the NMA, CMA, and the TMU to veto the visa applications of foreign musicians wishing to find work in South Africa.

Hughes argued that he was not undercutting local musicians by importing overseas musicians in the White European continental market. In support of this, he claimed that of the professional musicians employed in the White hotel and restaurant industry, 60% were South African, and 20% were working on temporary permits. The rest of the foreign musicians in the country, he insisted, were permanent residents and were therefore not his responsibility. Moreover, of so-called continental bands, 80% were South African, with a small proportion of foreign musicians in groups supplying continental atmosphere.

However, local working conditions did not always meet the expectations of foreign musicians. For example, in 1966, seventeen Spanish musicians resigned from the SABC Orchestra. They listed among their grievances the incompetence of the

Orchestra's conductor, and the failure of the SABC to supply promised benefits. They claimed that the SABC had promised them as yet unrealised housing benefits, and that, despite a 66% increase in out-of-town allowances, the R200 monthly salary which they earned was 'lower than those of a Johannesburg bus driver.'[31] By contrast, they asserted that, on the hotel and restaurant circuit, a professional musician was paid between R200 and R400 a month, with free board and lodging often supplied as well.

The CMA's attitude to local Black musicians also illustrates that it sought to secure professional opportunities for local White musicians. In 1968, the CMA received a letter from the Department of Community Development confirming that, 'the employment of a Coloured band by a member of the White group to provide music for the entertainment of Whites in a White proclaimed area is prohibited ... in terms of the Group Areas Act, 1966.'[32] Behind this lay a CMA initiative. A meeting of the Cape Town Liquor Licensing Board had earlier declined to impose a general condition on all on-consumption licenses which would have put an end to Coloured musicians working at White hotels. In response, the CMA had written to the Department of Labour to point out that it had not had an opportunity to give evidence on this matter at the meeting of the Liquor Licensing Board, and to protest against the

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[31] Argus 13/4/1966. In return, employers expected "the highest possible standard of music." Argus 22/1/1966.

[32] Argus, 20/1/1968.

continuing employment of Coloured entertainers at rates lower than those stipulated by White performers. Fraser was particularly careful about the terms of the CMA view:

> This is not a racial issue with us, Mr Fraser emphasised today. Some of the Coloured entertainers are first class and we have long had cordial relations in the Cape with them. Our attitude is strictly a trade union one and is based on the rate for the job. We object to employers engaging Coloured entertainers at lower rates than we charge. Mr Fraser said that Coloured musicians were sometimes employed at less than half the fees charged by White musicians. The Association had more than 300 members he added, there were sufficient White musicians to provide for the needs of hotels and night clubs.[33]

Despite his protestation of principle, it is apparent that Fraser was centrally concerned with job protection for White musicians on the White hotel and night club circuit. In general terms, job security in a rapidly changing entertainment sector had become a priority for small-scale entertainment workers such as hotel musicians -- especially with petty apartheid provisions being increasingly enforced by the mid-1960s. Understandably, an anonymous Coloured bandleader 'with 20 years of experience', who ventured to speak on behalf of Coloured musicians, denied the CMA's claims of lower-paid Coloured amateurs undercutting White musicians:

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[33] Argus, 20/1/1968.

> A number of Coloured musicians earn their living by working in hotels and night clubs. In certain circumstances, they have asked for rates higher than those asked for by White musicians.[34]

This bandleader also pointedly raised the fact that the employment of Coloured waiters in White hotels on the same basis had not produced any similar outcry. Clearly, a long-standing tension is suggested in this sharp exchange between Fraser and the Coloured bandleader. There was obviously a sense among some Coloured dance musicians that they constituted a distinct group of skilled musicians within the local entertainment industry.

Naturally, performer relations were grounded on the premise that the Cape was the natural home of Coloureds and Whites. This divided coexistence, and the concomitant exclusion of Africans, was to be disturbed by the jazz subculture that emerged here in the 1950s and 1960s -- with its new competing notions of Black pride, multi-racialism and even Pan-Africanism.

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[34] Argus 23/1/1968.

CHAPTER FIVE: POLITICS, TRADITION AND CHANGE IN DANCE BAND AND JAZZ CULTURE IN CAPE TOWN, 1930-1969

Previous chapters sketched the development of the record trade as part of secondary industrialisation, of ethnic record markets, and touched on the marginalisation of jazz and dance musicians from the record industry. We also considered an instance of exclusion from the musical profession by White musicians unions. Against this context of industrialisation, exclusion and marginalisation, we now shift our focus to the immediate social conditions in which Black performers lived and worked.

How did local performance traditions, social activities, external material influences and perhaps even political activities affect dance band and jazz performance? Such questions involve developing two issues which were posed in the introduction to this thesis. These concerned the social and professional aspirations of Black dance and jazz musicians and the influence of styles from other regions on Cape Town musicians and audiences between the 1930s and the 1960s.

An obvious factor of relevance is local responses to musical and social change. For instance, between the 1930s and the 1960s, American popular music and African jazz were introduced to local audiences on a large scale. These naturally prompted varying reactions from local audiences and musicians, including social acceptance, rejection, or indifference to the

new styles of music. Such reactions were mediated by local social and political circumstances and by inherited traditions in local communities, street music, dance hall customs and established local bands.

Between 1930 and 1969, dance and jazz performance was influenced by wider social, political and economic changes in predominantly Coloured townships such as District Six and Kensington. In particular, in some incidents, aspects of dance band performance became entwined with aspects of Coloured politics, especially by the end of the Second World War.[1] In particular, activities of two rival teacher unions, and the non-white reception for the Royal visit in 1947 became the subject of political controversy.

Furthermore, since the 1930s, jazz was being assigned different social meanings which were sometimes distinct from dance music and sometimes indistinct form it. Firstly, jazz was seen by some as a glamorous style from American films, records and pictures and became fashionable among mainly middle class Coloured audiences. Secondly, it became the preserve of a professional Coloured elite interested mainly in dress style, high life and other decorative aspects of jazz.

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[1]This chapter traces this process through evidence in which the social and political activities of the intellectuals and activists who formed the nucleus of organised black politics in Cape Town during the period is depicted -- as reflected in newspapers such as the Cape Standard. The latter newspaper was aligned to politically radical viewpoints of Coloured political organisations such as the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM).

A third category of meaning saw jazz, particularly in combination with African jazz, as the vehicle for a new form of self-expression among a small handful of African, White and Coloured musicians in the city. This chapter will trace the development of these threads between the late 1920s and the late 1960s.

Dance bands and community in the 1920s and 1930s

Dance music has been a prominent feature of the social life of Cape Town's Coloured townships since the 1920s, with amateur bands an important part of local musical tradition and community identity. Most musicians had their formative experiences performing in the coon carnival, Christmas bands, dance bands and other troupes.[2] Moreover, institutionally-derived musical performance was often governed by traditional familial patriarchy and by religious connections, such as those of the Malay choirs and local church Christmas bands. From its inception in 1936, the Cape Standard regularly advertised dance orchestras for hire, and numerous bands performed at social gatherings in District Six. Such use of social space as musical space was a mark of community and identity -- for example in dance, variety concerts and other musical performance on the streets at new year, in the Star bioscope and in dance halls in the District on regular

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[2]See S. Jeppie, 'Aspects of Popular Culture and Class Expression in Inner Cape Town, circa. 1939-1959', MA Thesis, UCT, 1990, for treatment of this. The musical culture constituted an aspect of the 'fabric' of inner city working class cultural expression.

weekends. Bands formed a cornerstone of the activities surrounding the use of community spaces.[3] They were also associated with community self-improvement, drawing people to fund-raising fetes and dances for schools and churches.

These spaces were important for social interaction. In 1938, the completion of a number of new halls in District 6 'for meetings, dances and concerts given by members of the Coloured community' was announced.[4] Halls were often used by community institutions such as churches, benefit societies, and for municipal functions. In addition, as spaces for political, sporting, and social gatherings, dance halls became an integral aspect of social and political life. Outside of Cape Town, a lively dance band culture also existed in rural centres such as Malmesbury, Langebaan and Darling.[5]

Usually, dance bands comprised a group of men playing instruments which were either relatively easily available, or instruments obtained through past military service or religious activities -- such as trumpets, banjos and violins. Based on such instruments, 'Coloured-Afrikaans' vastrap,

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[3]Racial identity in Cape Town, as John Western cogently illustrated, was a 'spatial' as well as a political and social identity; that is, identity was also conceived in relation to spatial phenomena such as Table Mountain, and the affluent White suburbs on the slopes. See J. Western, Outcast Cape Town, Cape Town, 1981, p.146. Veit Erlmann has also emphasised the concept of social space; see his African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance, London, 1991, p.5.

[4]Cape Standard, 22/2/1938.

[5]See Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990.

Scottish square dance and American dance band music of the 1920s and 1930s had become elements of an emerging ballroom and langarm tradition since the mid-nineteenth century.

The local reception of jazz between the 1920s and 1930s

American jazz, on the other hand, was historically a non-traditional form in Cape Town. Nevertheless, the notion of jazz as a modern urban musical style has been embedded in the popular consciousness of Coloured and White Cape Town since the 1920s. In this formative period, it was associated with glamorous American big bands and hot soloists such as Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton. Locally, for example, the term jazz also entered the local vocabulary in the early twentieth century through 'The Jazz Singer', a movie release of the blackface minstrel singer, Al Jolson.

The reception of jazz in Cape Town was initially ambiguous. On the one hand, it presented an exciting variation on sophisticated dance music which was being imported from America, while on the other hand, its rhythmic excitement and virtuosity was perceived as a moral threat to proper style by some of the city's White and Black inhabitants. In this sense, the ascendance of jazz was perceived as a musical invasion.

Thus, in 1936, a Cape Standard correspondent asserted that since the turn of the century, jazz had 'rapidly displaced the

graceful music and dances of the Victorian Age.'[6] It was perceived as a momentary rupture in a continuous evolution from nineteenth century Victorian values and style, to the present. The 'roaring twenties' had just made an impact on those Coloured audiences who attended bioscope shows in Cape Town. Perturbed by a lack of classical musical activity among the Coloured community, one contributor sarcastically accused Coloured musicians of 'bowing at the altar of Jazz.'[7] For White Cape Town, a similar rejection of jazz was part of a general 'puritanical invective against its sensual nature' and its degenerative effect on war-weary soldiers.[8]

Whatever the critical reception in some quarters, American jazz tradition had a strong impact on South African musicians and audiences. By the 1930s, this jazz performance 'had developed a history of its own and could point to its own traditions.'[9] During this period, syncopated American band performance became an object lesson for Coloured dance band musicians, and Coloured dance bands started consciously to use hot jazz band names. Thus, one dance band called itself 'The Red Hot Jazz Pirates' -- after Jelly Roll Morton's 'Red Hot

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[6]Cape Standard, 8/6/1936. This notion of perceived 'interruptions' in colonial legacy, has been treated in connection with nineteenth century minstrelsy in South Africa. See V. Erlmann, '"A feeling of prejudice": Orpheus McAdoo and the Virginia Jubilee Singers in South Africa, 1890-1898, Journal of Southern African Studies 14,3 1988.

[7]See Cape Standard 11/5/1936.

[8]T. Gutsche, The History and Social Significance, p.166.

[9]See G. Schuller, Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development, New York, 1968, p.356.

Peppers'. Typically also, local pianist Felix de Cola, advertising his self-styled piano course -- 'Learn piano jazz and be popular' -- stressed that his was a method used by 'world famous syncopation pianists.'[10]

While jazz had become synonymous with syncopated dance music, a consistent distinction between the two did not harden during the 1930s, when jazz in the swing idiom had emerged as a hugely successful popular music. Only later, in the 1940s, were firm distinctions made between jazz and dance band music, and then only in privileged circles.[11]

A small number of local musicians began following these conventions. Some sought to modernise dance bands and started to include overt jazz conventions such as improvisation in their performances. In particular, this involved the boosting of improvising soloists, who had not been a distinguishing feature of dance band performance. Felix de Costa, adjudicating at a dance band competition in the late 1930s, testified to changing trends:

> whereas [the Collins band] was much cleaner than the rest and more suitable for dancing, Jones' was better to listen to ... There was a tendency on the part of each

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[10]Cape Standard, 1/3/1938.

[11]The musician Charlie Parker exercised considerable influence on local musicians as he had on jazz performance as a whole. G. Schuller, The Swing Era: The Development of Jazz, 1930-1945, New York, 1989.

> band to do so called busting; not giving an opportunity for soloists. These wrong tactics on the part of instrumentalists spoil the necessary effect required by good dance bands.[12]

Thus, by the 1930s, jazz had become a local feature of recorded and live performances of popular music. It was associated exclusively with American swing and the accompanying images of film stars and their slick urban lifestyles.

Politics, performance and traditional dance band performance in the 1940s

In time, political and social organisations of the 1940s began to draw on a local dance band tradition for their social activities. For instance, as a post-1941 war ally, cultural links with the Soviet Union were not just feasible but desirable. The Communist Cabaret Ball in January 1943, featured Joe Murray's Philharmonic Orchestra, and had to turn away hundreds at the door, while the Zionist Socialist Party held a grand concert at the Muizenburg Pavilion, in the same month. In more highbrow spheres, in 1944, a concert at the City Hall featured Shostakovich's Leningrad Symphony, by the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra as part of its programme.[13] Towards the end of the war, a Communist Party May Day pageant

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[12] Cape Standard, 20/9/1938.

[13] T. Schreuders, 'The social and intellectual life', p.18.

featured English folk dancing and the Eoan singers.[14] Dances had thus become a commonplace feature of community social activity, even for political organisations.

The dance forms were themselves subject to indirect political inflexions. Thus, the identifiably Afrikaans connotation of some forms of Coloured dance music was a controversial feature of dance band performance, specifically that which related to vastrap and Afrikaans folk performance.[15] In stylistic terms however, vastrap seems to have been a predecessor of langarm, the latter actually an amalgam of diverse influences such as square dancing, ballroom, swing and vastrap itself.[16] Yet, the issue of 'Afrikaansness' was undoubtedly part of what made dance music pleasing to some middle-class English-speaking

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[14]Cape Standard, 24/4/1945.

[15]In fact, these were often described interchangeably by some of its practitioners as both vastrap and langarm. See Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992. Bearing in mind that it remains an incomplete description, we follow the orthodoxy that Coloured vastrap evolved among the Western and Northern Cape Coloured populations through the assimilation of White Afrikaner vastrap and other musical influences. These included square dancing, minstrelsy and vaudeville. The origins and development of terms such as vastrap and langarm are yet to be researched. See G. Stone, 'The Coon carnival', Unpublished Mimeo, Abe Bailey Institute of Interracial Studies (n.d.). See also L. Green, Grow Lovely, Grow Old: The Story of Cape Town's Three Centuries, the Legends, Traditions and Folklore, the Laughter and Tears, Cape Town, 1951, p.193.

[16]A reminder should be issued here. This thesis does not claim authoritative knowledge about the origins and development of these musical styles; nor is it supported by musicological data about the differences between them. The evidence presented here is drawn from inferences made by musicians who practised these styles and necessarily involves issues of interest to the social historian. The precise musicological issues of describing the styles are best left for future studies drawing on such expertise.

Coloured elites.

Whatever the nature of perceptions, dance activity occasionally became entwined in more overt local political tensions and conflicts. Because they were valuable in fostering a sense of community, social dances were useful for political organisations in fostering solidarity among their members. Here, the classic case of two rival teacher bodies in the 1940s provides an intriguing illustration of the local politics of music in political culture.

In July 1945, the Teachers Educational and Professional Union (TEPA) held a dance in Paarl, which was immediately condemned by the rival Teachers League of South Africa (TLSA) as a bid to demonstrate support among local teachers and thus to discredit the local TLSA branch. Alec April, convener of the TEPA dance, replied that the TLSA had 'tried to make a political issue of what we regard as a mere form of entertainment.'[17] This relatively minor incident revealed a complex and fraught link between social and cultural life on the one hand, and political strategy on the other.

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[17]Cape Standard, 24/7/1945. For an account of the rivalry between the two bodies, see G. Lewis Between the Wire and the Wall: A History of South African 'Coloured' Politics, Cape Town, 1987, pp.233-44. After an earlier takeover of the APO by radicals, politically conservative members had regrouped under the Coloured Peoples National Union (CPNU) and Teachers Educational and Professional Union (TEPA). The radical group had established two new organisations after 1943, namely the anti Coloured Affairs Department (anti-CAD) and the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM).

In the postwar era, new practices consolidated. Non-collaboration in the Western Cape was increasingly articulated politically in many popular institutions, from bioscopes to schools:

> Young activists, consisting largely of teachers, students, a few doctors and lawyers and a sprinkling of semi-skilled workers and artisans, penetrated virtually every kind of organisation of the people including sports bodies, teachers' organisations, church groups, cultural societies, coon carnival and christmas choir bands, and many more.[18]

While this was one area of organisational energy, rooted in ideas of democratic social emancipation, on the other hand, Coloured elites also sought a bridge to civilised cultural standards. They pursued this through common cultural identities with Whites. Opera and classical music concerts at the City Hall were popular with middle class Coloureds and the skilled respectable working class of District Six.[19] Some intellectuals were steeped in practices which epitomised the pursuit of respectability -- that entrenched social aspect of Coloured identity. Even during the bustle of war conditions,

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[18]N. Alexander, 'Non-collaboration in the Western Cape, 1943-1963', in W. James and M. Simons, (eds.), The Angry Divide: Social and Economic History of the Western Cape, Cape Town, 1989 p.183.

[19]See B. Nasson, 'Oral history and the reconstruction of District Six', S. Jeppie and C. Soudien (eds.), The Struggle for District Six: Past and Present, Cape Town, 1990.p.59.

'respectability was the order of the day and the Guardian volunteers would put on their 'hats and gloves' before going out to raise funds or solicit donations, so as to create the best impression.'[20]

In later decades, high-minded cultural inclinations remained a source of elite pride. Thus, in 1964, commemorating the Spes Bona Orchestra, Coloured intellectual Richard van Der Ross pondered the 'natural sense of rhythm of the Coloured people' in the following terms:

> We cannot account for it. Our leaning to the opera and other cultural interests is one of the outlets we have because we have not reached our fulfilment in politics and commerce.[21]

Politics, ethnicity and class in ideas about performance in the 1940s

In the urban elite view, culture was seen as a means to achieving improvement in social status, as a surrogate for political advance. Yet, there were obviously a number of cultural tendencies in the Cape which broadly tended to reflect ethnic, racial and class aspirations of particular

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[20]T. Schreuders, 'The social and intellectual life of the Left in Cape Town during the Second World War, as specifically reflected in the Guardian, in H. Bradford and B. Nasson (eds.), South African Research Papers 5, UCT, 1988, p.22.

[21]Cape Times 31/10/1964.

social groups.

On this basis, local dance tradition was composed of many influences. In the 1940s, music-making war veterans from the Cape Corps and elsewhere returned from a new and diverse set of experiences. Some, such as Eddie George, had made informal contact with musicians to the North, coming to the realisation that Johannesburg-based Coloured dance bands had exercised a profound influence on Cape musicians. For George and others, exposure to a number of musical influences and to musical literacy was mediated through involvement in the Cape Corps band. Moreover, a number of bands from Kimberley, Durban and Johannesburg's Coloured locations toured the Western Cape over the immediate pre-and post-war period.[22] For example, established bands such as Kimberley's Versatile Jazz Band visited during the 1930s.[23]

Such bands supplied music for set pieces like the Victorian quadrille, which was popular among the elite of the 1930s and 1940s. Like the waltz, it became a regular feature of elite Coloured dance. On these occasions, it was the duty of the MC:

> to see that ... every four couples was fixed for a square for a set or Quadrille, and the MC would not allow the

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[22]Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990.

[23]Cape Standard, 6/12/1938. The band had been active since at least the 1920s, and had a 'composer', who had previously been attached to the Spes Bona Orchestra.

band to start playing until everybody was ready.[24]

Requests for the maintenance of European standards were commonplace.[25] While the use of Whites as adjudicators in musical performance competition is common in South Africa's popular music history, in this era an appeal for White judges was motivated by a desire to attain 'European standards of excellence', and not just to ensure artistic knowledge.[26]

Equally, the austere and controlled snobbishness of most elite dance occasions was often undermined by the very underlying popular tradition from which they tried to distance themselves. At numerous social dances organised by elite Coloured voluntary associations, popular memory recalls that membership required that 'you had to be a something'. Yet, social outcomes were not always predictable; while they

> used to give these posh balls, you know ... dinner jackets and stuff. But when they got drunk, ... and the band struck with a lekker moppie or a lekker vastrap ... then their ... true colours [came] out so to speak.[27]

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[24]Cape Standard, 26/6/1945. Complaints about 'declining standards' at recent functions held at the Banqueting Hall, City Hall prompted the description clarifying the proper arrangements required at elite dances.

[25]Cape Standard, 31/7/1945.

[26]Cape Standard, 1/3/1938.

[27]Vincent Kolbe interview, WCOHP, August 1988.

Naturally, dance band performance was not confined to specific political or ideological tendencies. In 1945, Stan Lombard's regular solo piano radio broadcasts on the 'A' transmission were being hailed by the radical Cape Standard, as a service of cultural significance for non-Europeans. The bands of Stan Lombard, Van Willingh and Alf Wylie were in fact, given regular radio airplay during the 1940s. Popular requests for permanent dance band broadcasts were commonplace, and sometimes linked to a separatist identity, as shown by one correspondent in 1947 who suggested that, 'seeing that they have a Bantu programme every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings why cannot we have our own Coloured programme once a week or once a month?'[28]

Such tendencies to allocate ethnic meanings to dance music performance were quite often visible. It was to some extent also reflected in the political collaboration crisis faced by the Coloured elite in the 1940s. In this instance, the president of the APO, E. T. Dietrich, who had openly endorsed the radical NEUM, violated the non-collaboration policy when, despite his self-professed militancy, he ignored a decision to boycott the 1947 Royal visit.[29] In effect, he joined the assimilationist tendency, which, having earlier regrouped under the CPNU and its leader George Golding, constituted the loyal core of elite Coloureds and socialites who attended the mayor's segregated non-White reception for the Royal family.

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[28]Cape Standard, 10/6/1947.

[29]G. Lewis, Between the Wire and the Wall, p.236.

Here, the musical entertainment at the mayor's Coloured reception unexpectedly became a matter of controversy. The exclusion of widely popular vocalist Achmat Adams as master of ceremonies for the Malay section, was questioned by a number of sympathetic individuals. Typically, 'Puzzled' wrote to the Cape Standard, complaining about the exclusion of Adams from the Malay choir section of the reception, maintaining that Adams was 'quite an institution' in Cape Town. Then, unexpectedly, Adams responded by publicly rejecting both the reception and the Malay showpiece, and supporting the radicals' boycott.[30]

While the Malay section represented a folk item for the amusement of guests, the elite bands, combined under a local White bandleader, provided a studied restraint deemed appropriate for the regal occasion:

> [Sergeant Charles] Van Willingh's and [Stan] Lombard's orchestras under the leadership of bandmaster Collins rose to the occasion and provided most lilting music, especially for the state Quadrille, which was apparently greatly enjoyed by the Royal Party, for ... their Majesties ... and even General Smuts [were] noticed keeping time.[31]

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[30]Cape Standard, 25/2/1947. The controversy continued in the following issues, and one letter included an Achmat Adams fan club address. See Cape Standard, 11/3/1947.

[31]Cape Standard, 25/2/1947.

The elite ballroom bands such as Stan Lombard's band thus epitomised the aspirations of temperance and respectability which had been a cornerstone of elite Coloured cultural politics up to the 1940s. The 1947 attendance of a significant section of the assimilationist tendency, and the boycott by the radicals, certainly illustrated the depth of political division. Yet, fragments of respectability and temperance remained intact and entrenched within the radical camp as much as in assimilationist circles. Elite bands, overall, seem to have been tacitly recognised as an embodiment of an emerging Coloured cultural icon.[32]

Elite band performance became a commonplace occasion accessible to both Coloured elites and other audiences. For example, some years after the Royal reception, a young Vincent Kolbe, making his debut on a dance band stage, shared the platform with the Stan Lombard orchestra at an Eoan Group Christmas party. Even though its membership consisted of a mix of factory workers and educated individuals, the Eoan social functions were invariably sober affairs. Nevertheless, novelty rough edge bands were sometimes thrown in as a secondary warm-up attraction. Kolbe's group, the Paramount Dixies Rhythm Band, was invited to provide such a novelty.

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[32]This consciousness that it was a subservient Coloured idiom was sometimes potent enough to strain family relations. For example, Eddie George, a dance musician who had been raised in a family with connections to the coon carnival before the Second World War, recalled that in the 1950s and 1960s, some of his relatives refused to attend his performances from embarrassment -- his band was not a respectable dance band. See Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990 and Cape Standard, 22/2/1938.

Shortly afterwards, it changed its name to the more imposing Paramount Orchestra.[33] In other words, the band sought recognition in terms prescribed by notions of elite Coloured respectability. This had become a grid of acceptability.

Jazz in postwar Cape Town

By the mid-1960s, jazz had crossed paths with traditional dance bands, elite dance bands, intellectuals, middle class professionals and entrepreneurs in the entertainment sector. Through these encounters, numerous social, aesthetic and political meanings came to be ascribed to the term jazz, and to jazz performance.

In the light of earlier discussion, we can see that the gramophone record played an important role in introducing such conventions. By the 1930s, traditional popular musical forms which had flourished up to the earlier part of the century, such as the Coloured vastrap, were marginalised and were eventually displaced commercially by the onslaught of the postwar popular music industry. Specifically, the interwar American invasion ushered in a new wave of musical consumer products and images, and a general consumerism such as a competitive material culture which developed around the

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[33]Vincent Kolbe in R. Gassert, '"Bop Till You Drop": An Oral Study of Popular Musical Cultures in Cape Town, from the late 1940s to the early 1960s', History III Long Paper, UCT, 1988, p.30.

purchase of fancy record players.[34]

How did jazz musicians confront the new mass musical influences after the Second World War? For a start, the establishment of semi-professional dance bands in the 1920s and 1930s in Southern African urban centres had come to place pressures on Cape bands to adopt standardised performance conventions such as the square parties and Christmas bands. Consequently, by the end of the 1950s, a generation of Coloured musicians had been schooled in dance bands -- both in the elite ballroom and langarm bands. Meanwhile, and alongside this, a rash of small amateur jazz bands, or jazz combos, had begun to emerge, composed of African and Coloured musicians.

For one group of young jazz musicians, the moment at which jazz stopped being a part-time hobby and became a more serious activity, was brought about in events leading up to the Holy Cross concerts of the mid-1950s in Walmer Estate. According to Vincent Kolbe, one of the first major jazz events for Black musicians arose out of an episode at the Weizmann Hall:

> Harold [Jeptha] could blow really cool jazz on the sax in the style of Stan Getz. There was going to be a jazz concert at the Weizmann Hall in Sea Point and he was

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[34]See Vincent Kolbe Interview, WCOHP, August 1988. As an indication of this, the Cape Standard conducted a reader survey of appliance usage in its first issue, detailing specifically the use of radios, gramophones, pianos and other home appliances. See Cape Standard 11/5/1936.

> supposed to play there ... So we go ... [and] every White monkey in Town is playing -- except Harold, so we thought the only thing to do would be to have our own jazz concert. I asked the father at the Holy Cross if we could use the church hall.[35]

This small and faltering start eventually led to new and larger developments. During the 1950s, African musicians, immersed in the established African big band idiom, and experimenting with new influences such as bebop, gradually started to interact with Coloured musicians in Cape Town. Musicians such as Chris 'Columbus' Ngcukana and 'Cups and Saucer' Nanuka were instrumental in generating local interest in African stylistic jazz idioms, particularly the big band mbaqanqa style. This happened on an intermittent basis in Langa, with bands such as the Merry Macks popularising the idiom.

Naturally, African musical performance existed in proximity to Coloured dance idioms, in places such as in District Six and Kensington.[36] Because of this proximity, it presented a

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[35]Vincent Kolbe in R. Gassert, 'Bop Till You Drop', p.35. Activities at the Weizmann Hall played a decisive role in shaping the relationship between White Cape Town and its black musicians. As early as 1962, African performers such as Ben 'Satch' Masinga appeared at the Weizmann hall in Sea Point, Cape Town. See Argus 20/2/1962.

[36]A caution is needed "not to confuse this ... growth of jazz with District Six." At its height, the jazz movement was mainly centred around the White city centre and areas such as Woodstock, the foreshore area and Castle bridge. Traditional popular performance culture still had its thriving centre in District Six. Vincent Kolbe interview, WCOHP, August 1988.

potential point of contact, for Coloured musicians especially. Equally, the idioms on which the music was based generally presented a cultural anomaly for many Coloured dance audiences. For instance, a local African musical performance style, diba, was relatively marginal in Coloured District Six. Local descriptions of diba vary, although most usually depicted it as 'ballroom with an occasional kwela'. Occasionally, as one informant recalls,

> they used to raffle a bottle of brandy, and ... you'd pay for your dancing partner. They'd play a lot of straight ballroom and have really smart venues. It wasn't shantytown stuff like we'd think today because these weren't shantytown guys. They stayed in a sort of enclave in the Clyde Street area.[37]

Diba normally had both a ballroom component and a strong neo-traditional element, stylistically linked to kwela and mbaqanga. Some musicians claim that it 'started a lot of the concepts in African rhythm in Cape Town.'[38] Yet much African performance generally remained distanced from the postwar popular culture of areas such as District Six. When it emerged in the Western Cape, it arrived with a distinct and

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[37]Vincent Kolbe in R. Gassert, 'Bop Till You Drop', p.17. Diba parties resemble the 'concert and dance' performance tradition which was the 'crucible' of black jazz styles on the Witwatersrand See C. Ballantine, 'Concert and dance: the foundations of black jazz in South Africa between the twenties and early forties', Popular Music, 10,2 1991, for this discussion.

[38]Cliffie Moses interview, 19/11/1991.

fairly well developed set of ideas about performance. Its central tenet was the creation of an indigenous South African idiom, ideologically loosely linked to popular African political movements.

In this regard, the influence of Dollar Brand's Jazz Epistles on interest in progressive jazz was considerable. The alto saxophonist for the Jazz Epistles, Kippie Moeketsi, recalled an occasion on which a crowd at a Langa show rejected the stylised American vocal harmonies and crooning, and vociferously demanded something different. This prompted him to experiment with traditional musical forms.[39] According to Coplan, the Jazz Epistles 'helped to establish an influential mainstream modern jazz movement, which claimed national attention among urban black South Africans during the 1960s.[40]

During the 1960s, Dollar Brand (later known as Abdullah Ibrahim), the most prominent musician in the Cape progressive movement, expressed an identification with radical black traditions and the ideology of pan-Africanism, verbalised through a number of black American intellectuals and musicians such as Sun-Ra.[41] Also, Brand expounded these sentiments

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[39]See K. Moeketsi, 'Roll 'em Morolong', M. Mutloatse (ed.), Umhlaba Wethu: An Historical Indictment, Johannesburg, 1987.

[40]D. Coplan, In Township Tonight, p.172.

[41]See L. Miller, and J. Skipper, 'Sounds of black protest in avant-garde jazz', in S. Denisoff, and R. Petersen (eds.), The Sounds of Social Change: Studies in Popular Culture,

personally in a weekly column in the Cape Herald (a popular Coloured readership newspaper).[42] Such musicians thus established a framework within which the traditions of conventional musical performance could be challenged.

A notion that popular musical traditions could be harnessed in developing an indigenous style was the basis of new aesthetic practice.[43] Developing African jazz involved a measure of syncretic experimentation with the established American styles such as the blues, and musical structures in Southern African traditional and neo-traditional forms, such as marabi.

The key radicalism of the new jazz lay both in struggles by musicians against increasingly repressive official cultural constraints, and in its formal musical challenges. This often translated into a sub-language or lingo which made use of insider terminology and forms of address.[44] This

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Chicago, 1972, pp.26-37.

[42]For example see Cape Herald, 24/8/1968.

[43]The parallel influence of the blues as a black American indigenous form with roots in popular tradition, was part of the symbolism of American jazz, and thus influenced local developments. As a 'bedrock' for the development of orchestral performance as well as other aspects of jazz in America, the blues had become a 'national' style. See G. Schuller, The Swing Era: The Development of Jazz, 1930-1945, New York, 1989, p.804.

[44]For example, the following jazz review assumed knowledge on the reader's part about the reputations of well-known musicians': "Mackay [Davashe] leads the group in this rather funky number ... trombone takes over (a pity it wasn't Gwangwa) trumpet comes next (a pity it wasn't Masekela) and has some good bits and so on and this is a pleasant shared piece." African jazz musicians such as composer, Gideon Nxumalo, embodied the new importance of intellectuals to

intellectualism often used flamboyant critical language and stylised critical formulations.[45]

Moreover, by the 1960s, African jazz musicians were conducting an intellectual and musical dialogue with Black America, where musicians such as John Coltrane were experimenting with free jazz. But, the subdued chaos of this style was beyond the tolerance span of most musicians, let alone lay listeners.[46] Saxophonist Ezra Ngcukana recalled a past fantasy, a bizarre mockery of American influence, suggesting how strange and unfamiliar were some of the new avant garde influences of the decade:

> My father [Chris Ngcukana] was playing avant-garde sounds - things you never heard before. I remember imagining, when I was about 11 or 12 that I'd like to take some dogs on stage and get them crazy so that they'd start howling and then play with them on the saxophone - one day I'll

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African jazz. See P. Radlof, 'New jazz', The Classic 1,3 1964, p.73.

[45]Writers and other intellectuals were a prominent part of this scenario. A number of journalists had a particular relationship with jazz culture, providing spirited public comment on the music for the 'public eye'. For example, Howard Lawrence, a freelance journalist, was an "ardent jazz fan", while another journalist, Neville Fransman, was instrumental in attempts to form a musicians' union in the 1960s. See Billie Daniels interview, 2/4/1992, and Zelda Benjamin interview, 19/11/1991.

[46]See J. Coker, Listening to Jazz, New York, 1986. Coltrane was influential in local jazz circles, and Winston Mankunku's critically acclaimed recording, Yakhal' Inkomo, betrayed evidence of his style. Ian Cameron interview, 29/7/1991.

still do it.[47]

For all this, experimentation and the development of technical competence in a group context became the rationale behind a new aesthete consciousness of musical performance. For African musicians from the 1950s, the development of jazz as an informal musical craft was a musically liberating experience.[48]

In one important sense, maintaining group stability, or finding work, became less important than the development of jazz musical competence. For example, pianist, Chris MacGregor, maintained that he accepted the dispersal of former groups with 'only moderate regret' because of preoccupations with more personally challenging musical tests.[49]

Cumulatively, the work of African musicians in Langa, and efforts to transcend the conservatism of Coloured dance band music performance, all provided an impetus for the Cape jazz boom which lasted from the late 1950s to the early 1960s. The availability of liberal urban space in the city centre and in smaller pockets such as community centres in African and Coloured townships, provided physical space and a measure of

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[47]Ezra Ngcukana in R. Gassert, 'Bop Till You Drop', pp.49-50.

[48]For example, see the description of Kippie Moeketsi by Ntemi Piliso in Vrye Weekblad, 21/2/1992.

[49]C. MacGregor, 'Personal background: from an application for a cultural grant', The Classic, 1,4 1965, p.19.

political sanctuary.

The progressive jazz movement also fostered an ideology of artistic integrity and authenticity.[50] This was justified by derogatory reference to the trappings of 'musical and variety shows', and straight commercial bands, where the work was less demanding musically.[51] For instance, Chris MacGregor advocated an inherent non-racialism in his musical practice which purported to emanate from his 'musical instincts', insisting, 'My musical instincts must decide what, how and with whom I play.'[52] As a young music student in the 1950s and 1960s, MacGregor broke away from the traditional higher education of university music studies and started experimenting with jazz with a seriousness of purpose:

> I began to form amateur jazz groups with fairly serious intent ... When I started working with 'Cup and saucer' Nanuka, the great Cape Town tenor saxophonist, and other local jazz musicians, I realised that we had a common ground in the folk songs I had been aware of from childhood.[53]

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[50]The 'artistic' identity of African jazz was celebrated in Black South African literature, especially in the 1960s and 1970s. In particular, African jazz and 'the blues' became a Black cultural motif, canonised particularly in the work of Mongane Serote, Bloke Modisane and Es'kia Mphahlele. See J. Jacobs, 'The Blues: an Afro-American matrix for Black South African writing', English in Africa, 16,2 1988.

[51]C. MacGregor, 'Personal background', pp.15-19.

[52]C. Macgregor, 'Personal background', p.16.

[53]C. MacGregor, 'Personal background', p.17.

Some artists consciously used inspirations from everyday life in performance practice. For example, attributes such as tremolo ornamentation which had been a hallmark of the Cape dance band saxophone players became fledgling elements of a regional style of Cape jazz, using traditional African and Cape stylistic concepts.[54]

[54]In particular, this became a trademark of the tenor saxophonist Basil Coetzee. This particular influence has been ascribed to the sound made by the fish horn which fish sellers in District Six used to advertise their wares. Personal communication with Vincent Kolbe at Cape Town History Workshop, 12/11/1991. Suggestively, in another context, the ethnomusicologist Gerhard Kubik observed a tendency among Malawian kwela musicians to devise musical responses to phenomena occurring in the urban environment, such as traffic lights; see his The Kachamba Brothers' Band: A Study of Neo-Traditional Music in Malawi, Zambian Papers 9, University of Zambia, 1974, and 'Donald Kachamba's montage recordings: aspects of urban music history in Malawi', African Urban Studies 6, 1980.

'Swinging' Professionals in the 1950s and 1960s

However, while most postwar Coloured professionals were at a remove from this developing jazz culture, an alternative Coloured professional jazzing subculture was emerging on the basis of an apolitical identity. This subculture had no declared relation to any oppositional political tendencies; nor did it relate directly to the African intellectual influences and musical styles which were emerging from townships such as Langa into public view in Cape Town club culture.[55]

For example, during 1945, the Palace bioscope in Salt River housed a Coloured social club called the Super Mouse Club which ran community oriented activities such as good deed competitions. Its members drew on American jazz symbolism by, for example, adopting terms such as Hi De Hi -- part of the vocabulary of the illustrious American jazz musician Cab Calloway.[56]

Also, in the mid-1950s, the St. Johns Bop Club was active in Waterkant Street, Cape Town:

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[55]A number of precedents for this type of jazz club had existed. In fact, such clubs were not peculiar to Cape Town. Sophiatown's 'culturally self-conscious', American oriented elite had taken steps to support local jazz by forming the Sophiatown Modern Jazz Club in 1955. See D. Coplan, In Township Tonight, p.171.

[56]Cape Standard, 3/4/1945. For a comparative study of jazz subcultures in Europe during the Second World War, see R. Willet, 'Hot swing and the dissolute life: youth style and popular music in Europe 1939-49', Popular Music 8,2 1989.

> there used to be a church below the basement ... there was ... membership [requirements] ... when this new bop beat came out, we played the [American] symbols you see. Its a new kind of feel and the older musicians couldn't get into this.[57]

Moreover, the St. Johns Club membership was:

> not sort of elitist, but swingy, a swinging professional. There was the conservative professional who still had ties with churches of the old ways. We were the breakaways.[58]

This hipster breakaway avoided overt political engagement and in fact constructed a formative subcultural identity as a consciously educated jazz elite. Rockers were condemned as 'mechanics' and 'uneducated', while political intellectuals -- whom Kolbe referred to as the 'NUM types' -- were parodied as stiff professionals who were 'into Keats, Shelley ... and Bach.'[59]

The urban sophistication of jazz was free of inherited political associations. Local indigenous styles were also rejected:

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[57]Vincent Kolbe interview, WCOHP, 03/06/1990.

[58]Vincent Kolbe interview, WCOHP, 03/06/1990. "Churches of the old ways" is a figurative expression, similar in meaning to "the old school."

[59]Vincent Kolbe interview, WCOHP, 03/06/1990.

> We would scoff at the 'peasant' [kwela, vastrap and langarm] music of the locals ... as we considered ourselves superior.[60]

The classic distinction was not so much between art music and popular music as that between 'hip vs hick'[61] -- between the 'bucolicity' of indigenous music on the one hand, and music and styles that drew on urban American symbolism on the other. The critic Andrew Ross articulately defined the term 'hip':

> To be hip ... was to ... possess a certain kind of knowledge, not legitimately acquired ... but linked to the practices of high art and scholarship through a respectful but mock imitation of their institutions.[62]

Thus, jazz produced two major local schools of thought: namely, the aesthetes and their concern to forge an indigenous jazz idiom, and the swinging professionals who emphasised its social cache and entertainment value.

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[60]Vincent Kolbe in R. Gassert, 'Bop Till You Drop', p.26.

[61]Coined by C. Waterman, Jùjú: A Social History, p.14.

[62]See A. Ross, No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture, New York, 1989, p.81.

The rise of showbiz, consumerism and the informal entertainment industry in the 1960s

Cumulative pressures operated on fledgling South African jazz. In the Western Cape, racial legislation, commercial development in the entertainment industry, and rising consumer demand for recorded music imported from America and Britain, all had a constricting impact on the new form. These eventually had the effect of driving jazz initiative out of the city as many musicians either retired, went into professional and political exile, or adopted other emerging styles of music.

Predictably, the aesthete jazz movement made little impact on popular culture among working class communities during the 1960s. In broad terms, live music which was popular with the working classes, such as that associated with the coons and Malay choirs, remained untouched by Black intellectual culture. Traditionally, popular audience demand favoured dance music, while the politically aware middle classes also sought cultural upliftment through pursuit of the best of European high art.[63]

Here, by the mid-1960s, only the Eoan Group had been consistently active as a model for the development of elite

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[63]Gerald Stone has asserted that "the Coon mocks 'the Coloured man' in general (including the protesting Coloured middle class) for the entertainment of, inter alia, the respectable White adjudicators and spectators." G. Stone, 'The Coon carnival', p.33.

Coloured performance. While political and commercial control over the coon carnival was in the hands of speculators such as liquor store owners,[64] the Eoan group continued touchy links with the municipality and the Coloured Persons' Representative Council (CPRC). Such politically contentious patronage and control weakened the position of such performing bodies.

The Group Areas Amendment Act of 1950 aggravated this general cultural decline. The jazz boom had survived temporarily in an atmosphere of relative civic tolerance towards mixed social activity, with many jazz concerts taking place in halls as licensed clubs became segregated. It was one way people could 'defy the new legislation.'[65] But its basis was always fragile.

For Cape Town's laissez faire atmosphere was tenuous, even at its height, and was short lived. As the boom petered out, musicians -- and other entertainment workers -- had to either find ways of circumventing obstacles to their work activities, or bear the indignities which sometimes accompanied them. The case of Winston Mankunku is instructive:

> When we were playing as a trio for a stripper they put up a curtain in front of the band because we weren't allowed

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[64]The carnival has a long history of rivalry between different controlling authorities or 'boards'. These boards were staffed with tailors, sports administrators and bottle store owners. See G. Stone, 'The Coon carnival', pp.4-6.

[65]Vincent Kolbe interview, WCOHP, August 1988.

> to see the stripper who was White. With Winston we played at a concert where we were all on stage and he had to play from behind a curtain [because he was African]. This happened in one of those bloody townhalls somewhere, I can't remember.[66]

The position of African musicians in the changing performance culture was naturally even more precarious than that of their Coloured counterparts. Hence, Winston Mankunku's experience is a testimony to deft adaptation in an increasingly restrictive situation. Mankunku's name appeared in local newspapers as the tenor saxophonist at the Cape Art Centre during 1967. But identity was subtly fluid. Depending on the racial classification of the venue, his appearance would be billed as Winston Mann -- in a White venue such as a hotel -- or Mankunku -- if he was appearing at a Black venue such as the Langa Community Centre.

Even within these racial confines, the distinction between popular entertainment and culture shifted to accommodate the new political order. In 1965, White impresario Ronnie Quibell suggested that his Luxurama theatre in Wynberg had been opened as a theatre to promote Coloured playwrights in the longer term, and as an entertainment centre only in the short term. He expressed disappointment that the Eoan Group did not use

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[66]Musician Monty Weber in R. Gassert 'Bop Till You Drop', p.53.

the venue but instead had stayed at the City Hall. [67]

The closing of Group Areas legislative loopholes in the later 1960s eventually forced Quibell to cease staging live shows for non-segregated audiences and run the theatre mainly as a Coloured cinema.[68] In turn, the Cape Herald clamoured for the Cape Performing Arts Board to petition the Cape Provincial Administration to fund the cultural potential of the Luxurama theatre. For a time, it had previously been the centre of a thriving showbiz enterprise which involved the contracting of international musicians such as Percy Sledge and Adam Faith to visit South Africa. Despite consistent displeasure from the government, the venue hosted a series of multiracial music activities during the 1960s, until Group Areas tightened its grip.

Liberal spaces in the city itself afforded limited provision where a small number of Coloured jazz musicians worked in White establishments. In the early 1960s, groups such as the Four Sounds played mostly in townhalls while there was little club work available. At the same time, Coloured jazz clubs, such as the Zambezi club in Upper Darling Street, thrived, with White customers having to come in clandestinely. Decorated with bamboos and palm trees, the Zambezi was favoured by a number of musicians because of the more serious

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[67] Cape Herald, 15/5/1965.

[68] Cape Herald, 15/5/1965.

jazz audiences it attracted.[69]

Inevitably, this musical culture was destined to be driven out of the inner city by larger urban population removals. Moreover, the jazz boom had remained confined largely to middle class professionals and intellectuals; in the teeth of displacing pressures, its subcultural character could not be translated into a popular radical defiance of pressures to squash non-conformist cultural tradition. And in the city, the CMA's monopoly of the professional establishment (municipal and state-sponsored), narrowed work opportunity for former jazz boom musicians to those existing within the new liquor-related amateur entertainment establishment.

The recently-confected new night clubs which had sustained the flurry of jazz activity, such as the Vortex, Zambezi and Mermaid, closed, while others such as the Naaz and Ambassador were limited to Sunday jazz sessions. The Ambassador, which had flourished for five years as the hub of the jazz boom, hit especially hard times, with some musicians rejecting association with what was seen as a moral decline into unsavoury activity at the club, such as drug dealing and prostitution.[70]

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[69]Zelda Benjamin interview, 19/11/1991.

[70]See Vincent Kolbe in R. Gassert, 'Bop Till You Drop', p.37. Owners of these clubs were often politically conspicuous individuals and some, such as Abie Housak, received banning orders from the state in this period.

Under these conditions, the sale and promotion of liquor and tobacco became the conspicuous basis of a promotional entertainment industry.[71] Access to the liquor trade, including access to liquor, lounges, restaurant establishments and hotels was extended to Coloured small businessmen in 1963, and licensed Coloured-owned night clubs also emerged during this period.[72] By 1968, there were nearly 40 licensed Coloured sales premises in South Africa, the lion's share of these in the Western Cape.[73]

The Stellenbosch Farmers' Winery Lieberstein show, and the Lieberstein 'Follies', was a large scale promotion which used a new touring variety format, in the wake of the 1950s musical, King Kong, which had inspired a series of touring cabaret companies run by 'showbiz' impresarios. Companies such as the Golden City Dixies, the Golden City Follies, and African Jazz and Variety were active in the 1950s and 1960s.

The gaudy Lieberstein promotion -- Lieberstein was the brand name of a cheap wine -- was targeted mainly at Coloured working class audiences, provided free of charge and offered a mixture of jazz, coon songs, beat, mime and ballet.

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[71]The role of liquor regulation on the working lives of professional African musicians was stressed by Duke Ngcukana. Personal communication with Duke Ngcukana, 11/2/1991.

[72]The Malan Commission of Enquiry into General Distribution and Selling Prices of Alcoholic Liquor, UG. 55/60, 1960, recommended the establishment of licensed hotels for Coloureds, and went as far as to recommend the discretionary desegregation of White hotels for Coloureds.

[73]Cape Herald, 7/9/1968.

Accomplished musicians such as vocalist Zelda Benjamin, worked extensively with the Lieberstein Follies in the 1960s and also appeared briefly with the African Follies in African Jazz and Variety.[74]

An air of amateur competition was also central to much of the new commercial performance culture, in which touring variety shows staged items such as 'Challenge '67' to attract large audiences. This vehicle was billed as 'the biggest war in the history of non-White showbusiness' and involved two entertainment companies, Alfred Herbert's African Jazz and Variety, and Fred Langford's Golden City Follies.[75]

The new platform for musical performance enjoyed brief success and foreshadowed liquor industry patronage of Cape Flats night clubs of the following decade. And emerging from the variety concert format, the concept of cabaret became a key attraction of the later night club culture of the 1970s.

British and American beat music also spread rapidly after the mid-1960s, with beat groups having gained popularity in African and Coloured townships in earlier years. For example, an African beat group called the Volcanoes, was established in Langa in 1960 by Joe Saban, a local impresario.[76]

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[74]Zelda Benjamin interview, 19/11/1991.

[75]Cape Herald, 25/2/1967.

[76]See Cape Herald 10/12/1966.

Elsewhere, there were new directions too. In one such instance, after the jazz boom, the owner of the Ambassador found new ways to sustain his business. Modelling the identity of his club against the American Hugh Hefner's 'Bunny Clubs, he turned to novelty entertainments, in which subcultural opposition between mods and rockers became a novel part of its night club culture.[77] Significantly, a diverse Coloured clientele participated, ranging from petty bourgeois teachers, drug pedlars and prostitutes, to working class transvestites.[78]

Understandably, serious African jazz musicians such as Ezra Ngcukana, viewed the diminishing prospects facing them with deepening gloom:

> I had to start playing in rock and roll bands to earn a living. It was horrible ... For black musicians it was also difficult to get work in White clubs ... It was easier for light-skinned [Coloured] musicians... who could claim they were Portuguese or so.[79]

Survival was now coming to depend not just on skin complexion

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[77]Cape Herald, 29/7/1967.

[78]The Cape Herald reported that "One week the patrons come as mods and rockers, the next like Spaniard bullfighters and their senoritas. Or like Victorian ladies and gentlemen." Cape Herald, 29/7/1967.

[79]Ezra Ngcukana in R. Gassert, 'Bop Till You Drop', p.50.

but on Europeanness.[80]

Inevitably, the centre-stage of dance band culture had been transformed from informal social activity centred around dance halls to a liquor-based industry centred on night clubs. By the end of the 1960s, the hotel and lounge industry for Coloureds was booming, with 'more and more Coloured people ... becoming eating out conscious' and as 'music -- mostly progressive jazz -- attained popularity in the past year or so.'[81]

And so, a predominantly Coloured subculture started to supersede the now marginalised non-racial jazz ethos of the early 1960s. In an ugly symbol of this, in the early 1970s, the African jazz enthusiast and musician Duke Ngcukana, was ejected from a Coloured night club in a racial incident.[82]

Naturally, things were not absolutely monolithic. Occasionally, in the earlier 1970s, groups such as Pacific Express consciously expressed an ideological link with Black

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[80]Cape Herald, 24/8/1968. In response to this situation, Coloured jazz musicians set up an action committee in 1968 to draft a constitution for a proposed musicians' union: "All over the country we have organised unions of textile workers, engineering workers, teachers, sports bodies. But in the field of showbusiness - nothing." All such attempts were unsuccessful.

[81]Cape Herald, 29/3/1969. This claim was made by Andy Wichman, the manager of the Beverly night club in Athlone.

[82]Personal communication with Vincent Kolbe, 12/11/1991.

Consciousness.[83] Elsewhere, the Four Sounds articulated a sense of the re-invention of jazz on the press statement announcing the pending release of their first record:

> Our [album] contains our own compositions and is dedicated to the people of District Six, to picture musically their fears and frustrations, their moments of joy and their moments of sorrow. Our lp is also aimed at reviving the scene -- the jazz scene -- which has, perhaps, wilted a bit in recent times.[84]

The album featured song names reminiscent of the District, such as 'Katrina' and 'Seven Steps Lament'. Also, 'Up from Slavery' was evidently named after the Black American novel of the same title.[85]

In sum, since the 1930s, dance and jazz performance at the Cape developed within discrete traditional, political and social boundaries. These were in turn marked by wider social, political and economic changes. Performance events such as radio broadcasts, social dances, glittering receptions, or experimental jazz performances either became part of the intensely political climate of the postwar years, or served as

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[83] Argus 9/5/1970.

[84] Cape Herald, 9/8/1969.

[85] As John Western asserted, the District Six removals destroyed one of the symbols of whatever Coloured identity may have existed, "a space in parts at least seven generations deep and one with associations with the emancipation of the slaves." J. Western, Outcast Cape Town, p.150.

a diversion, in which participants opted for the glamour and social glitter offered by forms of American jazz. Within this, indigenous jazz had a short but notable existence in Cape Town.

In the next chapter, we shift focus from the limits and opportunities which governed the working lives of Black performers, to consider the activity of music-making viewed from the inside. For this, we turn now to the story of Jimmy Adams and other traditional bandleaders.

CHAPTER SIX: BANDLEADERS AND APPRENTICES, THE TIMES OF JIMMY ADAMS, c.1945-1965

This chapter explores something of the world of dance musicians and bandleaders at the Cape in the postwar years, a world revolving around the enterprise of performing local and American dance music, American jazz and African jazz. We examine this from the touchstone of personal experience, by focusing on oral biographical evidence on the career of a unique musician, Jimmy Adams, and others of his ilk.

Jimmy Adams was born in 1929 in District Six, Cape Town.[1] As a young musician, he was primed in the traditionalist world of Coloured dance music, but started to experiment with American jazz at the end of the Second World War. Additionally, he had fraternal contact with African jazz musicians, with whom he exchanged ideas. From these beginnings, Adams endeavoured to develop new innovations in dance band music. In fact, he influenced the musical orientation of a number of his peers and younger apprentices. In this, his authority was extended by the influence which he enjoyed as a bandleader. Adams's career spanned an initial period as a novice in the 1940s, a phase as a bandleader in the 1950s, and subsequent periods

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[1]Often conspicuous by his plastic saxophone, Adams was colourful and charismatic in his youth. He had a reputation for 'fast living' and a 'no-nonsense' attitude to dance hall tsotsis (petty gangsters). For example, at a night club in the 1950s, an intoxicated Adams threw down a death-defying challenge to a gun-toting tsotsi to pull the trigger on him. Fortunately for Adams, and for posterity, the gunman backed down. Cliffie Moses address at Cape Town History Workshop oral history event, 12/11/1991.

holding down various jobs in the informal entertainment industry.

In Adams's testimony, a sense of the convergence between traditional dance music, American ideas and images, and the new indigenous jazz is apparent. In his performance life, he sought to blend American swing and African jazz -- with its innovative freshness -- on the one hand, with traditional Coloured dance music on the other. To achieve this, he had to impress enthusiastically upon audiences and musicians that he was involved with concepts which were exciting and original. By virtue of such efforts to modify attitudes towards traditional Coloured dance music, and indeed, attitudes to African performance, Adams was an agent of micro-cultural change. In a sense, his story seemed to prefigure the successes of the jazz aesthetes in the late 1950s and early 1960s, some of whom developed from being local Cape musicians to innovators of a broader South African jazz idiom.

Performance and Biography

On this basis, the present discussion re-asserts the usefulness of biography in establishing the role of individuals as significant agents in changing tradition. While 'biography can depict individuals confronting, creating and making history and culture,'[2] it can also restore

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[2]J. Modell, 'Stories and strategies: the use of personal statements', International Journal of Oral History 4,1 1983, pp.4-11.

individual experience to the story of a community and is therefore particularly pertinent to Cape Town community history.[3] More broadly, oral history can represent connections between broader social change and individual experience.

Specifically, anecdotes in present biographical narrative are particularly useful in enabling the historian to probe the creative processes of performers. Most importantly, musical processes can also be portrayed as an integral part of local history, which can include evocation of the social world constructed by individual musicians,[4] and the meanings and nuances of urban cultural formation.[5]

Moreover, biographical evidence can help in our understanding of cultural change. In Africa, as Robert Kauffman has asserted, the interplay between tradition and innovation has often been readily apparent in urban music.[6] By integrating

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[3]See for example, B. Nasson, 'The oral historian and historical formation in Cape Town', in C. Saunders et. al. (eds.), Studies in the History of Cape Town 6, 1988, UCT, pp.16-17.

[4]See H. Becker, 'The professional jazz musician and his audience', in R. Denisoff, and R. Petersen (eds.), The Sounds of Social Change: Studies in Popular Culture, Chicago, 1972 for a useful discussion of 'social' and 'subcultural' aspects of jazz performance from the point of view of musicians.

[5]B. Nasson, 'The oral historian and historical formation in Cape Town', in C. Saunders et. al. (eds.), Studies in the History of Cape Town 6, 1988, UCT, pp.16-17; and T. Sideris, 'Recording living memory in South Africa: the need for oral history in South Africa', Critical Arts 4,2 1986.

[6]R. Kauffman, 'Tradition and innovation in the music of urban Zimbabwe', African Urban Studies 6, 1980, p.42.

life history with the history of performance the latter can be viewed with new perspectives. It can ensure that related categories such as tradition and change, 'can ... [be] ... captured in 'perpetual growth and decay.'[7]

This dynamic characteristic of oral history also enables the historian to distinguish between recollections of individual ephemera, and more abiding forms of evidence which embody social experience. Oral historians may avoid the trappings of generic nostalgia, and trivia by actively collaborating with informants in the description of vital experience.[8]

Finally, biography can serve a valuable function in reconstructing the specific history of performance since it depicts relationships between broader social change and individual agency. Here, studies of urban African popular music have seldom explored 'the dialectic of individual creativity, cultural aesthetics and collective processes of music making.'[9] In general, research has tended to eschew a

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[7]P. Thompson, 'Life histories and the analysis of social change', in D. Bartaux (ed.), Biography and Society (London, 1981), p.289.

[8]L. Shopes, 'Beyond trivia and nostalgia: collaborating in the construction of a local history', International Journal of Oral History 5,3 1984.

[9]V. Erlmann, 'A conversation with Joseph Shabalala', p.31. Also, see R. Joseph, 'Zulu women's bow songs: ruminations on love', Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies 1,1 1987, for a brief study of aspects of creative subjectivity.

focus on individual musicians and composers.[10] Yet, aspects of performance, of creativity, and the defining of 'aesthetically acceptable and plausible models of society',[11] are integrally both social and individual. In this sense, a life can help to make explicit the place of individual agency in transforming cultural traditions.

Bandleaders and the Social Organisation of Performance in Coloured Dance Bands since the late 1930s

As Jimmy Adams operated in a particular work ethos among Cape musicians, we now need to outline aspects of the organisational structure of Cape dance music, and consider aspects of ethnicity in the performance of that dance music.

At the centre of most traditional dance bands was the bandleader. Bandleaders typically exercised authority by virtue of one or more of the following: experience, musical competence, ownership of instruments, and patriarchal status.[12] Generally, Cape bandleaders had either graduated

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[10]V. Erlmann, 'A conversation with Joseph Shabalala', p.32.

[11]V. Erlmann, 'A conversation with Joseph Shabalala', p.31.

[12]Comparatively, as dance bands on the Rand attracted larger audiences, these functions were assumed by 'managers' who sought financial gain from them. For example, in the 1950s, the manager of the Sharptown Swingsters owned musical instruments but could not play himself. He would hire the band out and collect between 70 and 80 percent of the takings. See I. Jeffrey, '"Their Will to Survive": A Socio-Historical study of the Sharptown Swingsters', BA(Hons) Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1985, p.47.

through older bands or were those who had started gaining reputations as soloists. For example, Stan Lombard won local acclaim in 1945 as a solo pianist with a 'pleasing Bill Mayer style.'[13] This provided a basis for Lombard to form his own band.[14]

In Cape Town, a tradition of masculine succession developed in dance bands during the early twentieth century. Christmas bands, Malay choirs and coon troupes offered formative musical experiences for young boys aspiring to become amateur and semi-professional musicians. These groups were often organised around skill relationships between fathers and sons; for example, Eddie George joined a coon troupe when very young, as his father ran a 'klopse kamer' (literally coon room) for a troupe known as the Diamond Eyes, with Mr Fati Abraham, an old Muslim performer, the captain.[15] In District Six, troupe captains in the coons, bandleaders and choirleaders enjoyed an informal respect and authority.[16]

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[13]Cape Standard, 15/5/1945.

[14]Lombard, in turn, switched to the piano accordion to make way for a new upstart pianist, Henry February. The latter subsequently won acclaim as a Coloured jazz pianist. Cape Standard, 25/9/1945.

[15]Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 03/05/1990. He encountered banjo, violin and mandolin players here. The 'klopse kamer' was a generic term for the headquarters of the coon troupe, where planning meetings, rehearsals and other preparation took place.

[16]For example, the troupe captain had powers which included the dispensing of funds, hiring decisions and general well-being of his charges. See G. Stone 'The Coon carnival', pp.4-8.

Musicians in traditional dance bands generally held day-time jobs, and were drawn from blue collar and clerical occupations. Eddie George worked variously as a librarian with the City Council and as a truck driver for a removal company by day. He was also a Christmas band musician, a church musician and a dance band musician. The Christmas band was called on to perform at religious social gatherings such as confirmation and baptism parties, and church social events. Despite the seasonality of the Christmas bands, musical work had a weekly calender.[17]

For many, the distinction between music-making as potential vocation and as pure leisure was very slender. Yet, there was often a semi-professional component to performing in dance bands, and these work opportunities, though limited, were also regulated. Alf Wylie, an elite bandleader in Cape Town in the 1940s, acted as an employment agent and had the power to allocate work. He was also commissioned by record companies for recordings made by local dance bands. Wylie owned a barber shop and ran his informal agency from here. He also ran a number of dance bands himself, with these being re-formed annually when the Christmas and New Year bands and choirs had stopped for the year:

> There was never a shortage of work ... there we find, 'Eddie you playing tonight? Listen man I've got a job for you ...' They give me the phone number ... we ring

[17]Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990.

> the people up ... Alfie was actually the man there ... He used to have all the jobs for us.[18]

The choice of musical instrument was also significant, in so far as musicians who played certain types of instruments, such as saxophones or guitars, were more sought after than others. Naturally, bandleaders often played the lead instrument in a group. In dance performance, evolution was also brought about by the adoption of key instruments associated with jazz. The influence of this jazz symbolism and aesthetics came from diverse sources, with Cape Town itself important in the sense that its varied musical character determined particular musical choices.

Apart from being a port city, Cape Town had a cosmopolitan urban centre in the shape of District Six,[19] which exposed local musicians to a range of influences and musical ideas. For example, vocalist and guitarist Cliffie Moses, born in 1937 in District Six, remembered individuals such as Baart -- a singer with a distinctive style who used to sing on the street. He also remembered a Jose, whose father had introduced a young Moses to progressive chords.[20]

The shifting use of particular instruments also suggests a

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[18]Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990.

[19]See B. Nasson, 'Oral history and the reconstruction of District Six', p.63.

[20]Cliffie Moses interview, 19/11/1991.

dimension of change in dance band music. As a typical case, Moses chose the guitar -- in his case a Hohner 'f-holed' jazz guitar -- in an interwar context where the instrument was beginning to represent an admired vogue. By the late 1930s, it was evident that guitars were being paraded as a more respectable instrument as opposed to the banjo. Thus, when the Cape Standard announced a banjo competition at the Star bioscope in 1938, banjo was linked to old fashioned jigs, with the guitar, 'being a more dignified instrument.'[21]

The musical ambitions of bandleaders, and indeed of most musicians, were nurtured at a young age through access to learning materials and instruments. This was obviously important to the development of young musicians who would later assume the jazz mantle. In the 1950s, the young Cliffie Moses was at the St. Phillips Social Club in District Six, where his interest in jazz was kindled through Charlie Parker, the acknowledged hero of jazz, even for guitarists. Moses, a guitarist and vocalist, learnt his practical guitar skills from Jose and the Bill Trigham guitar book.[22] Like a number of other young Coloured jazz musicians, Moses would later count Jimmy Adams as a significant influence on his interest in the music.

Another bassist and guitarist of this era, Gary Kriel, slipped into dance music as a beneficiary of the Mayor's charitable

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[21]Cape Standard 25/10/1938.

[22]Cliffie Moses interview, 19/11/1991.

work. Born in 1939, he was already playing the guitar ably at the age of six. At his Maitland Cottage Orphanage home in Garden Village, the city mayor would customarily bring gifts for children at Christmas. In one particular year, Kriel's gift was a guitar, and he immediately started teaching himself to play. By the age of 12, he was playing in his first dance band.[23] Thus, the generational context of musical transmission was firmly entrenched in formative experience of popular music in the city.

Whatever the spread of the guitar, the key instrument in jazz and dance band music was undoubtedly the saxophone. For, despite growing recognition of the guitar as a respectable instrument, the saxophone emerged as the most popular and exciting fronting instrument. Self-evidently, the American saxophone virtuoso, Charlie Parker, influenced a local fashion among South African jazz musicians, with many adopting both his style of playing and his instrument -- the alto saxophone.[24] This became an important drawcard at dance hall events; in fact, it became such an icon that one clarinet player, Mattie Van Niekerk, used the instrument as an ornamental showpiece when performing, even though he could not play it:

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[23]Gary Kriel interview, 19/11/1991. By a coincidence exiled saxophonist Harold Jeptha, of Kolbe's 'Holy Cross' anecdote, also grew up in the same home. See Cape Standard, 19/6/1945.

[24]The most well known South African Charlie Parker prodigy in Cape Town was Kippie Moeketsi but the city also produced Dennis Combrink and Harold Jeptha.

> he was still in clarinet. He never played the saxophone. Even as he was sitting there he only had that sax as a kind of a, you know, front ... but you [could] see [that his instrument was] this clarinet.[25]

Playing the saxophone as the lead instrument demanded a real measure of musical competence. Accordingly, Eddie George paid Davy May, the bandleader of Mr May Daveman's Novelty Band,[26] for saxophone lessons. While Davy May could read, he was not sighted:

> [sight reading] wasn't the in thing to do ... But ... he did teach me how to read staff notation because it was necessary for transposing ... but I wasn't interested in that. I was interested in the type of dance band music that we were playing ... that was my biggest mistake. I was there with him a good couple of months and then I could read music but not first sight. I had to go write it down first.[27]

Racial Perceptions of Musical Performance

Two examples suggest how ethnicity and race had an impact upon the activities of Black performers. First, a distinct sense

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[25]The instrument became a badge of male proficiency, and saxophonists were especially 'popular' with women in the audiences. Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990.

[26]See Cape Standard, 10/6/47.

[27]Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990.

of differentiation between Coloured and White musicians was tangible in perceptions of field of performance. Added to this, Coloured dance band musicians also displayed a sense of differentness towards African counterparts in the realm of making music. Secondly, the denial of access to adequate resources for many Black musicians also fed racial perceptions of Black performance; and this in turn was illustrated in Black musicians' attitudes towards musical literacy and towards White audiences.

Within this framework, Adams's activities highlighted another dimension of the presence of African jazz for Coloured dance band musicians and audiences. Postwar big band mbaqanga jazz was subject to much musical change in the 1940s and 1950s, and opportunities existed for contact to be made between proponents of different band traditions. As Christopher Ballantine has suggested, this was a time of 'astonishing innovation' in African big band music.[28] Even in Cape Town, it provided a context for Jimmy Adams's maverick excursions into African jazz; these, in turn, served to flout the racial order of musical performance in the city.

We know in general terms that a limited amount of contact existed between African musicians and dance band musicians in District Six. Eddie George, for instance, sat in with African

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[28]See C. Ballantine, 'From marabi to exile: a brief history of black jazz in South Africa', in A. Tracey (ed.), Papers presented at the Sixth Symposium on Ethnomusicology, Rhodes University, 1987, pp.2-5.

bands in District Six in the 1950s, accompanied by an African musician called Stormy. At the same time, the strong jazz influence in this music was difficult for dance musicians such as Eddie George to dabble in or assimilate. They 'were too rooted in their traditional stuff'[29] and struggled to make the transition. On the other hand, as George recalls, there were Africans who assimilated smoothly into Coloured styles:

> We were playing, you know, some of our commercials and our quadrilles ... There was only one chappie ... he was the only African that played in a Coloured band ... ou Alf Wylie's band ... That ou could have played for you. You'll never think he was an African, you know, the way he played the music, our music ... vastrap and all that you know.[30]

Alf Wylie occasionally engaged African dance band musicians, who were sometimes seen as quaint outsiders and hired cheaply to do novelty jive items:

> the black guys from the District ... would get paid less. Apart from the normal standard big band styles, those guys would play novel black and jive numbers.[31]

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[29]Vincent Kolbe interview, WCOHP, August 1988.

[30]Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990.

[31]Vincent Kolbe in R. Gassert, '"Bop Till You Drop": An Oral Study of Popular Musical Cultures in Cape Town, from the late 1940s to the early 1960s', History III Long Paper, UCT, 1988, p.27.

Diba, which exposed Coloured musicians in District Six to a distinct African performance idiom, clearly influenced such performance contacts.[32] Yet, despite apparent stylistic similarity, Coloured musicians tended to regard their dance bands as ethnically unique, owing to inherited langarm and vastrap components. Indigenous jazz influences were regarded as African, with most Coloured dance musicians being exposed to it only through diba.

Negotiating ethnically understood stylistic change was not the only problem that musicians such as Eddie George had to face. The members of the Merry Macks, for example, were known for their versatility in switching between jazz and ballroom music.[33] Indeed, analogous to the cutting contest of American jazz subcultures, a musician's skill was most relentlessly tested in the ability to read music or to negotiate musical problems in practical situations such as those presented by the big bands:

> I was a bit slow on the uptake with the [first-sight] reading. I practised a couple of times with them and I just couldn't get the hang of it so I chucked again.[34]

With the exception of a small minority with access to private

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[32]Cliffie Moses interview, 19/11/1991

[33]R. Molapo, 'Identity, Popular Culture and Politics in Langa in the 1960s', BA(Hons) Thesis, UCT, 1991., pp.41-46.

[34]Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990.

lessons, informal educational networks were the main educational tool in fostering an indigenous jazz culture in Cape Town. Such informal instruction also fed racial perceptions about Black musical performance, through drawing on notions of innate ability.

In short, scattered musical instruction became a vehicle for urban myths about black performance and creativity. A tacit notion of black musical primitivism was sometimes evident among White audiences, for whom the lack of formal musical training was a prerequisite for an authentic jazz performance.[35] Characteristically, Jimmy Adams recalls an anecdote at a White wedding:

> I played at a place one day ... This one guy ... conducted the orchestra in the City Hall ... And there was a wedding, ... And he politely came up to the stage and he came to look at the music and he came to ask, 'is this just for show or are you guys reading it?' You know that type of thing, ja you get it [laughs].[36]

The view was often commonly shared by Black audiences and

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[35]See T. Gioia, The Imperfect Art: Reflections on Jazz and Modern Culture, New York, 1988, pp.19-49 for a pertinent comparison taken from another context. The perceived 'illiteracy' of black musicians has been an important element of their common attraction for White audiences. This mythology attributed a 'primeval' quality to black jazz performers. According to the myth, inspired moments of suspended animation would otherwise be spoilt by the restrictions of musical literacy.

[36]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

musicians as well. Many Black musicians held the belief that Black rhythm and musical sense was not readily appreciated by White audiences. Inevitably, this aspect of musical performance was conflated with dance performance expectations. Eddie George identified White gigs as a meaningful trade term among Coloured and African musicians. At a hotel in Bloubergstrand:

> Eddie Smith ... asked me to come and play [in Milnerton] ... I said: 'no I can never sit and play with these people eating here man, I like the people to dance', you know.[37]

Equally, because these audiences were regarded as being less demanding than Black customers, the White gig could be an attractive, easy option:

> We used to call it a soft trip. I had a nine piece band. But then all right if I play for those Boere then I take about three, [or] four chaps along.[38]

In summary, dance band culture in the 1940s was characterised by a patriarchal tradition of control, a measure of generational continuity, and general stylistic conservatism. Yet, around this, material manifestations of a new postwar jazzing culture also started to emerge, as musical virtuosos

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[37]Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990.

[38]Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990.

such as Charlie Parker and Django Reinhardt became local heroes to a younger generation of musicians. A unique articulation of the new jazz aesthetic and intellectual culture with the old entrenched ethnic patriarchy of dance performance, was ultimately embodied most fully in the work of Jimmy Adams.

Jimmy Adams and Coloured Swing

Jimmy Adams's career as a musician went through a number of phases in the postwar period. First came two spells of tuition, initially with his father and subsequently with Tem Hawker, an African big band mbaqanqa musician, during the 1940s. In the early 1950s, Adams started his own four piece jazz combo and also became involved in progressive jazz circles.[39] Later in the decade, he joined Stan Lombard's elite dance band. Finally, after some years of preparation, he formed 'Jimmy Adams and the Swingsters'. In these transitions, he charted a unique passage from traditional dance bands, to the jazz subculture of the late 1950s and early 1960s. We can therefore trace his career from that of a young novice to a bandleader and an innovator.

Around 1939, at the age of ten, Adams was already a regular

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[39]Such as those at Cliffie Moses's "huge house" in Mowbray. Younger African and Coloured jazz musicians gathered in this manner to develop new pieces, progressive chord forms and other musical work. Cliffie Moses interview 19/11/1991. Later, he worked as a soloist in the 'showbiz' environment of the late-1960s.

member of his father's bands.[40] Arnie Adams led both a Christmas band and an old style dance band which had been operating since at least the early 1930s. Throughout the 1940s, Adams was a banjo player in his father's dance band.[41] While he had a day job, the dance band was a source of extra income.[42] Like bandleader Alf Wylie, Arnie Adams owned a barber shop from where he conducted musical business arrangements during the day.

Jimmy's first encounter with African jazz sparked his proclaimed endeavour to develop a fusion with Coloured dance music. Arnie Adams occasionally staged dance events and, in the mid-1940s, as his son recalls:

> the old man had a non stop ballroom competition in the Sea Point town-hall. I think I must have been about seventeen years old then. Then there was two bands playing there, the old chap's band and a African band ... We played and then this African band got on the stage. But the minute they started off then I told my old chap,

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[40]Young boys were frequently recruited into Christmas bands and dance bands, especially in familial relationships. Gary Kriel also started playing with the Willie Max band at age 12. He remembers that he was paid 2 and 6 or half a crown (25c) for the night. Gary Kriel interview, 19/11/1991.

[41]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992. This band still used a cello and a violin as well.

[42]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992. At 16 years of age, Jimmy got a job at a chemist and worked there during his school years. Later he was a presser, a chauffeur, a driver at a furniture shop, and a carpet layer. At the time of this interview, he was unemployed.

> 'man, that is the music I want to play ...' They were playing a jazz/ballroom style ... but they had [emphasises] harmony ... They had a big band there, they had three saxophones and two trumpets. And this guy's name was Tem Hawker.[43]

The Tem Hawker Band was based in Langa and -- like the Merry Macks -- was modelled on the African big band music for which the Jazz Maniacs had become popular on the Reef.[44] Adams's serious interest in this music was unusual, for the flamboyant big bands in Langa were unfamiliar to the usually conservative Coloured dance musicians. But, as the son of a local bandleader, Adams could use his position to bargain for influence. The arrangement proved to be fruitful for Adams:

> Then I told my dad, 'man, do you know this guy?' He says 'yes he's a friend of mine.' I told him 'well you must talk to this guy man because this is the type of music that I feel I want to play.' And my dad had a barber shop in Salt River. And then one day I came out of school and then this guy was sitting there. And then I spoke to him and said 'man I want to learn this type of music you guys are playing ...' Then he said to me 'well look, we can make a deal. Can you play drums?' Well, that time we were just playing straight drums you know

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[43]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

[44]According to Adams, Tem Hawker died a few years later. Adams remembers him as an incredibly disciplined man, a boxer who only drank milk. Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

> ... for ballroom dancing or whatever. He says to me 'look if you can teach my drummer to play then I'll teach you music.' And that's how I got into the jazz scene.[45]

At roughly seventeen years of age, Jimmy Adams broke with established conventions in his father's dance band. But he encountered stern opposition. Arnie Adams combined paternal authority with the hold of a band leader, as the following episode illustrates:

> I used to borrow a saxophone ... from Langa, then I come practise at home, doing scales and doing runs and riffs ... then the ou says 'what the hell are you playing man', you know. And then he told me one day, 'look if you don't want to play vastraps and squares then I won't buy you a saxophone.'[46]

Adams began to assimilate African tunes heard in Langa in various situations. Throughout, he was more concerned to use this music syncretically than to appropriate it from an intra-cultural perspective. His curiosity was remarkably ordered:

> I used to walk from here to Langa every night to go and learn there ... then you have these barracks where these wild Africans are doing these stamping and things. And I

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[45]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

[46]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

> used to listen to the songs they used to sing. It was quite simple tunes you know. But then I used to come home and arrange these tunes for the big band ... That is how I educated these people here. After a while they didn't even want to listen to a vastrap or anything else.[47]

Here, Adams's self-image was that of a cultural broker, helping to assemble new tastes. In some ways, the jazz subculture of the late 1950s was an 'underground comradeship' among local musicians. Also, while it permitted the exchange of musical ideas across 'traditionally forbidding' racial, musical and geographical barriers, it was strongly patriarchal.[48] Thus, Adams was readily accepted by the masculine toughness of the dance bands of Langa in the 1940s. He performed widely with the Tem Hawker band, while he studied:

> He taught me to read music and I started playing with his band, ... he started me on the saxophone. Well, they had

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[47]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992. Barracks were compulsory accommodation for migrant workers in Langa, but despite very restricted access to family housing units, a sense of cultural identity, such as that of the amagoduka was actively created through maintaining ties with rural performance. See R. Molapo, 'Identity, Popular Culture and Politics', p.23.

[48]L. Dahl, Stormy Weather: The Music And Lives of a Century of Jazzwomen, London, 1984, p.16. "It also bred clannishness and the tendency to set up a closed society-within-a-society." For example, women musicians such as Zelda Benjamin frequently had to endure condescension from some male musicians because of her gender. Zelda Benjamin interview, 19/11/1991.

> quite a few big bands in Langa that time. There was a lot of competition that time ... playing the blues, playing jazz[49]

As the Tem Hawker band performed mostly in Langa in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Jimmy Adams's musical apprenticeship was thus a rather exceptional affair. In essence, he graduated from an African jazz school. In this social milieu, many of the new generation of African jazz musicians were also being schooled -- musicians who would be at the forefront of the non-racial aesthete jazz subculture. The sense of belonging to a creative school provided a strong sense of inheritance for Adams, who typically remembers,

> Me and 'Cups and Saucer' and Ezra's father [Chris 'Columbus' Ngcukana] we came from the same school.[50]

Two fathers of this Langa big band school, 'Cups' Nanuka and Chris 'Columbus', played an important role in initiating the aesthete jazz movement,' as the township became a focal point for the new generation in the early 1960s:

> The jazz sessions took place at the Langa hall and in the mid-sixties, they built community centres all over.

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[49]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

[50]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992. 'Cups and Saucer' Nanuka was a popular jazz tenor saxophonist, cited in the previous chapter in connection with the formative development of aesthetes such as Chris MacGregor.

> Often people like Themba Mathole who was a community worker, would run the centres. He was employed by the council and he was a jazz freak, so of course there was always a venue to jam. This usually happened on Sunday afternoons. You'd have a core band and everybody else would join in.[51]

But, in the Coloured townships, all this was quite unfamiliar, as Adams would discover. After a few years with Hawker, he formed a progressive jazz combo called the Harmony Hits in the early 1950s. But they had a cool reception:

> The worst thing was that we didn't get much work because for the type of music we played people never thought we could play a vastrap ... [But] we never worried about these Afrikaans tunes ... people didn't really go in for hiring us because they thought 'ag these guys can't play dance music they just play jazz.'[52]

He later joined the Stan Lombard band -- playing mostly for elite Coloured audiences. But, he also wanted to start a dance band modelled on the big band jazz idiom, and moreover

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[51]Ezra Ngcukana in R. Gassert, 'Bop Till You Drop', p.49. These sessions were described as 'cutting sessions', which may be defined as a peer performance for musicians "where an experienced player faces a novice on stage and demonstrates in front of an audience the standards the inexperienced player must master to become a peer." See L. Dahl, 'Stormy Weather', p.199.

[52]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992. The pianist Henry February, who had worked with Adams in Stan Lombard's elite dance orchestra, was also a founder member.

one with a particular identity:

> I really wanted to see a Coloured band doing the same thing. I really wanted an all-Coloured orchestra ... I wanted no 'blind' guys there? [laughs] ... they all had to read.[53]

However,

> they weren't interested [in African jazz sounds] in the Coloured areas that time ... when I came on the road, [after being in the Tem Hawker band] some of these Coloured musicians says 'ag jy speel soos n kaffir', you know, that type of thing ... because they didn't have a feel for jazz.[54]

For all this, Jimmy Adams still had to seek literate musicians to produce the richer harmonies of big band music. To find sighted musicians who would be prepared to collaborate patiently in developing his concept, was a tall order. Nevertheless, while working with the Stan Lombard dance band, Adams opened his own music school and started to recruit talented young Coloured musicians with the deliberate purpose of training them for his band. And this inevitably meant breaking old ties of authority with Stan Lombard, his

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[53]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

[54]Literally: "you play like a kaffir." Kaffir is a derogatory racial term referring to Africans. Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

bandleader, and forging his own leadership:

> while I was playing for him, I was coaching these okes, you know ... and he knew I was coaching this band ... and then he told me one evening, 'you know Jimmy man, I want you to take this band as your own' ... But the day when these guys were ready ... then I told Lombard 'look my band is ready I'm playing with my band now ... ' and he's bad friends with me since that time.[55]

It took Adams 'about five years to get them where [he] wanted them.' And then, in the mid-1950s, right out of the practice room, 'we used to practice from Sunday to Sunday, the first gig we had over the air on the SABC in Cape Town.'[56]

Willie Jales was one of the apprentices in the Jimmy Adams Swing band. Previously, he had been a member of Alf Wylie's elite band and joined Jimmy after completing his clarinet and saxophone training. He recalled that it was a 'tremendous privilege' to play in 'Jimmy Adams and the Swingsters', and that 'Jimmy was the daddy of 'middle-of-the-road' jazz during the fifties.' However:

> The Coloured people were not ready for him and so his band was not popular at all. The musicians in his band all became strong jazz musicians ... But there was no

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[55]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

[56]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

> future for jazz in the popular dance scene. Jimmy's band stopped in about 1958/59. I can't remember.[57]

The music of Jimmy Adams and the Swingsters was not readily digested by established dance audiences, and, initially the band found little favour from the dance band establishment. But Adams persevered. In the later 1950s, a dance band competition was run by the St. Johns Ambulance:

> They advertised it as a jazz band contest. And I know I was the only [Coloured] jazz band in Cape Town, and the rest of the bands were all langarm bands. But a strict-tempo ballroom band won me that night. They had a alto sax, a tenor sax and a trumpet. They didn't even play harmony. They all played melody. I was the only jazz band in that hall but I got second prize [laughs].[58]

After the demise of the Jimmy Adams Swing Band at the end of the 1950s, Jimmy embarked on a solo professional career as a musical director with the touring African Jazz and Variety. He spent two years in Johannesburg after the show ended in the early 1960s, a period recalled with both bitterness and nostalgic affection:

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[57]Willie Jales in R. Gassert, 'Bop Till You Drop', p.33. Among Jimmy Adams's young graduates were the popular local pianist Tony Schilder and 'exile' Harold Jeptha.

[58]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992. See also Cape Standard, 31/7/1945.

> Actually we got stranded there that's why I stayed there for two years ... ja those guys dumped us man ... One day I went to this Bantu Men's Social Centre. This guy Kippie Moeketsi, he used to give me a pound every day for food ... I'll never forget that chap.[59]

Adams's protégés did not emulate his innovations. For example, Willie Jales, who started his own band in 1960 called 'Willies Starlight Orchestra', consciously decided that the experimental jazz work of his mentor was not a rewarding proposition. Jales therefore opted to perform 'popular top twenty stuff, but with a difference':

> [Following the] Jimmy Adams style ... our music was very orchestrated, lots of saxophones, two altos and two tenors. In between dance numbers we'd push jazz very subtly. The banjo was definitely out and guitars took over ... eventually becoming electrified ... Rock 'n Roll was taking off but we didn't feel threatened as long as we included it to a small degree in our repertoires. We still catered for the older generation's style of music - ballroom. We just adapted a little and compromised where necessary.[60]

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[59]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

[60]R. Gassert 'Bop Till You Drop', p.34. Other Coloured dance bands such as Ikey Gamba's Dance band, also adapted Adams's concept for dancing. Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

Adams was personally disappointed at Jales's decision to steer clear of the direction the older musician had set him on over years of tuition.[61]

Adams's desire to develop a Coloured musical advance, was based on his belief that Africans had moved in that direction using traditional forms. He was also inspired by advances made by American big band jazz. At the same time, while he directly referred to his musical upbringing in Christmas bands, the coons and langarm bands as part of 'our tradition'[62], he rejected the notion of conventional Coloured traditions. Thus, his experience in the recording studio in the 1960s saw him taking a critical stand on tradition. There, he confronted a well-known musician with whom he was familiar:

> I went to make recordings ... and ... [Gerry Bosman] ... knows my capabilities. So when I came to this recording studio [he] was there. He was the engineer. And when I started playing he told me straight Jimmy you don't sound [Coloured] enough. So what does he want me to sound like? You know what I mean? They want to keep you just there. I made the recording but it was just plain dance music ... no twists and turns ... I was forced to do this because I was out of work that time and I needed money.

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[61]Wille Jales in R. Gassert, 'Bop till you drop', p.35.

[62]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

It just shows you what they expect of you here.[63]

Adams had in fact contested convention, as well as the racial associations that accompanied it. In his perception, Coloured convention had been imported from White Afrikaner tradition via Coloured musicians in Johannesburg.[64] This, in turn, was associated with the stifling of musical progress by Coloureds:

> These vastraps and things, most of the stuff came from Joburg and then the Cape Town guys copied those ... Sonny's Jazz Revellers ... he used to send a lot of recordings up here.[65]

In this same period, the Gallo record company also rejected his African arrangements and compelled him to play vastraps. Shortly afterwards, Spokes Mashiyane had released his records in Cape Town:

> I was so disappointed ... I would have been the first Coloured guy to record African music here ... And he was

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[63]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992. A well-kown White guitarist, and arranger, Gerry Bosman, had been a peer of Adams, and, as Zelda Benjamin recalled, had often mingled with Black musicians at the Ambassador. Zelda Benjamin interview, 19/11/1991. He later joined the White jazz establishment and became the director of the SABC big band. See Argus, 15/10/1973 for a feature on Bosman and his recording work with the SABC.

[64]Eddie George acknowledged the impact which the Johannesburg Coloured dance bands had made locally. See Eddie George interview, 05/03/1990.

[65]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

> playing solo, it wasn't even harmony ... the people went mad ... they wouldn't give me a chance ... So you see we've just been kept down all the time [laughs].[66]

For Adams in the final analysis it all boiled down to the issue of Coloured particularism and its unfavourable prospects.

In outline, this chapter has considered the world of dance musicians and bandleaders at the Cape in the postwar years, drawing on fragments of oral biography to establish the role of individuals, particularly bandleaders, as agents in adapting or changing tradition. That tradition flowed through the postwar world of dance musicians, of efforts to secure engagements, and of learning to master particular instruments. That world was also bounded by the role of ethnicity in the activities and relations of musicians. Through this, we have tried to present a glimpse of a unique individual's efforts to change some of the fundamental conventions which underpinned the local tradition of dance band music.

As part of a larger patchwork, Jimmy Adams's story has demonstrated a focused pursuit of new musical directions. While he certainly did have his own racial preconceptions, Adams pursued his musical aspirations in the face of traditional, political and material constraints. His sense that he was doing something beyond the ordinary is best

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[66]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

illustrated by his personalised and impassioned epigram to his musical creativity:

> Arranging for a big band is like painting a picture ... Once you've arranged something and you get your guys sitting, playing there ... well you can feel it, I really feel it.[67]

[67]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to demonstrate that the social, cultural, and economic history of this region's dance and jazz performance at the Cape can deepen our understanding of aspects of this region's history. Music-making, traced from the inside, can reveal illuminating categories of social and political behaviour which are significant to historians of Cape Town and the Western Cape: such as assertions of tradition, identity and consciousness over time. The presentation of inner music history can also help to provide more nuanced images of a range of noteworthy Black musicians.

Furthermore, Cape Town's rich history of dance music and jazz can be seen as providing an important chapter in the growth of a broader South African jazz idiom, based on the agency of musicians in processes of cultural continuity and change. Equally, discussion has also considered the means by which Black musicians were marginalised from professional opportunities. Inevitably, Black performers and audiences were culturally marginalised or reconstructed on imposed terms as South Africa's major cultural resources underwent industrial development -- particularly in the years after the Second World War.

In the main, important intersecting developments occurred during the post-1945 years in the cultural life of Cape Town. Firstly, in the 1950s, a group of musicians who were concerned

to assert an alternative professional identity and to develop a self-conscious South African jazz idiom came to form the fulcrum of a jazzing subculture in the city. By the late 1950s, this jazzing subculture had helped to establish the seeds of a fledgling African nationalist cultural tradition in Cape Town.[1] This growth emerged essentially independently of any existing, dominant intellectual or political tradition in the city. Links existed with developing indigenous African jazz which had been developing since the 1930s, which gained popularity in the 1940s and which had some influence in Cape Town's African townships in the 1940s and 1950s.

The second development concerns the role played by traditional Coloured dance band musicians. They encountered and either ignored or resisted a Black nationalist approach and the aestheticism of the jazz movement. On top of this, they were also marginalised from substantive opportunities to develop professional careers in recording studios, radio broadcasting, or live performance in segregated live entertainment venues.

In a third development, Cape Town's racially exclusive and largely white-controlled musical establishment sought an agreement with representatives of the South African music industry -- consisting of large record manufacturing companies and the SABC in the 1960s. These developments underlined the fragmentation and decline of a major part of cultural life in

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[1]R. Molapo, 'Identity, Popular Culture and Politics in Langa', pp.41-46.

Cape Town, that of popular performance.[2]

Fourthly, the national record industry flourished in the postwar years, establishing racially and ethnically delimited markets by the 1960s. The Western Cape experience was no exception. The structures which controlled this medium had an economic claim in the emerging apartheid social and economic order. This claim had been secured as the established record industry emerged as part of the postwar South African consumer economy. For radical changes had occurred in the music-making sphere since the advent of the 1940s. From its early roots as a mercantile record trade at the turn of the century, record production became a highly centralised activity, embedded in the postwar South African manufacturing boom on the Witwatersrand. Gramophone reproduction increasingly became the dominant form in which music was performed -- and owned. And it had significant outlets in Cape Town.

Professional musicians

Against this background, the jazz subculture of the 1950s and 1960s offered a brief opportunity for musicians to carve out an independent niche outside of these productive and political

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[2]The decline of popular performance in Cape Town therefore has many facets. The city had small and divided middle classes who could not support a large number of professional bands. Veit Erlmann has submitted similar reasons why popular performance declined in Durban as early as the 1930s. There were not many venues for bands to perform in Durban in the 1930s. The radius of action for the major jazz bands was Johannesburg and the surrounding towns. See V. Erlmann, African Stars, p.92.

relations. In its own terms, it induced some musicians both to assert a role as agents for change, and for cultural continuity.

Some musicians thus played an active role, acting to define a professional identity. Through this, in a number of ways, they attempted to define what it was to be a musician, thereby constituting the kernel of a Black musicians' profession.[3]

Although many musicians performed in a part-time capacity, they had a set of unwritten rules for professional conduct. These rules were transmitted in their day-to-day relationships with each other, in their attempts to make a living through performance, in their recognition and mutual judgment of competence, and by their general dedication to making music. When necessary, they could adapt to accommodate sophisticated new working realities. For example, musicians working in both dance bands and in the jazz idiom adapted to the demands of increasingly critical audiences -- steeped in the slick and polish of recorded jazz imported from America -- by learning to read music.

But Black musicians at the Cape were acting without an organised educational support network. They were excluded

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[3]This effort was sometimes tacit and sometimes overt. A more comprehensive study of trade unionism and the exercise of political power in organisations such as the performing arts councils awaits future studies of culture in Cape Town and other major urban centres in South Africa. Also, the change in the status of White musicians in these and similar organisations is fertile territory for later studies.

from the established professional institutions, and were therefore having to make their own institutions and social spaces within which to learn the tools of the trade. Here, there was a single choice open to musicians hoping to sustain their profession of free artistry in postwar Cape Town. Excluded from a racially exclusive profession -- as embodied by the CMA -- the radical alternative was the non-racial or national musicians' ethos symbolised by the aesthete jazz culture.

In one sense, we can envisage the prospect that Black musicians were groping towards an alternative professional model which embraced their own forms of expression. But in the 1960s, the profession was itself divided along racial lines. The record industry itself had altered the material world in which popular music had flourished in the years preceding the Second World War and the earlier postwar years. For it created markets based on racial criteria, and supplied forms of approved music for these markets and musicians who were to produce that music.

Another form of exclusion remains to be considered in future studies. While instrumental competence and virtuosity were typically defined as male characteristics, the role of able women instrumentalists in jazz and dance bands, although uncommon, qualified this.[4] Thus, in Cape Town's strongly

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[4]Women like Zelda Benjamin worked extensively in the 1970s in Cape Town, when the term 'cabaret' became fashionable

(continued...)

patriarchal dance band culture, pianist Diana Goliath, who played in Eddie George's band, was a striking individual:

> most of the bands that time would ask ou Diana to come and play and Diana's just with me ... she [now] lives in Hanover Park ... She's very old. She's still working. She can't afford to stay at home. She had a raw deal in life, man.[5]

Region

Yet, against the grain, Cape Town provided a setting for what became the last stand of a progressive African jazz movement. Thereafter, many performers went into political and professional exile by the mid-1960s.

In the 1940s and the 1950s, indigenous jazz, with its sense of aesthetics (and its links to African Nationalism) challenged

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[4](...continued)
and many activities at clubs 'passed for cabaret'. On Sundays she typically had three such jobs a night. Zelda Benjamin interview, 19/11/1991.

[5]Eddie George interview, WCOHP, 05/03/1990. See C. Ballantine, Marabi Nights for a discussion of women in early African jazz bands such as the Pitch Black Follies and the Merry Blackbirds in the late 1930s and early 1940s; see T. Matshikiza, 'Aunt Elm at the Helm', and Z. Nkosi, 'My kind of jazz', in M. Mutloatse (ed.), Umhlaba Wethu: An Historical Indictment, Johannesburg, 1987, for narrative accounts of women in African jazz; and M. Rörich, 'Shebeens, slumyards, and Sophiatown: Black women, music, and cultural change in urban South Africa c.1920-1960', The World of Music 31,1 1989, for a discussion of women's relationship to urban musical performance culture on the Rand. Comparatively, see L. Dahl, Stormy Weather: The Music And Lives of a Century of Jazzwomen, London, 1984.

the local ethnic basis of traditional Cape dance performance, creating a lasting impression on popular memory in Cape Town. Many ordinary residents continue to remember the animation and excitement around hotspots such as the Naaz and the Ambassador.[6]

The champions of this jazz boom asserted a new cultural and political viewpoint, challenging the efforts of the Nationalist state to complete cultural segregation in the 1960s. The very existence of the boom encouraged some local Coloured dance band musicians to contemplate new cultural directions. Nonetheless, this new cultural challenge to the city's racial order was rolled over by Group Areas and other apartheid exclusion; this virtually put paid to resources for Black jazz musicians.

Throughout this period, the relationships between different political and class interests and, between differing performance ideologies, were ambiguous. This was especially clear in efforts to define cultural identity in the Western Cape. Here dance band performance highlighted social, cultural and ideological factors. Specifically, in enlarging choices open to musicians as African jazz was introduced in the Cape, performance in effect became part of the negotiation

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[6]Billie Daniels interview, 2/4/1992, and Zelda Benjamin interview, 19/11/1991.

of Coloured identity.[7] A perception of racial and ideological bonds with Black America formed part of a quest to express a Coloured identity independent of the pull of White respectability.

Cape jazz in the 1990s

To close, we may touch on a brief contemporary perspective through which to view some of the developments described in this thesis -- which might also serve to suggest areas for future research.

What is the significance of Cape Town's story for indigenous South African jazz in the present? For musicians, audiences and enthusiasts, jazz in the Cape's boom period expressed the collective nonconformist spirit of the 1960s. Some observers have asserted, with more than a hint of nostalgia, that there was a stronger oppositional sense of direction for jazz in the 1960s than in the 1980s. There was a sense that things 'were going somewhere'[8], and that, 'today's [jazz] hasn't got the depth and the feeling of the old music ... today its a kind of escapist jazz ... But I think people in the sixties still dreamt of freedom in a real way ... it was a post-Sharpeville

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[7]By comparison, this thesis has not touched upon the parallel question of African identity in Cape Town. Only a full appraisal of this issue will provide a complete picture of the early roots of African jazz in Cape Town, and will therefore provide important knowledge about the cultural history of Cape Town.

[8]Ian Cameron interview, 29/7/1991.

thing and it was a more serious feel.'[9]

The establishment of the Cape Art Centre during the late 1960s, was seen as an attempt to forge an outward looking, institution for White and Black jazz musicians with serious musical ambitions. Hence Midge Pike, a founder member of the Centre stated in 1968:

> Today the trend is toward a more sophisticated kind of music to which classically trained musicians apply advanced ideas. It is regarded as a true art form, a beautiful and vibrant music of universal appeal.[10]

From 1966 onwards, a drastically reduced congregation of musicians and supporters -- the remnants of an earlier jazz boom in the city -- survived at the Cape Art Centre in Greenpoint.

For others however, the 1980s have been a period of popular artistic re-awakening: a renaissance.[11] The return of exiles in this period represented a re-assertion of continuity with

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[9]Vincent Kolbe interview, WCOHP, 1988.

[10]Argus 6/1/1968.

[11]See R. Denselow, When the Music's Over: The Story of Political Pop, London, 1989, pp.173-202 and pp.275-82 for a popular account of politics and South African urban popular music in the 1980s and C. Shaar-Murray, Crosstown Traffic: Jimi Hendrix and Post-War Pop, London, 1989 for a useful general account of postwar popular music up to the 1980s. See also S. Nicholson, Jazz: The Modern Resurgence, London, 1990, for an account of the worldwide resurgence of jazz since the 1980s.

the still-born earlier period of musical ferment and development, blighted by the entrenchment of 1960s Apartheid. The return of Abdullah Ibrahim and others has signified a movement to repair damage to an indigenous movement. Even more, the arrival of a new peoples music was proclaimed in the aftermath of the much trumpeted 1988 Culture in Another South Africa (CASA) Conference; and local tenor saxophonist, Basil Coetzee, has joined its chorus:

> Our sound has jazz influences yes. It also [has] traditional influences ... I think there is still a lot of work to be done with township music ... a lot of musicians are becoming aware of themselves culturally ... this growth of political consciousness gives musicians new freedom to play what they want to.[12]

Paradoxically, however, the general re-introduction of South African jazz in the 1980s left the legacy of many township dance and jazz musicians such as Jimmy Adams out of its picture. Unemployed after being retrenched from his daytime job, an ageing Adams has declared 'there is nothing calling us

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[12]Basil Coetzee quoted in J. Gwangwa, and F. van Aurich, 'The melody of freedom: a reflection on music', in W. Crampschreur and J. Divendal (eds.), Culture in Another South Africa, London, 1989, p.157. The conference reflected a renewed interest in indigenous local jazz in among many young cultural activists, proclaiming, for example, that "we ... will be called upon to utilise our skills in a post-Apartheid South Africa." Annual Report of the MAPP Public Address Committee, 1989. I thank Mr. Ralton Praah for kind permission to reproduce this extract. See also, 'From Cultural Accommodation to Cultural Resistance: The Eoan Group and MAPP at the Joseph Stone Auditorium', People's History Project, Group Term Paper, University of the Western Cape, 1992.

to the jazz scene today.'[13]

Finally, Cape Town's Waterfront enterprise has fashioned jazz as another part of its projection of the city's 'sanitised past', a symbol of Cape Town's seamless harmony. Here, easy jazz has found a home as a kind of sophisticated background music in upmarket restaurants in which diners eat beneath images of 'Satchmo and Duke Ellington' displayed on the walls.[14] These pictures 'rearrange icons of the past to authenticate a new, more convenient history for the present.'[15] Today, this musical history echoes remarkably few notes from its past: it is unlikely that the pioneering sounds of the Merry Macks, Tem Hawker, Jimmy Adams and others will rattle the walls of the Green Dolphin Restaurant.

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[13]Jimmy Adams interview, 18/6/1992.

[14]See review article in Vrye Weekblad: Two Tone Magazine, 26/6/1992. Describing "a great menu and lukewarm music", at the Green Dolphin restaurant on Cape Town's Waterfront, the reporter concludes that "Cape Town's claim to being South Africa's jazz capital was true, but some time back: it's now just a myth".

[15]M. Hall, 'People in a changing landscape: excavating Cape Town', University of Cape Town Inaugural Lecture, March 25, 1992. Nigel Worden has also noted that, at the Waterfront, "the only tangible presence of the 'Cape vibe' are artificial performances, watched, but not created, by visitors"; see his 'Unwrapping history at the Cape Town Waterfront', Paper presented at the Africa Seminar, Centre for African Studies, UCT, 1992, pp.7-8.

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Ms. Billy Daniels	02/4/1992
Mr. Eddie George (WCOHP)	05/03/1990
Mr. Vincent Kolbe (WCOHP)	06/03/1990
Mr. Vincent Kolbe (WCOHP)	August, 1988
Mr. Gary Kriel	19/11/1991
Mr. Cliffie Moses	19/11/1991
Mr. Aubrey Vigeland	02/4/1992

Extracts were also used from a UCT History Department term paper by R. Gassert, which is a collection of oral transcripts. The transcripts are from interviews with:

Mr Willie Jales

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