



University of Venda

**A descriptive analysis of indigenous Xitsonga music-dance compound: A
musicological approach**

by

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the

Department of African Studies

at the

University of Venda

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2018

DECLARATION

I, **Khosa Hanyani Aubrey**, hereby declare that the thesis for the PhD degree at the University of Venda, hereby submitted by me, has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other university, and that this is my own work in design and execution and that all reference materials contained herein have been duly acknowledged.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My acknowledgements go to Prof M.G Mapaya, my promoter and Dr M.T Chauke, my co-promoter for their valuable guidance towards the completion of this thesis. I am also grateful for the financial support I received from the Capacity Development of the University of Venda and a SAHUDA scholarship.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my primary school teacher, Mr. P Makondo, of Merwe Primary School, who noticed my musical talent at a very early age and the late Mr. T.P Tshifhango who fully supported my dreams, thank you.

ABSTRACT

It has been shown that indigenous music and dance can help one to vividly fathom the behaviour, values and morals of particular cultural groups, they perform their music and dance for various reasons. For instance, there are songs for hoeing, weeding, reaping, for children, of mockery, during game, protests, by the fireside interspersed with folktales, love songs and so on. All these songs are immersed in culture-bound indigenous music. The indigenous music and dance of the Vatsonga play a vital role, not only in their lives but also for others who enjoy indigenous Xitsonga music and dance. There exists, however gaps regarding documentation, preservation and notation of this music and dance practices. In this study, therefore, indigenous Xitsonga music and dance genres are analysed descriptively and documented (with notation of common songs) for posterity. A qualitative approach was used to conduct this musicological study. A study such as this one can also contribute towards African indigenous knowledge systems and be used by the Department of Education.

Keywords: Music-dance compound, harmony, texture, form, Xitsonga, *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, aspects pertaining to the background to this study will be discussed. These will include: historical background of African music, Xitsonga language, culture and music history of Vatsonga, a statement of the problem, justification for the study, aims and objectives as well as definitions of key concepts.

Indigenous music and dance play a momentous role in the lives of a particular cultural group. Msomi (1980) states that knowledge of cultural dances and songs is one of the key aspects necessary for a comprehensive understanding of the customs of any cultural group. The morals, behaviour, and values of any cultural group are shaped largely by its music and dance. Cultural groups, therefore, have their own music and dance that play vital role in determining their way of life.

African rhythm was previously regarded as mere noise, however, it has now been accepted as a disciplined art, and what in African music was formally interpreted as “absence of set form” has now been acknowledged as improvisation (Herskovits, 1967). This fact also contributed to numerous Africans losing interest in performing their own music and dance because it was perceived as inferior. A reconsideration of the status of indigenous African music and dance by the Department of Education, through the introduction of a learning area called ‘Arts

and Culture', and by the Department of Arts and Culture, through indigenous music and dance competitions, has led to its resuscitation.

Almost every cultural group has its own music and dance. Within cultural groups are different art forms that seek to attract a particular age group of performers, a particular audience based on their common interest in life, and particular occasions. Music and dance are performed formally and spontaneously. The latter requires performers to wear specific regalia whilst the former is performed without.

To give some further context, it is perhaps significant to mention the researcher's involvement in an Indigenous Music and Oral History Project for five years. The project had, within its wide scope, included research on indigenous music and dance of the three ethnic groups - Vatsonga, Vhavenda and Bapedi - found in Limpopo Province, South Africa. As a result, a book titled *Cultures of Limpopo* (Mugovhani, Molapo & Ramaite, 2013) was published. In this book, only two indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compounds were discussed, even though the musical part was not transcribed. During my involvement in this project, I discovered that there is a need for deeper exploration of indigenous music and dance where vital aspects such as notation, harmony, structure, texture and contexts are attended, hence the undertaking of this study.

An inadequate record of the history of the Vatsonga exists. The Vatsonga originated from central Africa and the majority of them settled in Mozambique, in areas such as Musapa, Nyembani, Gaza, Bileni-Masia, Gwambe, Magudu and Maputo. According to Magubane (1998), the first Vatsonga to enter the former Transvaal did so in the 18th century and some years later, the Portuguese colonized them. There are also the Vatsonga who live in Zimbabwe in the area called Hlengweni, which is in the western side of Zimbabwe (Magubane, 1998).

According to Boonzaaier (2002), the name “Tsonga” is derived from the Mozambican word “*ronga*”, which means “from the east”. This implies that the Vatsonga came from the eastern side of Africa. In South Africa, for instance, the Vatsonga originated from the eastern side, although they are currently scattered all over the country as a result of migration for better education, jobs, as well as access to better life. Gauteng is an example of a province where there are large numbers of Vatsonga, however, the Vatsonga still dominate in the eastern side of South Africa, in the Limpopo Province.

The Portuguese are the first to capture the history of Vatsonga and it is possible that some valuable information might not have been adequately captured because of prevailing illiteracy of the time (Nkhwashu, 2011). There is also contradicting information concerning the history of the Vatsonga. For example, Mugovhani, Ramaite and Molapo (2013) state that the name Vatsonga was derived from a type of hut called *mintsonga*. This statement differs from the one

stated earlier, that Vatsonga comes from the word “*ronga*” which means “from the east”.

Many Vatsonga have settled in South Africa. Some are referred to as Vatsonga while some are referred to as Machangana. According to the history, the Portuguese arrested Nghunghunyane (the king of Vatsonga in Mozambique) and his children (Magubane, 1998). The reason for the arrest was to forcefully take the land which belonged to the Vatsonga. The arrest resulted in some of the Vatsonga fleeing to South Africa and settling in the then Transvaal, now referred to as Limpopo Province. Magubane (1998) notes that the Vatsonga first arrived in South Africa in the 18th century.

The historically recorded fight between Soshangane and Shaka (the leader of the Zulu people) resulted in Soshangane fleeing to Mozambique, and settling amongst the Vatsonga (Nkhwashu, 2011). Soshangane defeated some of the Vatsonga and settled in Bileni. Soshangane’s soldiers subsequently married Vatsonga girls and that marriage resulted in them becoming part of the Shangaan tribe, hence some of Vatsonga are today referred to as Shangaans (*Machangana* in Xitsonga). Vatsonga are the descendants of Gwambe and Dzavani while *Machangana* are the descendants of Soshangane. Shangaans are often the ones who usually perform *Muchongolo*, which is closely related to Zulu dances (Nkhwashu, 2011).

Xitsonga is one of the eleven official languages spoken in South Africa. It is also spoken in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Swaziland. The Bantu self-government Act 46 of 1959, formally declared the Vatsonga/Machangana to constitute a 'national unit' and allowed the government to accede to the Vatsonga Chiefs' wishes for a separate homeland (Vail, 1989). After the implementation, Vatsonga were relocated to areas such as Malamulele, Giyani, Mhala, Hlanganani, Elim and Nkowankowa. Presently, they are also found in Bushbuckridge in Mpumalanga, especially the descendants of Soshangana. However, the Xitsonga is also spoken in Gauteng Province.

The traditional Vatsonga settlements and homesteads comprised of round huts with conical thatched roofs and is referred to as *muti*. There would be a man's hut, his wife or wives' huts, a hut for girls which is called *nhanga* and one for boys called *lawu*. The houses would be in the form of a circle, surrounded by a fence of tree bases (Manganye, 2011). The Vatsonga used to hunt wild animals for food although they also relied on the cultivation of different kinds of crops, such as potatoes, groundnuts, vegetables and maize (Magubane, 1998).

The attire worn by Vatsonga women includes *yele* (short-sleeve shirt) with bright colours, a *xibelani* (pleated wrap-around skirt) worn around the waist. Around their necks and waists, they wear *minceka* (colourful clothes) with *vuhlalu* or *tikhwini* (beaded bands). *Vusenga* (traditional bracelets) are worn on the hands, while *madeha* (aluminium ankles) are worn on the legs. The Vatsonga men wear *tinjhovo* (traditional skirts made of animal skin), *nghundhu*, a hat made of animal

skin is worn on the head and a traditional vest made of animal skin, *mugaqo*. The men would hold *xitlhangu* (shield made of animal skin) with their left hand while *xigiya* (assegai) is held with the right. Vatsonga girls wear *tinguvu* (a shorter version of *Xibelani*) with nothing on top while boys wear *tinjhovo* and nothing on top (Manganye, 2011). A detailed discussion of Vatsonga clothing will be made in relation to attire worn during performances; these will be discussed in Chapter four herein.

Initiation schools play a major role in Xitsonga culture. Vatsonga girls attend *musevetho* (puberty school) and *vukhomba* (pre-marital school) while boys attend an initiation school called *matlala* or *ngoma*. Both *vukhomba* and *matlala* mark the passage from adolescence to adulthood (Manganye, 2011). During the attendance of these initiation schools, indigenous music and dance play a major role. Upon completion of these schools, indigenous Xitsonga music and dance is also performed during the celebration.

One cannot separate the origin and history of Vatsonga from that of their cultural practices. The origin of Vatsonga and their indigenous lives led to the foundation of their indigenous cultural practices. According to one of the respondents in this study, dance started when hunters were returning home, joyously celebrating their kill and walking rhythmically. This developed into a dance which, with improvisation, gradually developed into more varied and intricate dances. Progressively, the men began to sing to the rhythms, thus establishing indigenous Xitsonga music and dance, the respondents said. Males, thus are the ones who

started and were later followed by female music and dance; *muchongolo* was the first art form to be made.

It is believed that during the era of Soshangane in Mozambique the *Vatsonga-Machangana* performed this type of music whenever they prepared for war (Mugovhani, Ramaite & Molapo, 2013). Performers of *Muchongolo* used to carry real spears and shields which were used during wars although present day performers carry fake shields and spears because they are unable to get real ones. In addition, the type of attire that is worn during *Muchongolo* performance resembles the attire that was meant for war. (Attires will be discussed in detail later in this study).



Figure 1: Fake shields and spears used during *Muchongolo* performance (Ramaite, 2013)

The soldiers would perform *Muchongolo* in order to gain strength and enthusiasm for war. During a war, *Muchongolo* performance did not include women or instruments. After the men had won the battle, they would sing victory songs from the battlefield until they reached the king's residence. It was on such occasions that women and instrument players would join the soldiers in the performance of *Muchongolo* to congratulate them on their victory. When wars and battles were no longer waged, Vatsonga continued to perform this type of music at cultural celebrations and special events, such as when a man's family and in-laws-to-be had successfully completed negotiations and payment of *ku lovola* (exchange of bride-price), or during traditional weddings, referred to as *mucato*. Performance will be discussed in Chapter four.

According to Mabunda (2016), *Muchongolo* originated around in the 19th century in Mozambique. He adds that due to wars in Mozambique, the Vatsonga moved to South Africa with Hosi Mpisane. It is interesting to note that the Vatsonga did not relinquish their culture when they relocated to South Africa. The history of *Muchongolo* given by Dycort (2012), a school teacher in Bushbuckridge, is different from the account given by Mabunda (2016). Dycort (2012) writes that *Muchongolo*, started around 1860 with the aim being to entertain workers in the gold mines of Johannesburg. Dycort (2012) notes that *Muchongolo* no longer being associated with war, is very opportune as the performance would have fuelled violence, particularly during the volatile period in South Africa, before 1994.

As time went by, *Xincayincayi* was started with more or less the same characteristics as those of *Muchongolo*. *Xincayincayi* is an art form for young boys performed with vigour (see performers 4.2.2.). Females who used to stand behind the men and sing to the accompaniment of *Muchongolo* also initiated their own female art forms, which included *Mikhinyavedzo*, for elderly women and *Xibelani*, for young girls; the former being a slow and dignified dance while the latter is fast and vigorous (See performers in Chapter four).

The Vatsonga have songs that are suitable for children, youth and adults and their daily activities are coupled with singing and dancing. Each village used to have more than one drum ensemble (*Xigubu*, also referred to as *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*), hence during weekends, villagers used to compete in a large open areas.

As indicated earlier, one of the motivations for this was the scarcity of written documents on indigenous Xitsonga music and dance. This form of music and dance is no longer popular amongst the Vatsonga, probably due to the elders' reluctance to teach the younger generations because of their negative attitude towards this aspect of their culture. Notwithstanding the role played by the Department of Education, indigenous music and dance performance is not prioritised as a development component in South Africa. This is despite the fact that, indigenous Xitsonga music and dance is performed during significant occasions such as, *tikhombeni* (an initiation ceremony, which marks girls' passage to adulthood), birthday celebrations, indigenous music and dance

competitions organised by the Department of Education and the Department of Arts and Culture. Furthermore, indigenous Xitsonga music and dance is also performed spontaneously, during non-formal social occasions, as bonding sessions.

Some African composers express their experiences through compositions that teach about life in general, while others simply portray the importance of culture through music and dance. This study pays particular attention to lessons contained in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance. It should also be indicated that there are performers and audiences who do not have any interest in the theme of the music. They are simply interested in the beauty of melodic lines, harmonic structure and *macinelo* (choreography).

The focus of this study is limited to a descriptive analysis of *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* indigenous Xitsonga music and dance genres. Other kinds, such as, *Choza*, *Xifasi*, *Ku Thawuza*, and *Makhwaya* are excluded from this study although these genres are amongst others that have already been discussed and transcribed, such as *Ku Thawuza* music and dance; this study, therefore is an expansion of earlier works (Khosa, 2014). In this study, four indigenous Xitsonga cultural practices are descriptively analysed and transcribed using *Xibelani* and *Mikhinyavedzo* (female genres) and *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* (male genres).

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Presently, there are few Vatsonga who still perform indigenous music and dance, which implies a fading appreciation of the genre by its people. The Vatsonga were closely associated with the singing of and dancing to their indigenous music and dance during occasions. Unfortunately, exposure to other popular genres such as *Bubble-gum*, *Pop*, *Kwaito*, *House* and *Shangaan disco* has resulted in the neglect of indigenous Xitsonga music-dance compound, leading to moral degeneration. Furthermore, colonialism and western cultural influence also contributed in Vatsonga feeling inferior about their cultural practices. A few scholars, such as Johnston (1971) had the temerity to do research on indigenous Xitsonga music-dance compound and provides ethnographic descriptions of these genres. Junod (1927) contends that Xitsonga music and dance should also be investigated methodically, and documented, for it to be accessible to research. Scholars from South Africa's previously disadvantaged groups have conducted research on their respective indigenous music and dances without notation. As a result, people who are interested in learning more about indigenous Xitsonga music-dance compounds cannot access this information. In order to advance the knowledge of indigenous Xitsonga music and dance, documentation of these features is relevant. The current study seeks to improve the status quo of these compounds by analysing indigenous Xitsonga music-dance compound descriptively and also notating the songs of *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*. This exercise should enhance the understanding of these genres by Vatsonga and non-Xitsonga speakers.

1.3. AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to descriptively analyse indigenous Xitsonga music-dance compound. The focus will be on *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* respectively.

1.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To establish a common musical tread that represents indigenous Xitsonga music and dance genres.
- To investigate the appropriate system of presenting indigenous Xitsonga music and dance.
- To indicate the portability of indigenous Xitsonga musical elements into other forms of music.
- To notate indigenous Xitsonga music-dance compound.

The above-mentioned objectives will assist in resolving the statement of the problem.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the research questions:

- What is the common denominator in the four indigenous Xitsonga music and dance genres that mostly characterises Xitsonga indigenous music dance-compound?

- What are the appropriate systems that can represent indigenous Xitsonga music and dance?
- How portable is indigenous Xitsonga musical elements into other forms of music?
- To what extent has indigenous Xitsonga music and dance been notated?

1.6. JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on an analysis of *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*. Scholars have discussed indigenous Xitsonga music and dance but have not adequately analysed elements such as harmony, texture, melody, form, dynamics and notation. It is for this reason that this study was undertaken, however, mention should be made that a few scholars, such as, Hugh Tracey (1952) and his son Andrew Tracey (1970) have paved the way for this study. The study should be a valuable source of information to people who are able to read music, even if they are not Xitsonga speakers. The study could also serve as a guideline for notation of other indigenous African music and dance genres. Upon completion of this study, the Department of Education could utilise the results in the Arts and Culture learning areas while the Department of Arts and Culture can also use the document as an adjudication aid during indigenous Xitsonga music and dance competitions.

1.7. DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Music-dance compound: Music is not isolated from dance, according to Xitsonga tradition hence, it is referred to as “music and dance compound” in this study. Mapaya (2014) shares the same sentiment in his article titled, *Dinaka/Diba: A Descriptive Analysis of a Northern Sotho Song-Dance Performative Compound*. In his article, he does not separate music from dance, although he refers to the music component as a song. The present researcher is aware of a similar term “musical art”, but does not prefer using it because of its shortcomings in terms of what this study intends to cover.

Harmony: Is the musical element that results from the simultaneous sounding of two or more notes and encompasses the various ways in which such tone combinations interrelate (Miller, 1991).

Texture: According to Miller (1991), a musical texture is a characteristic disposition and relationship of melodic (horizontal) and harmonic (vertical) factors in music. More broadly, the term “thick” (or heavy) texture and “thin” (or light) texture are also used to refer to the tonal effect produced by the number of parts, spacing and register of tones and timbre.

Form: The word “form” is used in both a general and specific sense. In its general sense, form refers to the overall organisation of musical elements within a composition. It includes such elements as the composition’s external shape or

outline, its internal structure, and the way in which various parts fit together to create a unified whole (Jacobs, 1977).

Xitsonga: Authors such as Johnston (1971) and Manganye (2011) are among others who use the word “Tsonga”. In this study, the word Tsonga is replaced by the word “Xitsonga”. The present researcher believes that researchers who used the word “Tsonga” were influenced by authors who were not Xitsonga speakers; those who do not know that the word “Tsonga” does not exist in Xitsonga vocabulary. Additionally, they may have believed that the word Xitsonga only refers to the language whereas it is a term which can be used generally. For instance, one refers to Xitsonga culture, Xitsonga language, Xitsonga music and Xitsonga attire.

Xibelani: *Xibelani* is a female dance derived from the attire women wear - a very full traditional skirt. When the dancers are performing, the fullness of the skirt moves to the rhythm of the song. *Xibelani* is usually embellished with other traditional garments, headgear, wrist and ankle bracelets (Chauke, 2004). *Xibelani* is performed at any joyous occasion.

Mikhinyavedzo: *Mikhinyavedzo* is one of the indigenous Xitsonga music and dance genres which is performed by elderly women. During the performance of this art form, a woman employs, extensively, her waist on which she wears a Xitsonga traditional dress called *tinguvu* or *xitlhekutani* or *xibelani*. As this dance

was originally conceived for performance by elderly women, the dance movement is invariably at a slow tempo (Khosa, interview, 2010).

Xincayincayi: A dance performed mostly by young males at joyous occasions such as the installation of a chief, marriage ceremonies and the passing out of female initiates. The dance is performed by a combination of drummers, singers and dancers. Singers are mostly women who wear traditional garments, beads, docks, traditional skirts and ankle bracelets. Dancers wear animal hides, ornate headdresses and tassels on their arms and legs. The upper body of dancers is not covered and the feet are bare (Chauke, 2004).

Muchongolo: *Muchongolo* is a dance that is performed by males at any joyous occasion, for instance, at a marriage ceremony, hence the main aim is to entertain the audience. Performers use the following costumes, ornate head gears, *switlapfi* and *mitoriyana*, traditional garments, beads, wrists and ankle bracelets while holding shields and clubs. The upper bodies are naked and the feet are bare. During the performance, the drummer leads, followed by dancers and then female singers. As they move, they raise the shields and clubs just as soldiers at war would do (Chauke, 2004). Generally, only males are involved in dancing and playing instruments. Women stand behind the performing group, singing and clapping as accompaniment to the instruments.

1.8. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Chapter 1	Introductory section	Background of the study, aims, objectives, and definition of concepts are amongst the aspects discussed.
Chapter 2	Literature review	Journals, articles, books and other sources of information concerning Indigenous music and dance compound will be analysed and discussed
Chapter 3	Methodology	Aspects such as, theoretical framework, study approach, validity and ethical considerations will be discussed in detail.
Chapter 4	Data presentation and findings	Other relevant aspects such as occasions, attire, music instruments, choreography, composers and participants will be analysed and presented.
Chapter 5	Transcription and commentaries	Some elements of music such as melody, structure, texture, harmony and interpretation will be covered, including notation and interpretation.
Chapter 6	Summary, conclusion and recommendations	This highlights all previous chapters by means of a summary. The conclusion and recommendations will also be included in this chapter.

1.9. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the foundation in terms of directing this study was laid by means of discussing the following: background of the study which included the history of the Vatsonga in terms of origins, language and music. Aims and objectives were also discussed in this chapter as well as statement of the problem and justification for the study. The last section focused on definition of concepts and the structure of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Mention should be made that indigenous music and dance have been documented by innumerable scholars, however, there is limited literature on indigenous Xitsonga music and dance. In the discussions of existing literature pertaining to African music and dance, emphasis will be on indigenous art forms in the form of thematic content analysis.

2.2. COMBINATION OF SINGING AND DANCING

Singing is an important characteristic of indigenous African music and dance. Genres that are normally categorised as dance have a singing component that is almost equally important as the dance component. For instance, *Malende* dance cannot function without a singing component (Rabothata, 1991). Stayt (1931) shares the same sentiment that *Malende* is an “informal dance that begins spontaneously towards the end of a beer drink and it is accompanied by singing”. *Malende* performance begins with singers and the accompaniment of *murumba*. The lead singer is usually the one who starts to dance as the rest are backing him or her. He or she starts at a slow pace as a climax is gradually built. By the time the climax is reached, he or she is dancing very fast with extreme vigour. It is at this stage that one can notice the perfect relationship between singing and dancing. In all the four genres that are discussed in this study, singing and dancing cannot be separated.

In *the Music of Africa*, Nketia (1974) addresses the collaboration between musicians and dancers. He stresses that a close collaboration is always required between musicians and dancers because of the relationship between the structure of the music and the design of the dance (Nketia, 1974).

In *Xhosa Music: Its Techniques and Instruments, with a Collection of Songs*, Dargie (1974) accentuates singing in a dance performance. Certain dances have their own specific songs. The theme is carried out through singing, therefore, whether the dance is suitable for an occasion or not would be determined by the message rather than the dance. This is also the case in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance.

This study will show how most dance components can be referred to as “music and dance”. For example, *Ku Thawuza* is a music and dance genre because these two aspects cannot function in isolation. This explains the reason Rabothata (1991), advocates that *Malende* should be known as “*Malende* music and dance”, not just *Malende* dance. These authors did not discuss the elements of music in detail, thus validating the necessity of this study.

2.3. RYTHMIC PATTERNS

During music and dance performances, rhythm gives shape that govern the choreographic pattern of the dancers. Rabothata (1991) and Blacking (1995) have both documented the music and dance of the Vhavenda. Amongst the genres they discussed are *Malende*, *Tshigombela*, *Tshifasi*, and *Tshikona*. The

two researchers, however, differ on how they perceive the regularity of rhythm in Venda music and dance genres. Blacking (1995) perceives *Malende* music and dance as being irregular while Rabothata (1991) maintains the opposite. Surprisingly, neither Rabothata nor Blacking transcribed or analysed the rhythmic patterns of *Malende* music and dance during their research. These are some of the intricacies of African music and dance, which could be better clarified through descriptive rhythmic analysis and apt notation.

Rabothata (1991) argues that *Malende* is regular in terms of its rhythmic pattern because performers are used to it, thus it sounds regular and authentic to them. On the contrary, Blacking finds the rhythm being non-metrical from a Western music perspective, hence he describes the whole pattern as “irregular”. It should be mentioned, however, that Blacking is not against regularity, but makes his comment based on how he perceives regularity. This study will clarify whether indigenous Xitsonga music and dance rhythmic pattern is regular as the songs will be notated with clear time signatures. The regularity of rhythms, however, is not in the scope of this study, although rhythmic patterns will be discussed in general for the sake of addressing rhythm as an imperative music element.

Nzewi (1994: 68) discusses how different techniques of striking a drum can have an effect on the production of a particular sound, “using a drum stick for a closed-strike in the centre produces an indefinite-pitch essential melodic component and, therefore, is a melo-rhythmic essence”; The above statement demonstrates the

intricacies of striking a drum, however, as mentioned earlier, an interrogation of the whole notion of rhythm is not in scope of this study.

2.4. INDIGENOUS MUSIC INSTRUMENTS

Music instruments that accompany the art forms that will be focused upon in this study have been described by authors such as Johnston (1971) and Chauke (2004). Amongst the main instruments that accompany indigenous Xitsonga music and dance is *Xigubu*. Johnston (1971) describes it as a double-membraned cylindrical drum made from discarded canisters of all sizes. It is used in the boys' drumming school (*Xigubu*) from which it gets its name, at beer-drink dances, mine dances, at *tikhomba* (initiation school for girls) and *macomane* (ritual ceremony) dances when other drums are not available. The construction of not only *xigubu* but other instruments that accompany indigenous Xitsonga music and dance will be described in detail later in this study.

2.5. AFRICAN INDIGENOUS MUSIC AND DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY

As music and dance can hardly function in isolation, choreography is also part of the performance and groups put some effort into its creation. There are usually several styles of dancing (choreography) with performers in a group dancing in one particular style, at a particular time. The lead singer is usually the one who decides the style suitable for a particular song and occasion.

Diallo and Hall (1989) have also researched dance among the Bambara people in Mali. The Bambara people usually perform a dance called the *Gomba* which

children secretly learn, in the forests, for seven years and mastery of the dance marks the passage to adulthood. Upon “graduation”, they perform in the village square where high standards of performance are expected - “If they sound a false note in the music or make a false step, they are supposed to die” (Diallo & Hall, 1989: 115). This emphasises the importance of accuracy in the dance.

According to Nketia (1974), in Manianka music, there is a certain order in dancing and a dancer is not supposed to show off but to communicate, following the rules of Manianka music. When the rhythm changes, so does the step, hence dancing in disregard of the music is not part of the tradition of the Manianka. Anyone who behaves individually, for example, by repeating the same steps and gesturing to different parts of the music when not called for is considered mentally disturbed. The Manianka also believe that dance is the only occasion where enemies can share something showing that they associate dance with numerous aspects of life in general (Nketia, 1974).

The Manianka, for instance, have a dance routine, whereby performers display their different personalities through dance improvisation. When the performer is busy dancing, the drum players and other musicians follow the dance routine by keeping up with the rhythm and tempo changes. The performer at the centre keeps the basic steps but beyond that is free to improvise. It is believed that there is a supernatural influence on the dance (Nketia, 1974), therefore, the Manianka do not dance only for the audience but also for ancestors who are believed to be watching; wanting to impress their ancestors enhances the performance.

2.6. CONTEXT DISCUSSIONS

Rabothata (1991) has analysed Venda music and dance, such as *Malende*, *Tshigombela*, *Tshifasi*, and *Tshikona*, thematically, although the study did not analyse the rhythmic dance and song patterns in detail. Tracey (1952) also wrote a few articles based on the analysis of the themes of the songs.

Indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compound called *Ku Thawuza* has been discussed in the book titled, *Cultures of Limpopo* (2013). Aspects such as choreography, occasions, attire, and instruments were covered in their discussion. They also paid attention to thematic meaning of indigenous Xitsonga lyrics.

Another example of a thematic analysis of songs is by Blacking (1995), in *The Role of Music Amongst the Venda of Northern Transvaal*. Authors such as Msomi (1980) have based their analysis on the fact that cultural music and dance can lead to the understanding of a particular cultural group: “Knowledge of cultural songs is one of the key aspects necessary for a comprehensive understanding of the customs of any cultural group” (Msomi, 1980: 98).

The researcher, Madalane (2011) did not only transcribe contemporary Xitsonga popular music, but also discussed the contents of the music. She discovered that indigenous Xitsonga musical practices have influenced traditional Xitsonga music and have maintained some of the characteristics of song texts. Her argument will be referred to later when a discussion about common thread is made. It is through

thematic analysis that one can understand how composers represent the views of people they live with in their communities. Interpretation is carried out by performers as a way of conveying the message to the audience. An analysis of themes will form part of the discussion in this study.

2.7. NOTATION OF INDIGENOUS MUSIC AND DANCE

Another vital stage in making indigenous African music and dance compound visible is its notation. A recent scholar, Kruger (2004) has improved the transcription of indigenous African music and dance remarkably by transcribing numerous Venda music and dance in staff notation. Kruger also indicates the foot beats at the bottom of music notation to enable would-be performers in the execution of perfect rhythmic patterns. Lyrics are usually translated from Tshivenda into English in poetic form. Kruger (2004) has transcribed most of the songs in two parts with some form of harmony, which is also the intended method for this study.

Matsikenyire (2006) focuses on folk songs of South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Swaziland which he only transcribes (notes and lyrics) into staff notation; no attempt was made to analyse the content of the music. Tracey (1952) has written articles based on traditional music of different ethnic groups, focusing on the best way of notating the music (melodically and rhythmically) in pulse notation. In fact, he believes that pulse notation is the best method to capture indigenous African music and dance although this study does not use pulse notation as the

researcher believes that tonic sol-fa and staff notation can more accurately capture indigenous Xitsonga music and dance.

Madalane (2011), has transcribed contemporary Xitsonga popular music. She has paid attention to facets such as introduction (especially instrumental), drum pattern and lyrics, however, the lyrics do not appear on the transcriptions; they are in the form of poems. The common thread that indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compound has is not discussed in Madalane's dissertation (2011). Amongst the artists whose music is analysed are Thomas Chauke, General M D Shirinda, Penny Penny, and many more.

Venda Children Songs, by Blackings (1967), is an example of an analysis of Venda children songs, with no attempt made to notate the songs in this book. He made a follow-up by writing another book "*Venda Children Songs*" (Blackings, 1995). In this book he transcribed the songs in staff notation and in single melodic lines. He also discusses different Venda dance forms and the music accompanying the dances. For the purpose of this study, indigenous Xitsonga songs will be notated and analysed harmonically and structurally.

2.8. CLAPPING OF HANDS AS ACCOMPANIMENT

The clapping of hands is amongst some significant characteristics of African cultural practices (Mugovhani, 2007). Most of the songs require the clapping of hands throughout the performance while others require the clapping of hands, only when the songs reach their climax. When the *Malende* dance is being

performed, the lead singer claps his or her hands and the others, including participative audiences, join to thicken the texture. Whilst the clapping is in progress, the dancer performs in systematic rapport with the rhythm of accompaniment of the *murumba* (Mugovhani, 2007). In indigenous Xitsonga music and dance, clapping of hands is also characteristic. Guma (1983) affirms that African dance music is accompanied by hand clapping, the beating of drums and stamping of feet. Those are also the characteristics that accompany indigenous Xitsonga music and dance.

2.9. INFLUENCE OF INDIGENOUS MUSIC AND DANCE ON BEHAVIOURAL PATTERN

The behavioural pattern of a particular cultural group can be influenced by its music and dance. Msomi (1980) opines that if one listens to the music of a particular cultural group, he or she can learn about their values and morals. In his masters dissertation, Mapaya (2004) states that “the behavioural pattern of any given African society is, largely, influenced by the musical concepts of the people” hence, the graceful dancing of mature women differs from young girls’ dancing (Mapaya, 2004). This implies that when elderly women dance, it should be clear in their dance movements that they are mature, therefore an elderly woman who dances like a young girl is reprimanded. Young girls are more energetic and they vigorously use their body parts, such as the hips, hands, feet and facial expressions. A young girl who dances like an old woman would, similarly, be an element of ridicule from her peers. Mapaya (2004) states that music is a strong tool for perpetuating cultural practices because of its ability to inform action,

condition mood, communicate messages and inform behaviour; thus reflect values.

2.10. THE INFLUENCE OF INDIGENOUS MUSIC AND DANCE ON COURTING

Indigenous music and dance also play a crucial role in courting; people in love would sing songs related to their moods pertaining to love. Ramapata (1992) investigates the classification, analysis and meaning of Northern Sotho love songs. The study displays how the songs are used to convey both the love and cultural messages. So in the analysis he also shows that Basotho parents are responsible for arranging marriages for their children, hence, the latter are often shy when it comes to love affairs. For instance, most lawful married couples are reluctant to be seen together. As a result, when walking, the husband walks ahead, maintaining some distance from his wife. The excuse given is that when a man encourages his wife to walk alongside him, she begins to treat him with disrespect, as she becomes too used to him (Ramapata, 1992). All these messages came out in the analyses. Indigenous Xitsonga music and dance also comprises of songs related to the culture of courting. These will be discussed later in this study.

2.11. THE FUNCTIONS OF INDIGENOUS MUSIC AND DANCE

Although performers sing and dance for enjoyment, indigenous music and dance also have different functions in the lives of not only performers but the audience and members of the community in general. Mapaya (2004) points out that in African traditional societies, music forms the main medium through which most,

if not all, of the oral traditions are expressed. For instance, the Bapedi of Ga-Mmalebogo use their music for healing purposes, in church services, for the rites of passage and for social entertainment (Mapaya, 2004).

Johnston (1974) classifies the different types of Xitsonga music and dance according to occasions/seasons. Between October and December, which is a time for hoeing, and it is rainy and hot, farmers sing hoeing songs; from December to March, their songs relate to weeding and between April and September, when it is dry and cool, farmers sing reaping songs. The involvement of their Vatsonga indigenous music as they perform their daily activities is a way of avoiding feelings of tiredness and boredom.

Dargie (1974) also discusses different Xhosa dance styles such as “*Umtshotsho, Intlombe and Ucuxhentsa*”. Included in the analysis are details on the dress code, the age group suitable for a particular dance, mood, occasion and choreography (Dargie, 1974).

When one is truly taken by music, one becomes capable of movements that one would not have willingly done otherwise. Some people become so possessed by the dance that for several days afterwards they no longer have the same sense of reality as the same person.

(Diallo & Hall (1989)

In the quotation above, the two authors indicate how a dance can lead a person to a ‘different world’. This is also the case in other genres; where artists or performers are involved, they behave differently as a result of trying to express their feeling in song and dance in order to communicate well with the audience.

Agawu (2003) states that African music is integrated with social life rather than being apart. He also states that the affinity between song and dance is natural rather than artificial, thereby emphasising the role that music plays for African societies.

Manganye (2011) asserts that music is truly an inseparable ingredient of daily life amongst the Vatsonga, playing a significant role from birth to death. When a child is born, there is joyous celebration through singing and dancing; when death strikes, the community mourns, singing grieving and comforting songs (Manganye, 2011). It is, however not only during birth and death that Vatsonga sing, but they sing for all life's experiences hence they also sing and dance in church, at home, as well as when enjoying traditional home-brewed beer (*mqombhoti and Xikwembu n'teki*), among other occasions.

Guma (1983) is amongst the authors who have contributed in the documentation of traditional songs. He identifies three categories of traditional songs, namely, action songs, ceremonial songs and "*Dikoma*" (Guma, 1983:143). He describes action songs as those that are sung at work to accompany action, in order to increase working pace. Guma further states that action songs, according to his culture (Sesotho), are sung by women only and are sometimes utilised as prayers to God to grant them peace while *Dikoma* are sung by boys during their initiation ceremony (Guma, 1983). Masoga (2015) shares the same sentiments by stating that music and music performance in Africa become central to life contexts such

as politics, economics, all kinds of life celebrations and formulation of psychological discourses, healing, divination and divining.

Xitlhabana (1992) also emphasises the importance of songs in everyday activities. He states that Xitsonga traditional songs are used to defuse tensions between warring parties, to teach, to reprimand, to praise or to condemn. Below is an example of a song that teaches through reprimanding:

N'wachochovelani

Wa ha nava nenge

Wu ya dliva ekule

N'wachochovelani

(Xitlhabana, 1992:13)

Translation

N'wachochovelani

You are stretching the leg

To reach very far

N'wachochovelani

N'wachochovelani is the name given to a person who goes to different places, good and bad. In the context of this song, *N'wachochovelani* therefore refers to a prostitute, a woman who has lost respect and dignity (Xitlhabani, 1992). This

song is educational; it teaches people how they should behave. In this study, more songs of this nature will be described.

Xitlhabana gives the following song as an example of a song sung while people are working:

Hi tirha hi nga holi ka mulungu

Chona piki

Hi verengela mugayo eka mulungu

Chona piki

Mulunghu wa ku basa ka mulungu

Chona piki

(Xitlhabana, 1992)

Translation

We work for nothing in the employ of this white man

Pick up the pick-axe

We work just for a bag of mealie meal in this job of this white man

Pick up the pick-axe

The real white man, the white man

Pick up the pick-axe

The above is also a protest song as in it the Vatsonga employees are protesting about the way they are ill-treated by their white employers. They are complaining

that they can only afford a bag of mealie meal with their pay and that the employees cannot tolerate exploitation any longer.

As far as classification of indigenous music and dance is concerned, Chauke (2004) describes a variety of them and in the process emphasizing their functions and importance as well as the dance movements and instruments. Chauke gives the following as the classifications: *Ntsima* (working group), work songs, lullabies, labour migration songs, herd boys' songs, initiation songs and so on (Chauke, 2004).

2.12. CONCLUSION

The aspects discussed above are amongst the most significant characteristics of indigenous Xitsonga music and dance. Despite these details, there is still a gap that this study seeks to fill; for instance, there are authors who have discussed the themes of different songs but did not analyse musicological facets, such as harmony, texture, melody and structure. Notation will therefore form part of this study, in order to document sources that can benefit people who can read music. The comprehensiveness of the analysis will be enhanced by an inclusion of details like the text, attire, context, movements and the characteristics of performers.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

McMillan and Schumacher (2001) define a research methodology as the overall procedures for data collection and analysis to investigate a specific problem. The purpose of a discussion on a research methodology, therefore is to give a detailed explanation of the methods that will be utilised during the process of conducting a research.

3.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to reveal how indigenous Xitsonga music and dance genres operate, the positivism approach will be employed. Positivism in general refers to philosophical positions that emphasise empirical data and scientific methods, an appropriate approach in musicology (Moses & Torbjorn, 2012). In other words, positivism looks at music for what it is and also appreciates its expressions by practitioners.

3.3. STUDY APPROACH

The study employs two approaches, namely, a qualitative approach and a musicological approach. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) posits that qualitative research is a multi-method that involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to a subject matter. The qualitative research method, thus, was deemed suitable for

this interpretative study because of the kind of data to be analysed – music and dance compounds of a cultural group, in their natural environment. A qualitative approach was used for the collection of primary data – four types of indigenous Xitsonga music and dance genres (*Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*, respectively) and for their explanations. The musicological approach was also employed as the second phase of the study and was concerned with notating the pieces into two categories: tonic solfa and staff notation.

3.4. SOURCES OF DATA

The targeted primary sources were members of groups that perform *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*. Studying of existing records and attendance of cultural festivities were used to identify key groups and the people involved in the four art forms mentioned above. Secondary sources of data, including books, articles and journals about indigenous Xitsonga music and dance, were used as guides to notation and analysis methods.

3.5. STUDY AREA

The research was mainly conducted in the Vhembe District, Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga, South Africa. Vhembe District lies in the Northern part of Limpopo Province and it is bordered in the East by the Kruger National Park, South-East by the Mopani District, South-West by the Capricorn District, North-Eastern by Botswana and Northern Zimbabwe (Naomi M, René E, McCracken P, Ndlovu N, Gerritsen A, Bradshaw D & Groenewald P, 2015). The district has an

estimated population of 1.3 million people with Black Africans being the majority (98.2%); Coloureds 0.1%, Indians/Asians 0.4% and Whites 1.1% (Naomi, *et al.*, 2015). The languages spoken in the district are Venda (67.2%), Xitsonga (24.8%); North Sotho (1.6%), Afrikaans (1.3%) and other (5.1%) (Naomi, *et al.*, 2015). The Primary Health Care (PHC) facilities in Vhembe District include 123 fixed clinics, 18 mobile clinics and 8 community health centres.

3.6. POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The populations of any research are the relevant people, items or events that can contribute relevant data for the topic of the research. As the purpose of this research is the analysis of indigenous Vatsonga song and dance combinations, songs were collected from groups during routine performances as well as organised sessions. Thirty common pieces were analysed and notated in staff notation and tonic solfa.

3.7. SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Purposive sampling was used which best suited this study because the procedure involves people or groups with specified traits or characteristics. The samples were *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*. The four genres were chosen because they represent prominent indigenous Xitsonga music and dance - *Xibelani* and *Mikhinyavedzo* being female genres, while *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* are male genres. In addition to the four genres, there are also indigenous Xitsonga music and dance art forms; namely, *Ku Thawuza*, *Choza*,

Cawa, Ku Giya, Xifasi and *Makhwaya* Furthermore, existing recordings on indigenous Xitsonga music-dance compound was used for analysis.

3.8. DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

Hall and Hall (1996) explain data collection as a process of gathering information required to answer the research questions. The primary methods of data collection used in this study were observations, interviews and focus group discussions.

The study adopted the participant-observation method with the role of the observer being made known to the participants. Observations took place when indigenous group members were performing, either in cultural festivities or occasions specially organised for data collection. The songs were recorded during the observation and clarity concerning the lyrics was sought at the end of performance.

In order to guide the interviews, a checklist of issues comprising of key information emanating from the observations were constructed. The use of a checklist allowed a more detailed exploration into the issues of interest as participants were asked to give their views around such issues.

When interacting with participants, the Xitsonga language was used. During observation, interviews and focus group discussion, a digital camera and a video

camera were used for the purpose of capturing data and keeping evidence. Some of the pictures form part of the research report.

3.9. DATA ANALYSIS

Punch (1998) explains that data analysis means processing, checking over and trying to understand the information or the data collected. Brink (1997) defines data analysis as a process which entails categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summarising the data and describing them into meaningful terms. In this study, data was analysed qualitatively using thematic content analysis.

Van Mannen (1990) has outlined the following steps that can be used to analyse the data:

- Reading through the text several times to acquire more understanding.
- Re-reading the text and highlighting words and phrases or sentences which answer the research question/s.
- Grouping units which carry the same meaning into themes of meaning.
- Giving relevant titles to the themes based on the content of each theme.
- Presenting the whole portrayal of the text, while discussing the relationships between themes.

Exploiting this kind of analysis helped ensure that the statement of problem was addressed.

3.10. VALIDITY OF THE PROCESS

According to Morse and Field (1996), validity is the extent to which the research information (findings) represents reality. It has to do with whether the findings are interpreted correctly without being biased towards anything or anybody, such as the researcher's assumptions and preconceptions. Participants were allowed to verify interpretations and conclusions. This was done to ensure that no facts are constructed wrongly.

3.11. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study focused purely on music as the dance component was not analysed in detail since the present researcher is not a dance expert. As mentioned earlier, besides the four genres that were covered in this study, namely, *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*, there are also *Ku Thawuza*, *Choza*, *Cawa*, *Ku Giya*, *Xifasi*, *Makhwaya*, and so on, which did not form part of this study. If all indigenous Xitsonga music and dance genres can be analysed in this study, justice may not be done due to the extent to which the chosen ones were analysed.

3.12. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed study was conducted in accordance with the code of ethics of the University of Venda. The aims of this research were thoroughly explained to the participants so that they could choose whether they would like to participate or not. Informed consent was therefore considered.

Moyo (2014) states that a research conducted with human beings as participants could generate ethical issues that should be addressed from the onset. Ethics is a set of moral principles that are required by individual persons or a group of people (Moyo, 2014). In order to adhere to ethical practice during the research, certain guiding principles were observed: respect for the participants, justice and beneficence. In accordance with these principles, while collecting data, pseudonyms were used in order to ensure anonymity for the participants, by so doing their responses remain confidential. Participants were also at liberty to refuse to give answers if they were not comfortable. The length and type of interviews were extensively explained to the participants.

A qualitative research is usually subjected to the following five principles and these were applied in order to ensure trustworthiness in this research, namely, true value, neutrality, consistency, applicability and authenticity (Brink, 2006) as described below.

3.13. TRUE VALUE

True value determines if the researcher has established confidence in the truth of the findings with the participants. This principle was obtained by using the strategy of credibility and the criteria of prolonged engagement, reflexivity of the researcher and member checking.

3.14. NEUTRALITY

Neutrality refers to the degree to which the results are a function of informants and conditions of the research, not of other biases and perspectives. In this study the strategy of conformability was used. The researcher discussed the findings with the co-coder, who is knowledgeable about the topic, to enhance objectivity in data analysis and interpretation of the research results.

3.15. CONSISTENCY

It emphasises the need for the researcher to account for the ever-changing context within which the research occurs. The researcher used the strategy of dependency to ensure consistency, by obtaining assistance of a co-coder who is an experienced researcher, in the analysis of data and a consensus was reached on the discussions of the various aspects of the research.

3.16. APPLICABILITY

Applicability refers to the degree to which findings can be generalised to different contexts and groups. The researcher used the strategy of transferability to ensure applicability to other related environments.

3.17. AUTHENTICITY

Authenticity refers to how a researcher fairly and faithfully displays a range of different realities. Meaningful literature integration was conducted with an

appropriate search strategy to ensure that the research results are controlled against all available national and international research.

3.18. CONCLUSION

The methodology that was used to conduct this study was explained in this chapter. Amongst the main aspects discussed, were theoretical framework where emphasis were made that the study is musicological. Study design, validity of the study, delimitations of the study and ethical considerations were all covered in this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter four presents the analytical aspects of *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* music and dance, based on the findings of the research. In order to validate the discourse, findings discussed in chapter two were those of the researcher after collecting data. This was done through data presentation.

Amongst the aspects discussed are the origins, performers, choreography (*Macinelo*), composition of pieces and the occasions during which *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* are performed. The attire worn during performance and the instruments played (including how they are constructed) were all discussed.

4.2. ASPECTS OF *XIBELANI*, *MIKHINYAVEDZO*, *XINCAIYINCAI* AND *MUCHONGOLO*

4.2.1. Foundations

Xibelani, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* are cultural practices amongst many that belong to Vatsonga. The main music and dance categories of Vatsonga include *Ku Thawuza*, *Mikhinyavezo*, *Xibelana*, *Muchongolo*, *Xincayincayi*, *Xifasi*, *Choza* and *Makhwaya* (Mugovhani *et al.*, 2013). Vatsonga are mainly found around Southern Africa, especially in the following countries:

South Africa, Southern Mozambique, Southern Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi (Mugovhani, *et al.*, 2013). This research was conducted in South Africa, in the Limpopo Province because that is where Vatsonga are mainly found, specifically, in Vhembe and Mopani Districts, even though Bushbuckridge in Mpumalanga Province was also visited to collect data, especially for *Muchongolo*.

Vatsonga's origin and history cannot be separated from their cultural practices. Their origin and history led to the foundation of their indigenous cultural practices. N'wa-Khosa (2010) opines that dance started when hunters were returning home joyously celebrating their kill, walking rhythmically. This would develop into a dance which, with improvisation, would gradually develop into more varied and intricate forms (Khosa, 2014). Progressively, performers began to sing to the rhythms and thus establishing Xitsonga cultural practice (N'wa-Khosa, 2010).

Soldiers would perform *Muchongolo* in order to gain strength and enthusiasm for war. During wars, *Muchongolo* performance did not include women or instruments. After the fighters had won the battle, they would sing victorious songs from the battlefield until they reached the king's residence. It was on such occasions that women and instrument players would join the soldiers in the performance of *Muchongolo* to congratulate them for the battle won. When wars and battles were no longer waged, the Vatsonga continued to perform this type of music at cultural celebrations and special events, such as when a man's family and in-laws-to-be had successfully completed negotiations and payment of *ku*

lovola (exchange of bride-price), or during *mucato* (traditional weddings) or the performing of rituals (Khosa, 2014).

4.2.2. Performers

Performers who are involved in *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* are discussed in this section. Aspects to be discussed in detail include the dancers, age group, instruments and vocalists.

In any indigenous Xitsonga music and dance performance, age of performers play an important role. As in any other cultural practice, each of the four art forms which form the scope of this study has its own prescribed age for performers. Traditionally, young girls and boys aged between 16 and 23 were the ones who participated in *Xibelani* and *Xincayincayi* art forms (Khosa, 2014). However, if he/she got married before the age of 23, it was no longer acceptable for him/her to perform either *Xibelani* or *Xincayincayi*, whereas unmarried girls and boys over the age of 23 were allowed to continue dancing until they got married (Mugovhani, *et al.*, 2013). This was also echoed by one of the participants as follows:

Khale ka matiko mincino leyi a yi nga ciniwi hi vanhu lavakulu. A yi ri mincino ya tithugamama. Hi marito man'wana, loko u kala u tekiwa a wu nga ha pfumeleriwi ku cina mincino leyi.

In the olden days these cultural practices (*Xibelani* and *Xincayincayi*) were not performed by married men and women, but they were art forms for the youth. In other words, when a man or woman got married, he/she was no longer allowed to participate in these art forms.

(Anonymous, 2005).

Mention should be made that N'wa-Risenga (2016) of Ribungwani village, states that the two art forms, namely, *Xibelani* (for girls) and *Xincayincayi* (for boys), require much energy, hence they are meant for the youth rather than the elderly. She further indicates that the two were not 'dignified' in terms of *macinelo*, hence they are not meant for married people. On the other hand, *Mikhinyavedzo* (for women) and *Muchongolo* (for men) are meant for married men and women. This is because they are dignified arts forms, slower in tempo, more mature themes (mainly educational) and more relaxed in terms of *macinelo*. This aspect will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

4.2.3. Direct performers

These days, *Xibelani* is also performed by married women. In cases where it is performed by married women, it is not performed with the vibrancy and vigour befitting young women but has turned into a dignified cultural practice. In other words, married women do not accord *Xibelani* its former status of vibrancy and vigour. The elderly participants maintain that they perform *Xibelani* because young girls are no longer interested. This art form is now performed by young women who have just graduated from initiation schools and are about to be married. It is generally regarded as an energetic art form, with little room for relaxation. It is a show of physical prowess intended to let everyone (spectators) understand that they are still young and energetic. Amongst the reasons for the art form to be performed by unmarried women was to demonstrate that they are ready for marriage (Khosa, 2014). These women wear very short traditional garments (*tinguvu/xitlhekutani*) in order to display their bodies; the intention was

mainly to impress boys. According to Khosa (2014), this made a great impact and indeed it resulted in a number of them getting marriage partners. This perception was supported by the participant, N'wa-Daniel of Sisimukani Gajeni Cultural Group:

Vanhwanyana lava nga se tekiwaka va cina hi khinkhi swinene, leswaku va kombisa matimba na vuswikoti bya ku cina hi xihatla hi ndlela leyi va nga ta kota ku nyanyula vahlaleri, ngopfu-ngopfu vavanuna.

Unmarried girls dance with passion to show their energy and ability, in order to attract spectators, especially men.

(Marima, 2013)

The researcher opines that *tithugamama* (teenage girls) is the age- group that should perform *Xibelani* instead of married women.

Xincayincayi is still performed by many young boys, however, there are a few married men who still perform this art form. For instance, an adult who leads *Xigubu xa ka Ben* at Plange Village (see picture below).



Figure 2: Albert Novela of Plange Village (Khosa H.A, 2016)

According to some participants in this research, the number of dancers required for performing *Xibelani* and *Mikhinyavedzo* ranges from six to twelve.

4.2.4. Participative audience

Participative audiences who are not part of the performing group are called direct performers. A participative audience are spectators who only participate during a particular event. When a group is performing, a participative audience would clap hands and sing from where they are sitting, by so doing, they enhance the performance. In most cases, a participative audience could also make the texture

of the music thicker so that even a group that appeared unprepared could do well (Khosa,2014). Some participative audience would sometimes approach the stage where a performance is taking place and give performers money in order to motivate them.

4.2.5. *Macinelo* (choreography)

Macinelo is not just one of the main components of *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* music-dance compound but also plays a vital role in African cultural practices in general. Singing and playing of drums usually accompany the dancers (*vacini*); meaning that without *macinelo* the performance is incomplete. *Macinelo* is at the core of *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* music-dance compound.

Khosa (2014) notes that, most of the groups have individuals who specialise in *macinelo*, even though they may be functional in other aspects, such as singing and the playing of drums. In the two female art forms, *Xibelani* and *Mikhinyavedzo*, the lead singer is usually the main choreographer because in most cases, piece circles can determine the style of *macinelo*. As they rehearse, the lead choreographers are trusted with creativity, to introduce new dance styles. All dancers are expected to learn and dance properly and consistently with others, however, talented individuals are also allowed to improvise to enhance the performance.

The two male art forms (*Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*) do not restrict anyone from leading a piece. In fact, dancers, lead choreographers and instrumentalists alternate in leading pieces. The pieces are sung for a short period of time, especially at the beginning of a performance, then the instruments join. Normally the singing would stop and the focus will be on instruments and *macinelo*. This makes it easier for singers to produce their best works because the singing is not technically interrupted by any other physical action, such as playing the instrument or dancing. Intricacies of singing that are more likely to be affected by other physical actions are amongst others, intonation, diction and breathe control.

During the performance of *Xibelani* and *Mikhinyavedzo*, the lead choreographer, who is mostly the lead vocalist, ties a rope with a whistle around her neck. A whistle is used to signal a change in choreographic patterns. During an interview with N'wa-Khosa, she stated that:

Hakanyingi loyi a sumaka hi yena a chayaku pepe ku kombisa leswaku hi fanele ku cinca macinelo.

In most cases, the lead vocalist is the one who blows the whistle to signify the change of *macinelo*.

(N'wa-Khosa, 2010)

N'wa-Khosa, explains that when the whistle is blown, *vacini* are expected to change *macinelo* at the end of a piece cycle. *Macinelo* can be changed several times in one piece. The aim is to build the climax in order to grab the spectators' attention by the time the piece ends. Money would at sometimes be given to the best performer as a token of appreciation (See participative audience).

4.3. COMPOSITION OF INDIGENOUS XITSONGA PIECES

The composition of indigenous Xitsonga pieces is a work of art, particularly when an individual comes up with a new musical idea. For instance, a new melodic line can result in the development of a new piece; or lyrics can suggest a melody that results in the development of a new piece (Khosa, 2014). Most of the pieces sung during indigenous Xitsonga music performances were composed in the eighteenth century (Junod, 1927). Some member informants indicated that some of the groups were privileged to have members who had the ability to compose indigenous Xitsonga pieces. The texts of such pieces deal with different issues around the globe, continent, country and their villages. One participant confirmed by saying this:

I nkateko ku va na munhu wa vuswikoti byo qhambha entlaweni. Vo tala va hina a hi swi koti; xa hina i ku ticinela na ko ku yimbelela.

It is a blessing to have someone with skills to compose in the group. Most of us cannot compose; we can only dance and sing.

(N'wa-Sithole, 2013)

Contemporary composers, for example, would compose pieces about HIV/AIDS; pieces to praise their leaders, pieces about their history, culture, youth's behaviour and politics (Mugovhani, *et al.*, 2013). Composed indigenous Xitsonga pieces will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.3.1. Contexts of *xibelani*, *mikhinyavedzo*, *xincayincayi* and *muchongolo* performances

There are different occasions during which the above mentioned cultural practices are performed. According to many respondents interviewed in this study, *Xibelani* and *Mikhinyavedzo* were performed during celebrations for a girl who had graduated from initiation school (*tikhomba*). *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* were performed when a child was born during which they would slaughter a goat called “*Mbuti ya xidzwele*”.

A choral music composer, Marivate DC has composed a song called “*Mbuti ya xidzwele*”. The context is the same, it is a birthday song. In his song, there is a statement “*thimbyarimbya*” which is a title of one of the indigenous Xitsonga pieces that are discussed in the next chapter. *Thimbyarimbya* is also suitable for a birthday celebration (see piece 10). When people get together for drinking of home-brewed indigenous beer such as *mqombhoti* (traditional beer) or *vukanyi* (*marula* beer), they perform indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compounds.

Mabunda (2016) mentions that in the olden days, *Muchongolo* was performed during events such as when a man had completed the payment of *ku lovola*, or during a traditional wedding called *mthimba* or *mucato*. However, nowadays *Muchongolo* is performed at other ceremonies, such as the unveiling of tombstones, official openings of organisations, government or university inauguration ceremonies. In Bushbuckridge, *Muchongolo* is usually performed on Sundays and according to Mabunda, *Muchongolo* is performed every Sunday in

Bushbuckridge. This is also the case around Elim and Hlanganani in Limpopo Province. *Xibelani* is amongst some of the art forms that are performed every Sunday in the afternoon. Performance venues rotate around business stakeholders who manage these occasions.

Even though there are specific occasions where the Vatsonga perform their indigenous music and dance cultural practices, most participants indicated that currently they organize events mainly to engage in their cultural practices. It should also be mentioned that some performing groups are invited for a performance and get paid, however, money is not a primary motive for Vatsonga performers. Nonetheless, when someone among the performers excels, people from the audience may give such a person some money as a token of appreciation to the particular performer (Khosa, 2014). The following is what one of the respondents said about money:

Hambi leswi a hi nga cineli mali, loko munhu a cina ngopfu, vahlaleri va khumbheka va n'wi lula hi mali ku ri ndlela yo n'wi hlohlotela leswaku a yisa emahlweni ni ncinelo lerinene.

Even though we were not performing for money, when someone dances impressively, spectators would be moved and give them a token of appreciation in the form of money in order to encourage such a dancer to carry on with the good work.

(Marima, 2013)

Contrary to what happened in the past, there are also participants who believe that, people should perform during competitions for money or other valuables that may be of use in life. In fact, most groups stipulate a certain amount of money

when they perform, even during occasions such as *tikhomba*, where they never charged money before.

4.3.2. Attire

When the Vatsonga perform the four cultural practices discussed herein, they wear particular attires. The attire worn during the performance of *Xibelani* and *Mikhinyavedzo* will be the first to be discussed, followed by the discussion of the attire worn during the performance of *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*. The first two are female art forms and the latter are male art forms.

4.3.3. Attire worn by females

Most performing groups involved in *Xibelani* and *Mikhinyavedzo* wear a uniform when they are performing. They do so in order to feel like they are working towards one objective as without uniforms, they do not feel coordinated or as a unit. Figure 3 depicts a Mutsonga woman clad in traditional attire for *Xibelani* or *Mikhinyavedzo* (Khensani, 2017).

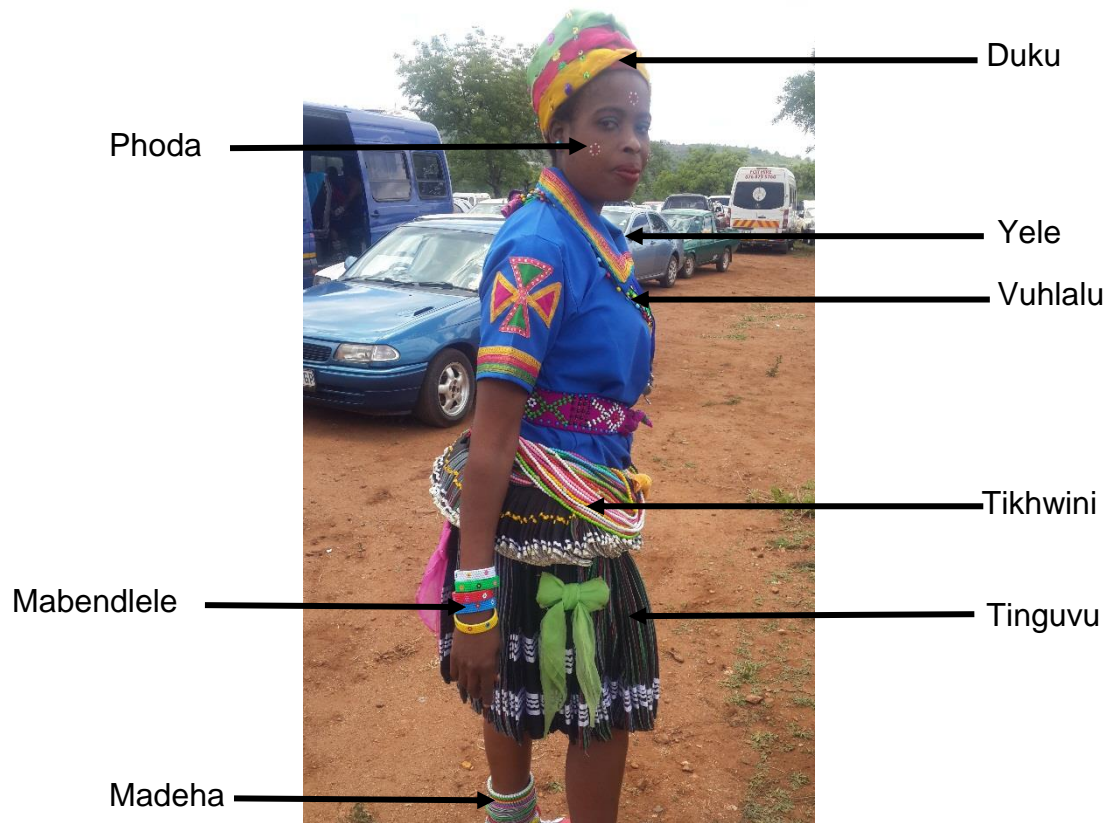


Figure 3: A Mutsonga woman wearing traditional attire (Khosa H.A, 2017)

An indigenous Xitsonga music and dance performer (woman) wears *thawula* (a small towel) or *duku* which appears in the picture below. Other women wear a combination of a *duku* and *thawula*. Sometimes Vatsonga women wear several *maduku* (head scarfs) at the same time, with the different colours overlapping, or woven together at calculated intervals (Mugovhani, *et al.*, 2013).

According to Mugovhani (2013), Vatsonga women also have decorative symbols, for example, the names of their spouses written on their *minceka*, arms and ankles (Mugovhani, *et al.*, 2013). Vatsonga women use their own traditional make up on their faces in order to look beautiful. They use match sticks to apply tooth-paste on their cheeks. *Poda* (ponds) was also applied for decoration. Below is a

picture of a Mutsonga girl who has applied traditional make up (*poda*) on her face (Khosa, 2014).



Figure 4: A girl who has applied traditional make up (Khosa, 2016)

Performers would wear *vuhlalu* (a necklace made of beads) such as *xizambhani*, *xifezani*, *matshunyetshunye*, *tikece*, *khume* and *landzhela*. The differently designed *Vuhlalu* has different names, such as *mhaninkulu*, meaning 'the first wife'. The first wife was expected to wear a *mhaninkulu* in order to signify her status in the family. There is also a *vuhlalu* called *tamani* (a mopani worm), since its colours look the same as those of a mopani worm (Khosa, 2014).

Below is a combination of *maduku* in different colours.



Figure 5: A Mutsonga girl wearing a *duku* on the head and *vuhlalu* around the neck (Khosa, 2016)

There are also women who wear a combination of a *duku* and *thawula* as well as a combination of *tikhwinari*. In order to avoid confusion, it should also be mentioned that *xizambhani* is not only worn around the neck, it can also be worn on the hand and on the leg.



Figure 6: A woman wearing a duku, thawula, khinari and xizambhani (Khosa, 2017)

There are also other head gears such as *pandhani*, *khanikha*, *siyandhani*, *kayelamani*, *kwhinari*, *qhazi*. and *mdumakule*. *Tikhwinari* appear in different forms (see figure above).

The Vatsonga also wear a *yele*, which is a shirt-like cloth with colours resembling the Xitsonga tradition. Performers wear a vest called *xihaka-boyi* right on top of a *yele*. “*Xihaka*” is derived from the verb “*ku haka*” which means ‘to hang’. Normally, the lady wearing a *xihaka-boyi* implies that she is in love with a gentleman called Boyi. The vest serves as a red light for boys to propose to the lady. A *yele* is mostly worn during *Mikhinyavedzo* performance, rather than at a *Xibelani*. *Xibelani* performers mostly wear *xikipa* (t-shirt), however, performers of *Xibelani* are not prohibited to wear *tiyele* (plural of *yele*). *Xikipa* is regarded as

casual attire, while *yele* is regarded as formal, hence, the former are worn by young girls and the latter by elderly women (Khosa, 2014).



Figure 7: A woman wearing *xikipa* (Khosa, 2016)

Nceka Vatsonga performers also cover their bodies with *minceka* (plural of *nceka*) when they perform. *Nceka* is a cloth which is big enough to cover one's whole body. *Nceka* is beautifully decorated with beads and colourfully embroidered threads, and sometimes with small copper safety pins (Mugovhani, *et al.*, 2013). There are different kinds of *minceka*, namely, *xihatimani*, *xikatawa*, *tindhayimani*, *xilakanyani* and *tshamanasipho*. A *nceka* called *tshamanasipho* can cover almost the whole body. The story is that a *Tshamanasipho* replaces *Xihaka-Boyi* when Boyi and his wife are not on good terms, particularly due to Boyi's failure to send money home. "*Tshamanasipho*" literally means "stay with

the soap”. The story continues that Boyi, who works in an urban area gets to a point where he does not send money back home. When that happens, his wife then puts on *tshamanasipho*. Men who know her as Boyi’s wife would then have the temerity to approach her for a secret love affair. A man who wins her heart, therefore would take care of the woman and replace Boyi as a bread winner; Boyi’s wife, however, would remain his wife forever. Usually, the man who would secretly be in love with Boyi’s wife would also be settled with his own wife.

Tshamanasipho is a whole story directed at Boyi so that he can keep his ‘soap’ wherever he is because she (his wife) can wash the *nceka* without soap and it will be clean. Under such circumstances, soap is being used figuratively; it actually means that the husband (Boyi) does not maintain his wife and children back home. After a long time Boyi’s wife realises that it is not a good idea for Boyi not to support her and the children financially and also, for her to be in a secret relationship with another man’s wife. She would then decide to wear some white *vuhlalu* so that Boyi is embarrassed and would be obliged to buy soap in order to wash the white spots, again, in other words, supporting his family in the process (Khosa, 2014).

Some performers carry beaded wallets, mainly for decoration; they tie them on the *minceka*. Around the belly area, women tie a *nchungu*, which is a towel that looks like a rope; they claim it gives them resistance against hunger while dancing as a reason for tightly tying a *nchungu*. A *tikhwini* (made of beads) would be worn around the stomach to close the gap between a *yele* and *Xibelani*. *Xibelani* is a

Xitsonga traditional garment, also known as *tinguvu* or *xitlhekutani*. On a *Xibelani* dancers wear *vuhlalu* shaped like an eye, which means that the husband (Boyi) was supposed to look only at the person wearing that particular *Xibelani* and ignore other women (Khosa, 2014).

The figure below show different traditional bracelets called *vusenga*. In between *vusenga* they wear *mabendlele*, *xifamandhani*, *swimanyela* and *chochwani*.

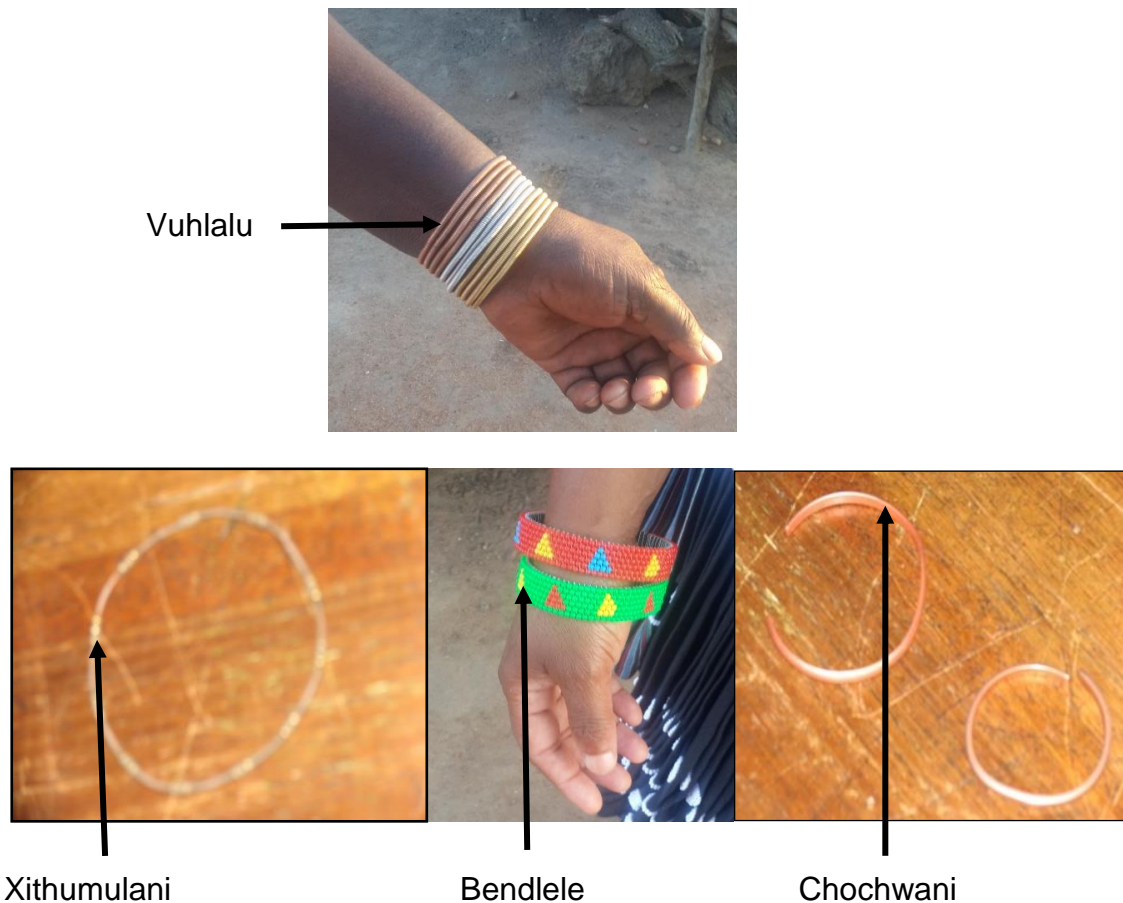


Figure 8: *Vuhlau*, *xithumulani*, *bendlele* and *chochwani* (Khosa, 2017)

According to Khosa (2014), around the waist women wear *xitlhekutani* (as shown in figure below). *Xitlhekutani* is a very short traditional skirt. On top of *xitlhekutani*, dancers wear or tie the *xigejo* that is also known as *xipereta* and it is made out of beads. As they dance, *xigejo* would follow the direction of *xitlhekutani*. *Swipereta* (more than one *xipereta*) are about five in number and they have different names - *magezi* (a person's name), *xipotwana* (small pot), *nyeleti* (a star) and *xigwagwa* (small axe) (Khosa, 2014).



Figure 9: Swigejo on tinguvui (Khosa, 2017)

Tinguvu and *xitlhekutani* are both *swibelani* worn by females. *Tinguvu* (mostly worn by married women) is not as short as *xitlhekutani* (mostly worn by young unmarried girls).

On the legs, dancers wear *madeha*, which look like *vusenga* but are slightly bigger. In between, *madeha* performers wear *fanyafanya*, *xikhalamazula*, *timbhobvu* and *vukhotlo*, for decoration. Figure 10 shows the leg of a Mutsonga woman decorated with *madeha* (Khosa, 2014).



Figure 10: *Xizambhani*, *swikhalamazula* and *timbhobvu* and *madeha* (Khosa, 2012)

In the past, performers did not wear shoes as part of their uniform, however, things have changed and now there are some groups that wear shoes when they perform and they make sure that they even wear same colour (Khosa, 2014).

4.3.4. Attire worn by males

Unlike women's attire, which is more or less the same for both *Xibelani* and *Mikhinyavedzo*, the attire worn by males has more differences than similarities. In fact, the attire for *Xincayincayi* comprises of more facets while that of

Muchongolo is less decorated, depicting maturity and dignity. The attire for *Xincayincayi* will be discussed first, followed by the *Muchongolo* attire.

During the performance of *Xincayincayi*, boys wear a traditional attire that is a uniform. On the head, they wear a *Xidlhoko* (hat) made of animal skin, although a leopard skin is preferred. According to Blessing of Xivulani Village, the skin of a leopard is the most beautiful of them all.



Figure 11: A boy wearing *xidlhoko* (Khosa, 2016)



Figure 12: A boy wearing a *xikhotlo* on the arm and *malapi* on the wrist (Khosa, 2016)

On the arms, boys wear *tinsiva* (feathers) of big birds, however, nowadays they use artificial feathers because birds' feathers are scarce. The *xikhotlo* is made in the same way as the *xidlhoko*. On their wrist, the boys wear a cloth.



Figure 13: A boy wearing *tinsiva*
(Khosa, 2016)

There are numerous items that are worn around the waist and underneath these boys wear *ntoriyani* (a short decorated skirt, tight at the lower edge). On top of *ntoriyani*, they wear *mbyembye*, also made of an animal skin; its role is to tighten the *ntoriyani* so that the private parts are covered when the boys dance. Around the waist, boys wear a *duku* (made of cloth), mainly for decoration. Below the *duku* they wear a *xigejo*, which is more or less the same as a *tinguvu*, which normally grabs the attention of the spectators as they perform. *Bencu* is an animal skin that is worn at the back, as the boys perform; it goes up and down as the *ntoriyani* moves sideways.



Figure 14: A boy performing Xincayincayi (Khosa, 2016)

Muchongolo has its own attire that differs from that of *Xincayincayi*. As mentioned in chapter one, under musical history, *Muchongolo* used to be performed to boost men's faith and courage as they gear up for war. However, as time went by, *Muchongolo* was performed during various joyous gatherings; consequently, dancers had to wear a particular attire in recognition of this. It should be mentioned that even though *Muchongolo* is an art form for elderly men, young boys are now encouraged to participate in it, as a way of preserving the culture; hence there will be pictures of young boys in a discussion of this section.

The attire worn during *Muchongolo* performance is made of male goat skin and feather bracelets made from the tail of a *hongonyi* (wildebeest). There are other items made of different animal skins. On the head, there are different items that

are worn; some men wear *rikhota* and *xikhapa*, decoratively made of beads. See picture below.



Figure 15: A man wearing *rikhota* and *xikhapa* (Ramaite, 2012)

There is also a *xidlhoko*, which Vatsonga believe is a tradition of the Zulu people. When the researcher asked some of the interviewees about the reason/s for wearing a Zulu attire, they indicated that Zulus had actually contributed to the traditional attire of Vatsonga because the two tribes lived together in Mozambique during the war between Shaka Zulu and Soshangana. When the descendants of Soshangana came back to South Africa and settled in Mpumalanga, Vatsonga, who are also known as Machangana, by virtue of them being the descendants of Soshangana, lived together and performed music and dance together. This is the reason why the Xitsonga attire, especially the men's, looks like that of the Zulus. As mentioned, the following is a picture of a boy wearing a *xidlhoko*, borrowed from Zulus (Ramaite, 2013).



Figure 16: A boy wearing
xidlhoko on the head
(Khosa, 2016)

On the chest, the young boy is wearing an animal skin called *njhovo*. The other artistically decorated animal skin worn around the waist is also called *njhovo*. Alternatively, men wear shorts instead of the *njhovo* which is worn on the waist. *Mukhupula* is worn on the legs and is made of sheep wool. It is associated with peace. According to the Vatsonga culture, a sheep is regarded as a symbol of peace (Hlungwani, 2007).

Boys adorn their legs with *mukhupula*, made of the skin of a Zulu or Xhosa goat and *mwacho* which is made of the tails of cattle. Boys wear traditional necklaces made of *rigoda*, long cow tail hair, *xiboyana*, and *xikopo*. They also wear short neck ties and beads of different colours. On their wrists they wear *mkhembu* and *timbhondha*. When they perform during *ku lovola* ceremony, they adorn their

waist with *mhlalanyoni* and *tinjhovo* which are made of calf skin. Around the waist, they also wear *swisegani* made of horse tail, which is preferred because of its length, compared to that of cattle.



Figure 17: A boy wearing *mukhupula* on the legs (Ramaite E, 2012)

Muchongolo performers sometimes adorn their legs with *mafahlela*, which produces a sound that accompanies the music as they dance. The sound produced by their feet when they hit the ground encourages them to dance even harder. *Mafahlela* is made by inserting small stones into an empty fresh milk carton. The carton is secured to ensure that the small stones do not fall out of the carton as the boys dance (Ramaite, 2013).



Figure 18: Muchongolo performers dressed for an occasion (Khosa, 2017)

Unlike *Xincayincayi* performers, *Muchongolo* performers do not wear many items when they perform. According to Gezani of Mkhuhlu, elderly men are not supposed to look glamorous because they have no intention to impress anyone, especially women. He further states that boys who dance *Xincayincayi* are the ones who normally wear many items as an endeavour to impress young girls.

4.4. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

During the performance of the four art forms discussed in this study, the *vacini* (dancers) are not only accompanied by voices but also by drums. The drums comprise of *swingomani* (site drums) and one big drum (in the case of *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*). Site drums that accompany *Xibelani* and *Mikhinyavedzo* are about three in number, while those that accompany *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* are about ten, including the big western drum which will be discussed later in this section. Amongst the instruments that accompany the *Xibelani* and *Mikhinyavedzo* is a *pepe* that is used alternatively with a whistle. It is mostly blown at the climax of a performance as the choreography changes at the end of the song cycle, as discussed under *macinelo* (Khosa, 2014).



Figure 19: A woman blowing a pepe (Khosa H.A, 15/09/2010)

4.4.1. Construction of a site drum

Site drums are made out of cowhide and tin. After a cow has been slaughtered, the hide is dried for approximately a month in for it to dry properly; normally it is put on firewood to aid the process (Khosa, 2014).



Figure 20: A dry cow hide (Khosa, 2016)

When it is dry, it is immersed in water for a week and cut into two circular pieces, whilst moist. The circular cuts are slightly broader than the diameter of the tin. The lids of a tin are removed at both ends where the two circular cowhide pieces will be used to cover the two hollowed sides. From the wet cowhide, holes are cut around the circular cowhide, so that it can be tied around the tin. The holes differ in sizes. Those of *xitetete* (smallest site drum) are very close, to enable the hide to be very tight when tuning it; this results in a very high sound. The opposite results are based on holes that are not too close to each other, depending on the intended sound by the tuner. The holes should be equal in number on both sides so as to produce the same sound from both sides. After cutting the holes on both sides, one needs to cut a slim belt from the hide, called *ribya*; it is used to tie the holes from both sides until the site drum is complete (Khosa, 2014).

The male cowhide is harder than a female cowhide. The harder the cowhide, the lower the sound and vice versa. This implies that *xitetete*, which is meant to

produce a high sound, is made from a female cowhide while *bidela*, meant to produce a low sound is made from a male cowhide.



Figure 21: Hole on the edge of circular piece
(Khosa, 2016)

The tins play a critical role in the quality of the site drum and the sound. According to Novela (2016) of Plange Village, an old tin is the best, although it is hard to find old tins nowadays. An old tin is stronger and produces clear sounds as compared to aluminium tins. Below is a picture of drums made from an old tin and one from an aluminium tin (Khosa, 2014).



Figure 22: On the left is a site drum made of an aluminium tin while on the right is a site drum made of an old tin (Khosa, 2016)

Every site drum has a handle, also made of cowhide, however, with a *ribya* it is tied using two holes on both sides of the site drum. Then a small piece of wood

is used to trap the *ribya* and to make a handle; when dry, the small piece of wood is removed.



Figure 23: A small piece of wood shaping the handle (Khosa, 2016)

The picture below is a demonstration of indigenous knowledge. It depicts an alternative method of drying the site drum, so that dogs do not temper with it. This is because dogs are usually attracted by the smell of cowhide.



Figure 24: A site drum hanged on a fence (Khosa, 2016)

When the drum is completed and dry, it is stored for some days before it is used. A sharp razor is used to remove *voya*. If the performers are not happy with the sound produced, they put the site drum around the fire for further tuning.



Figure 25: Site drums around the fire (Khosa H.A, 2016)

Apart from the drums, the texture of the music is further thickened by a big drum called *xigubu* or *ndlhazi*. In the olden days the big drum was made of donkey hide, and a bigger tin was used. According to many respondents interviewed in this research, the whole process of making the big drum was the same as that of making a small drum, the only difference being that they used donkey hide instead of cowhide for the big drum (Khosa, 2014). The reason given was that donkey hide is harder than cowhide. This meant that it would produce the required bass sound. This was stated by one respondent as follows:

Khale a hi tirhisa dzovo ra donki ku vamba hi rona Xigubu. Xivangelo a ku ri ku vona ku tiya ka rona. Ntikelo wa mpfumawulo wa Xigubu lexi a wu va lowu hi wu languteleke.

In the past we used donkey hide to make the big drum. This is because it is stronger. The sound produced by this drum was as thick as expected.

(N'wa-Sithole, 2013)

The bigger size and the slight tightness of the donkey hide meant such a drum produced a heavy sound. Nowadays the big drum is a western one, as shown in Figure 26.



Figure 26: A big western bass drum, also known as Xigubu (Khosa, 2012)

From the discussion on the making of the different types of drums, the different sounds produced by the different drums warrant description. The drums are not the same in size and therefore they do not produce the same sounds.



Figure 27: A big Western drum and site drums (Khosa, 2012)

Drums are divided into different parts, depending on the sounds they produce. For this reason, drums are made in such a way that the smallest drum would produce the lightest or highest sound, while the bigger one produces a heavier sound.

Before playing, the site drums are heated around a fire, especially when it is cold, so they can be tuned; the big Western drum does not need to be put around a fire. When they are hot, drums are put down in such a way that they face the direction of the sun. As they become hot, they become tight and produce the desired sounds.

4.4.2. Drum sticks

From the observations made during this research, drummers do not use the palms of their hands to play drums, rather, they use *tikhokho*, which are drum

sticks made from the mopani tree. A small stick is cut from the mopani tree and used to play the drums.

The idiophone *Kho!* refer to the sound that comes out when one strikes something. The manner in which the drums are played is the same as how one would strike something, hence the sticks made from the mopani tree are called *tikhokho*. The outer part of the stick is removed and the inner one remains, so that it produces an authentic sound effect (Khosa, 2014)

4.4.3. Instrumentalists

Instrumentalists in this context refer to performers who are responsible for playing drums, kudu horns, whistles and *pepe*. Usually there are about fifteen instrumentalists in the performance of *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*. These instrumentalists also participate as backing vocalists while playing their respective instruments. There are no specialists of any particular instrument; in other words, participants are multifunctional in their ensembles. The degree of excellence in performing any of these instruments is a result of thorough practice and dedication.

4.5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is important to note that all the role players discussed in this chapter are equally important. That means, a choreographer, a singer and an instrumentalist need one another in order for the ensemble to put up a meaningful

and complete performance. On the other hand, the attire is significant as it gives shape and identity to the appearance of the performers.

CHAPTER FIVE: TRANSCRIPTION AND COMMENTARIES

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In the indigenous Xitsonga music-dance compound, music cannot be separated from dance. In fact, the choreography, singing and playing of site drums combine to complete an indigenous Xitsonga music-dance compound. It is, hence emphasised that music and dance in indigenous Xitsonga cultural practice are equally important as stated in the previous chapters. This is also the case with the four art forms discussed in this study; *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* are all characterized by a particular style of dancing.

In this chapter, *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* pieces are transcribed in dual notation. Indigenous Xitsonga pieces, their meaning and also musical characteristics are discussed in this chapter. Among others, the main themes of these compounds relate to aspects, such as love affairs, marriage, societal complaints, mockery, chieftaincy and other general aspects of life.

In indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compound, key is not prescribed at all. It is mostly reliant on the vocal range of the lead singer who should also consider the vocal range of backing vocalists. Singers are, normally, used to their pieces so they pitch them in more or less the same key, although they do not use any pitch instrument to guide them.

The transcriptions that the researcher outlined below are solely based on trying to provide some guidelines to the listener or the reader about the melodic and

rhythmic lines of the pieces that were collected, documented and recorded. The key and pitches of the melodic lines presented in this document are therefore not sacrosanct (Khosa, 2014).

Aspects, such as hand clapping, dancing and singing techniques are amongst some important features of indigenous Xitsonga music and dance

The context of *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* vary, for instance, *tikhombeni* (celebration of girl initiates), competitions, marriage celebrations and so on. The variation of events is in most cases not considered in terms of the relevance of the piece. The rhythmic pattern will be discussed first, followed by the musical pieces and their analyses.

5.2. INSTRUMENTAL ACCOMPANIMENT

One of the most significant elements of African cultural practices is rhythm. *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* also considers rhythm as a significant element. The following sections will be on a discussion of the one rhythmic pattern common to all the performers of *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*.

There are two site drums that are used to accompany *Mikhinyavedzo* and *Xibelani*; these are played by women. *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* are accompanied by about 12 site drums and one big western drum; the roles they play as accompaniments are discussed below.

Drums have different names, based on their roles. The lightest drum is either called called *xitetete* or *matlingwana* or *xitlingi-tlingi*. The three different names are a result of the different dialects that Vatsonga have. *Xitetete* produces the lightest sound during the performance of indigenous Xitsonga art forms. The purpose of the lightest drum is to lead other drums, which means that it calls the rest. When it calls, it is answered by *ntlatlangu*, which is not as light as *xitetete*.

After a few beats or bars which are metrically measured (plus or minus two), *phendhu* joins in. The name *phendhu* is derived from a Zulu word, *phendula*, which means ‘to answer’; *Phendhu* is heavier than the first two drums. After *phendhu*, *bidela* joins in; *Bidela* is derived from the word “*bizela*” which means baritone as that drum does not produce a bass sound hence the usage of the big Western drum/*ndlhazi*. In most cases, the big Western drum marks clearly where the strong beats are. There are some pieces that are led by *xitetete*, but are answered by all other drums simultaneously. The following is a picture of a site drum and the big western drum called *xigubu* or *ndlhazi* (Khosa, 2014).



Figure 28: Site drum (Khosa, 2012)



Figure 29: A big western drum (Khosha H.A, 2017)

The indigenous *xigubu* or *ndlhazi* (24 kick bass drum), was made out of a very big tin. According to many participants interviewed for this research, the whole process of making the big drum was the same as that of making a small ones, the only difference was that they used donkey hide, not cow hide. The reason given was that donkey hide was harder than the cow hide, implying that a big drum would produce the required bass sound (Khosha, 2014). This was stated as follows:

Khale a hi tirhisa dzovo ra donki ku vamba hi rona xigubu. Xivangelo a ku ri ku vona ku tiya ka rona. Ntikelo wa mpfumawulo wa xigubu lexi a wu va lowu hi wu languteleke.

In the past we used donkey hide to make the big drum. The reason for this was that the donkey hide is stronger. The sound produced by this drum was thick and was the one expected.

(Marima, 2013)

Before the instruments are played, they are all put around the fire, especially when it is cold so, that they can be audible enough. Even when it is hot, they are placed before a fire so and facing the direction of the sun. When they become hot, they tighten and become soft. When that happens, the instrumentalists are assured that they (instruments) will produce a good loud sounds (Khosa, 2014). Pieces to be analysed herein will not be categorised into art forms since many of them are performed across different art forms. For example, many *Xibelani* pieces are also sung during *Mikhinyavedzo* performance.

The following are abbreviations for the drums as they appear in the discussions.

Xitetete	- X
Ntlatlangu	- N
Phendhu	- P
Bidela	- B
Ndlhazi (Western drum)	- W

5.3. PIECES COLLECTED

Yiva yiva



Yi va yi va yiva_ Yi va yi va yiva_

mha nta yva n'wa na

mha nta yva n'wa na Khwi rhi ra ku fa ne la hi nchu ngu mha nta yva n'wa na

mha nta yva n'wa na Khwi rhi ra ku fa ne la hi nchu ngu mha nta yva n'wa na

Piece 1: Yiva yiva

Translation

Text

Translation

Yiva yiva

Steal steal

Mha nta y'va n'wana

I would steal a baby

Khwirhi ra ku fanela hi nchungu

Beautiful stomach

Mha nta y'va n'wana

I would steal a baby

Embedded meaning

This piece is about a woman who is infertile as she expresses her melancholy in not having any child. In this piece, she says she will resort to theft as a solution to her problem; she says: “*Yiva yiva*” which means steal. She further states that she has a beautiful stomach that befits to carry a child for nine months. According to Vatsonga, after a woman has given birth, she should tie a *Nchungu* (a cloth or towel, see attire, 4.3.3.) around her stomach in order to conceal her shapeless belly. So the woman says that *Nchungu* would fit well around her stomach. That is a statement that shows her desperation to give birth.

This situation in the paragraph above normally affects many Africans in general. Most African societies accord dignity to women if they have children. When a woman gets married and is proven infertile, she does not only become sad but also embarrassed. There are also songs to mock infertile women. The in-laws also insult such a woman openly and her husband is always advised to get married to another woman who will give birth. However, marrying a second woman does not necessarily mean that the barren one should be divorced. Vatsonga believe in polygamy, therefore, two women would be married by the same man and the first wife (the barren one) would always maintain the status of *Mhanihulu*, meaning first wife. Major decisions about the upbringing of the

children are made by *Mhanihulu* who would raise the children as if they are biologically hers.

The status (*Mhanihulu*) accorded to the barren wife would make her feel better about her infertility and still feel useful and complete as a woman. The in-laws would also stop mocking her since there would be children and eventually peace would be bestowed. Even though the title of the song is *Yiva yiva*, Vatsonga barren women would not steal children due to desperation; they had better ways to deal with the grief.

Musical characteristics

The piece is accompanied by site drums. It is a piece to be performed by females in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance. As in many cases, the song is in four pulse major (four four time signature). The key indicated may change from time to time since they do not make use of any pitch instrument to mark the key. In this case, key C has been used. Six semi-quavers starts in the third beat of the first bar, which is common in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compounds. Anacrusis (when the song does not start on the strong beat as per time signature) plays a major role as well as this has a big influence also in traditional Xitsonga music. I will give an example of Dr Thomas Chauke's song titled *Rosa* which appears in his 17th album.

Roza

Dr T H Chauke



A swi nya wu li ka ya ra mi na.

Example 1: Roza

The piece above is composed in four pulse measure and is also characterised by anacrusis. The first semi-quaver does not start strongly on the first quarter of the first beat but on the fourth quarter of the first beat. The first strong note is on the second bar (note G or soh in tonic solfa). Chauke sings the syllable “mi” as the strongest. While in the song *Yiva yiva*, the first strong note is C which is doh in tonic solfa, making the first strong syllable “mha”. The difference though is that the strong note is sounded by the follower rather than the leader as is the case in the piece *Roza*.

Another interesting similarity between *Yiva yiva* and *Roza* is the usage of triplets, a common tread in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compound. The piece *Yiva yiva* is cyclic in nature, which is also common in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance.

Ha cina



Ha ci_ no o ho cha_ ku lo yi wa hi na ma nan ha ci_ no
Ho cha_ ku lo yi wa

6 o ho cha_ ku lo yi wa hi na ma nan hi na ha ci_ no o ho_ cha ku lo yi
Ho cha_ ku lo yi wa Ho cha_ ku lo yi wa Ho cha_ ku lo yi

11 wa hi na ma nan a hee ha ci_ no o ho cha_ ku lo yi wa hi na ma nan
wa Ho cha_ ku lo yi wa Ho cha_ ku lo yi wa

Piece 2: Ha cina

Translation

Text

Translation

Ha cino ho

We do dance

Ho chava ku loyiwa hina manan'

We are scared of witchcraft

Embedded meaning

Africans believe that witchcraft exists within the society. According to the performers of the piece “*Ha cina*” which means “we do dance”, they profess their ability at performing. In this piece, performers are actually boasting about their outstanding ability to dance. They say, however that they never perform to the best of their ability due to fear of being bewitched hence referring to their competitors as possible witches.

Africans have always believed that people who do well in different aspects of life are more likely to be bewitched by those who do not do well. In some cases, poor people are accused of witchcraft, citing their poverty as motivation to bewitch the privileged.

Musical characteristics

This piece is also in four four. The piece *ha cina* is characterised by an element of call and response and antiphony. In most cases, call and response and antiphony are used interchangeably, whereas they are not the same. This piece gives a clear example of the difference between the two terms. Antiphony applies from bar 1 to bar 5. The lead singer stars from bar 1 to bar 3. The rest (second part) stars from bar 4 to the first beat of bar 5. In other words, the lead singer finishes her melodic line completely before the response. The second part also sings alone without the interjection of the first part. This is call and response.

Antiphony is a combination of two words. “Anti” means “against” while “phony” means “sound” hence “antiphony” means “sound against sound”. From bar 5, the

lead singer calls and the second part interjects in bar 6. That is antiphony. The piece *Ha cina* has an element of anacrusis, which characterises many African pieces. The syllable “*cha*” is an elision of the word “*Chava*”. Another elision is “*manan*”, the complete word is “*manana*”.

This is common in African music. Colbert Mukwevho, who is a well-known reggae artist in Venda, is fond of elisions in his music. For example, when he pronounces the lyrics in his song titled *Nne na inwi*, he says: “*thi ngo zwi divha uri nne na inwi ri do pengisan*”. Instead of saying “*a thi ngo*” he says “*thi ngo*”, the vowel “*a*” is omitted. The word “*pengisan*” is also an elision, the complete word is “*pengisana*”.

Tuva



m . r , r : d , d . m , m | d , d . r : d .
 Ra dya ma vhe le swi ku tu vha hi yo
 Gu gu

² m . r , r : d , d . m , m | d , d . r : d . | m . r , r : d , d . m , m | d , d . r : d .
 Ra dya ma vhe le swi ku tu vha hi yo Ra dya ma vhe le swi ku tu vha hi yo
 m . r , r : d | . r : d | m . r , r : d | :
 ra dya ma vel Gu gu ra dya ma vel

Piece 3: Tuva

Translation

Text

Translation

Ra dya mavele, hiyo

It eats mealies, onomatopoeia

Swiku tuva hiyo

Go dove, onomatopoeia

Ra dya mavele tuva hiyo

The dove eats meats mealies

Gugu ra dya mavele

Onomatopoeia, it eats mealies

Embedded meaning

Vatsonga plough mealies as a means of survival. After harvesting the mealies, they place them outside for them to dry. When there is no one to look after the mealies, doves would capitalize on that and eat them. In this piece, the singer is complaining about doves reaping where they did not sow. The word “*swiku*”, is applied when one gets rid of either birds or chickens. “*Gugu*” is the sound (onomatopoeia) produced by the dove as it enjoys the mealies. The piece is performed during *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, amongst many.

Musical characteristics

Unlike many indigenous Xitsonga pieces, *Tuva* starts on a strong beat and ends the call within the first bar. The response starts in the first bar and ends at the second bar. There is no use of triplets in this piece, however semi-quavers are once again used in the piece “*Tuva*”. The piece is very short and is cyclic.

N'ta Famba na vana va mina

Voice

A- hee_____ ha! a- hee_____ Xin

Voice

Yo ndzi-ya'ka- yo, n'ta fa- mba na va - na va me Ndxate- ka va - na va mi- na haa!_____ Xin

7

Voice

dzi-ku-mi-le ka Ben_ Cha-va-la- la! I- yo

Voice

dzi-ku-mi-le ka Ben_ Cha-va-la-la! Yo ndziya ka - yo, N'ta fa- mba na va - na va me'

13

Voice

haa! I - yo_____ Xi - dzi - ku - mi - le ka

Voice

I - yo_____ Xi - dzi - ku - mi - le ka

17

DS

Voice

Ben Cha - va - la - la! Yo! Ben Cha - va - la - la

Voice

Ben Cha - va - la - la! Ben Cha - va - la - la

Piece 4: Nta famba na vana va mina

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Yo, ndziya kayo</i>	Oh, I am going home
<i>N'to famba na vana va mina</i>	I'll take my children with
<i>Na teka vana va mina- haa</i>	I'm taking my children with me
<i>Xi ndzi kumile ka Ben Chavalala</i>	I'm in trouble with the Ben Chavalalas'

Embedded meaning

N'ta famba na vana va mina is a piece that is led by a woman who declares that she is about to return home due to a divorce. She indicates that she is in trouble with the 'Ben Chavalalas' who are her in-laws. Seemingly, she is sick and tired of staying with them and she would prefer a divorce. She also emphasizes that she would not leave her children behind; she is taking them along.

It is usually the case for Vatsonga to give custody of the children to the woman upon divorce. The Vatsonga believe that divorced fathers can get married to another women who might treat these children badly. This differs from the case where a married barren woman is raising her husband's children as discussed in previous paragraphs (see piece 1, *Yiva yiva*). It is rare to find children being raised by their step mothers in the Xitsonga culture. In situations where children are raised by their step mothers, such children usually experience hardships in the form of mental and physical abuse.

Musical characteristics

N'ta famba na vana va mina also starts with a second part. In this piece, anacrusis applies once again. Unlike most Xitsonga pieces, *N'ta famba na vana va mina* is composed in three pulse measure (three four time signature). There is no specific key since there is never the use of a pitch pipe. The top line joins in bar 3 and compliments the lead singer. The two parts sing in unison from bar 7 to bar 8. In bar 13, the two parts once again sing in unison but they do not resolve in unison as they did in bar 8. In bar 8, the two parts sing the dominants, when they resolve, while in bar 14, the top line sings tonics and the bottom line sings the dominants.

N'wamarhwale

m . m : r . r | - : - | s . : m . , r | - . d : - . t | l . s : s . | : | s : - | - : m . , r |
 N'wa ma rhwa le _____ yo yo_ yo N'wa ma rhwa le hoo yo yo
 : : : : : : : | s : - | - : m . , r |

5 | - . d : - . m | m . r : r | . r : r . r | r . r : m . , r | - . d : d . t | l . s : s . | s : - | - : m . , r |
 _ yo Nwa ma rhwa le ma lo ko tswa ne tswa rwa_ ha ndle N'wa ma rhwa le hoo yo yo
 - . d : - . m | m . r : r | : : : : : | s : - | - : m . , r |

9 | - . d : - . m | m . r : r | . s : s . s | s . s : m . d | r . d : d . m | m . r : r . | s : - | - : m . , r |
 _ yo N'wa ma rhwa le swi tsa ki si li a ha ni ye nga le ka mha ne hoo yo yo
 - . d : - . m | m . r : r | : : : : : | s : - | - : m . , r |

13 | - . d : - . m | m . r : r | . r : r . r | r . r : m . , r |
 _ yo N'wa ma rhwa le ma lo ko tswa ne tswa rwa_
 - . d : - . m | m . r : r | : : : : : |

15 | - . d : d . t | l . s : s . | s : - | - : m . , r | - . d : - . m | m . r : r |
 _ ha ndle N'wa ma rhwa le hoo yo yo_ yo N'wa ma rhwa le
 : : : | s : - | - : m . , r | - . d : - . m | m . r : r |

Piece 5: N'wamarhwale

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>N'wamarhwale yo yo, hoo</i>	Carrier
<i>Malokotswane tswarwa handle</i>	Hypocrite, illegitimate child
<i>Switsakisili a ha ni yenga leka mhane</i>	It was nice when you were convincing me
<i>Malokotswane tswarwa handle</i>	Hypocrite, illegitimate child

Embedded meaning

N'wamarhwale refers to a person who is a carrier. In this context, a woman is complaining about a man who married her. She states that she regrets the day she met him because she has experienced hardships in her marriage. In the song, she calls him names such as *malokotswane*, which means hypocrite. The furious woman further states that the man is not even a legitimate member of his family as she alleges that he came with his mother, meaning that he is a child of another man who dated his mother before she was formally married in that family.

In the song *N'wamarhwale*, the woman says it was nice when they were still dating, however things changed for worse after getting married. The onomatopoeia *yo yo* express a feeling of being in trouble. The word *mtswarwa* in an elision, the complete word is "*mutswariwa*".

Some African couples experience difficulties after getting married. They claim that a relationship before marriage is more enjoyable than the marriage itself, hence most men would rather have affairs outside. Such man would not forever date women without marrying them so eventually such a man would pay a bride price “*ku lovola*” in Xitsonga. Eventually this kind of behaviour would result in polygamy which is why it is common for the Vatsonga men to have many wives, provided they are able to provide for them and their children.

Musical characteristics

The piece *N'wamarhwale* is in four four. It has two parts. The first melodic line is sung by a soloist and the rest sing the second melodic line to bring harmony. The tempo is usually slow in order to bring out the sad mood. In this piece, the soloist sings many notes without an accompaniment of other voices. The soloist should be very good in singing and in expression, for better interpretation of the message. The piece is cyclic.

Ho navela

m . r : r . d | t : s | l , d . - , d : - . l | : | m . r : r . d | t : s | l , d . - , d : - . l | : |
 Ho na ve la yo ho na ve la__ ni Ho na ve la yo ho na ve la__ ni
 Ya ya_ ya ho na ve la yo Ya ya_ ya

5 | m . r : r . d | t : s | d > l > d : l > d > d | d : | m . r : r . d | t : s | d > l > d : l > d > d | d > d > d : |
 Ho na ve la yo ho ³ mo vha wa ku sa se ka Ho na ve la yo ho ³ xi be la ni xa ku sa se ka
 ho na ve la yo Ya ya_ ya ho na ve la yo Ya ya_ ya

9 | m . r : r . d | t : s | d > l > d : l > d > d | d > d : |
 Ho na ve la yo ho ³ ti khwi ni ta ku sa se ka
 ho na ve la yo Ya ya_ ya

11 | m . r : r . d | t : s | l , d . - , d : - . l | : |
 Ho na ve la yo ho na ve la__ ni
 ho na ve la yo Ya ya_ ya ho na ve la yo

Piece 6: Ho navela

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Ho navela yoho navelani</i>	We envy, onomatopoeia, envy
<i>Ya ya ya ho navela yo</i>	Onomatopoeia, we envy
<i>Movha wa ku saseka</i>	Beautiful car
<i>Xibelani xa ku saseka</i>	Beautiful <i>Xibelani</i>
<i>Tikhwini ta ku saseka</i>	Beautiful <i>tikhwini</i>

Embedded meaning

The piece *Ho navela* is about people who envy what other people have. In this piece, the composer expresses her desire to have material things owned by other members of the community. The onomatopoeia *ya ya ya* is a confirmation by respondents (in the piece) that in deed they envy others. The lead singer further indicates that others own beautiful cars, beautiful *xibelani* and beautiful *tikhwini* (see attire, 4.3.3.).

The standard of living differs from one person to another as there are different classes in life. In this instance, the lead singer together with other members of the group agree that they would want to have great material things in their life. If you own a car you are regarded as a successful person according to the Vatsonga and other Africans in general. Items that are mentioned in this piece are examples of things that the singers of this piece wish to own. This means that

they are not happy about their standard of living, hence they sing it despondently.

Musical characteristics

Call and response is a well-known characteristic of African music, so is the case in this piece. The piece starts on a strong beat and it is in four four time signature. The second melodic line comprises of three notes that are sung in unison with the soloist; that appears on the first beat of the third bar. The unison is in different octaves which warrants the respondents to have a low register to reach the notes.

Xirhezani

$s_1 \rangle s_1 \rangle s_1 : s_1 . s_1 | s_1 . m_1 , s_1 : - . d_1 | . l_1 , s_1 : | : | s_1 \rangle s_1 \rangle s_1 : s_1 . s_1 | s_1 . m_1 , s_1 : - . d_1 |$



Ma nga vo na mu nhu xirhe za ni we ma nga vo na mu nhu xi rhe za
Va nhu vu kwe le be! hee_ xi rhe_ zan

$: . f_1 | f_1 \rangle f_1 \rangle s_1 : s_1 . r_1 | : . s_1 | - . m_1 , s_1 : - . d_1 |$

4



ni we a he he xi rhe za
va nhu vu kwe le be! hee_ xi rhe_ zan va nhu vu kwe le be!

$: . f_1 | f_1 \rangle f_1 \rangle s_1 : s_1 . r_1 | : . s_1 | - . m_1 , s_1 : - . d_1 | : . f_1 | f_1 \rangle f_1 \rangle s_1 : s_1 . r_1 |$

7



ni we a hee hee_ xi rhe za_ ni we
hee_ xi rhe_ zan va nhu vu kwe le be! hee_ xi rhe_ zan

$: . s_1 | - . m_1 , s_1 : - . d_1 | : . f_1 | f_1 \rangle f_1 \rangle s_1 : s_1 . r_1 | : . s_1 | - . m_1 , s_1 : - . d_1 |$

10



ma nga vo na mu nhu xi rhe za ni we
va nhu vu kwe le be! hee_ xi rhe_ zan

$: . f_1 | f_1 \rangle f_1 \rangle s_1 : s_1 . r_1 | : . s_1 | - . m_1 , s_1 : - . d_1 |$

Piece 7: Xirhezani

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Ma nga vona munhu xirhezani we</i>	Look, a person is a razor
<i>Vanhu vukwele be</i>	People are jealous

Embedded meaning

Xirhezani means a razor. This piece is all about an individual referred to as 'a razor'. A razor is a sharp object. In this case the lead singers says that there is a person who is sharp and dangerous as a razor. Respondents agree by saying that people are jealous, therefore, this danger is not physical in this case.

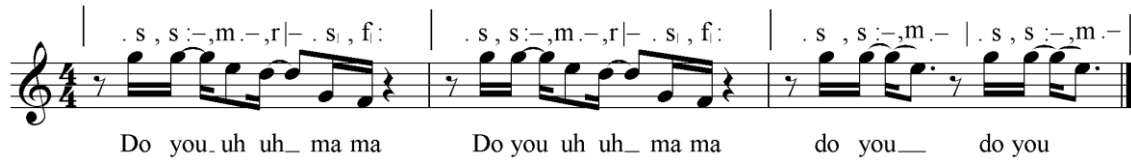
Africans believe that jealousy can be very dangerous because it leads one to bad actions that are likely to hinder the success of another. The piece *Ho navela* can somehow be linked to this discussion. Although the singers in the piece *Ho navela* sound positive, they discourage such behaviour (jealousy).

Musical characteristics

The piece *Xirhezani* is in four four, a common time signature in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compound. It also influences traditional music, for example, Penny Penny' song titled, Hayi *ka mina* is in four four.

Hayi ka mina

Penny Penny



Do you uh uh_ ma ma Do you uh uh_ ma ma do you_ do you

Example 2: Hayi ka mina

The piece *Xirhezani* is also characterised by triplets. The portability of Indigenous Xitsonga music dance compound into other genres is also proven by the use of triplets, for instance, Dr Thomas Chauke's *Nwamagezi* is also an example of triplets.

Va rahile xipotwana

Va-ra-hi-le xi - po-twa-no - xi ri ni ne-nge-wahu-ku! Nka-ka
 Hanchu-mu khu-lu-ma ka-hle

wo ba- vo - che - la ti - ma-nga wu ta ti - ti-me-la Nka-ka
 Ha nchu-mu khu-lu-ma ka-hle nka - ta! ha nchu-mu khu-lu-ma ka-hle

wo ba- vo - che-la ti - ma-nga hi ri - nga Ha nchu-mu khu-lu - ma

ka - hle nka - ta! Ha nchu-mu khu - lu - ma ka - hle.

Piece 8: Va rahile xipotwana

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Va rahile xipotwana,</i>	They have kicked the cooking pot
<i>Xi ri ni nenge Wa huku</i>	containing a chicken thigh
<i>Ha nchumu, khuluma kahle</i>	It does not matter; stop complaining
<i>Nkaka wa bavo</i>	<i>Nkaka</i> is a bitter wild vegetable
<i>chela timanga wu ta titimela</i>	Mix it with powdered peanuts and it will be less bitter
<i>Ha nchumu, khuluma kahle nkata</i>	It does not matter; stop complaining my love

Embedded meaning

A husband comes back home drunk and kicks a small pot, in the fire place, that contains a cooked chicken thigh. His wife complains that she was looking forward to enjoying the meal as she has had enough of eating the wild vegetable called *nkaka* because it is bitter and is now the only relish available after the incident relating to pot and the chicken meal. In the performance of this piece, the others are consoling her by advising her that if she adds powdered peanuts to the *nkaka* it would be less bitter. This piece demonstrates the misuse of power by the heads/elders of families. Women and kids were abused and expected to be submissive without challenging elders (especially fathers) even when they (elders) were irrational. The piece demonstrates the ability of the Vatsonga and

other African societies to utilize symbolic or figurative language in the poetry of their pieces.

Musical characteristics

The piece *Va rahile xipotwana* is actually a combination of harmonic elements found in other pieces discussed earlier. It starts with a call and response and in bar 6 to 7 there is counterpoint; the two melodic lines sing together with independence as they complement each other. There is also the use of different note values, for instance, quavers, crochets, dotted quavers and semiquavers.

Dyoha Ndengeza n'wana manana



va kho hli sa Nde-nge
Dyo-haNde-nge - za he n'wana ma-na -ne ha! A ma-zo - ndha va kho hli sa Nde-nge
he n'wana ma-na -ne ha! A ma-zo - ndha va kho hli sa Nde-nge

5
S. zo L'a nga ta sala mu-ngo-me-ni ka Ma - tsi-mbi, ho chaya ngoma n'wi he - wu - la
S. zo L'a nga ta sala mu-ngo-me-ni ka Ma - tsi-mbi, ho chaya ngoma n'wi he - wu - la
S. zo L'a nga ta sala mu-ngo-me-ni ka Ma - tsi-mbi, ho chaya ngoma n'wi he - wu - la

Piece 9: Dyoha! Ndengeza n'wana manana

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Dyoha! Ndengeza n'wana manane- ha A mazondha</i>	<i>Dyoha! Ndengeza</i> my brother the one who is hated
<i>Va khohlisa Ndengezo</i>	He has been found guilty
<i>La nga ta sala mungomeni ka Matsimbi</i>	Found guilty by Matsimbi- the witch doctor

Embedded meaning

Dyoha! Is an expression of emphasis on a beat that is accompanied by a dance. Dancers hit the ground hard to mark the emphasis when they sing “*dyoha!*” This dance’s emphasis has nothing to do with the meaning of the piece; it only helps to show the strong beat as a strong component of rhythm. Ndengeza is the lead vocalist’s biological brother who people do not like because the witch doctor has accused him of witchcraft. This piece, therefore is used to ridicule Ndengeza for his wickedness.

In this study, there are a few other pieces about witchcraft. Witchcraft is generally believed to be a science practiced by jealous people to jeopardize the success of people who seem to be successful in life. Many Vatsonga people believe in traditional diviners and healers. When there is something wrong in the family or in one’s life, it is believed that the diviners are the ones to throw the divine bones down and tell the truth. Many people were victims of such beliefs because those who were accused of witchcraft were killed or chased away from the village. In

many cases, people got punished without having done anything wrong. This happened as a result of fabrications by bogus diviners.

Musical characteristics

This piece is not typical of indigenous Xitsonga music. The harmony of this piece is comprised of three melodic lines; the piece starts with two parts instead of a solo. This warrants good order in terms of conducting, to enable the two parts to start together cleanly. Another interesting feature of note is the use of triplets, which is also uncharacteristic of indigenous Xitsonga music.

Thimbyarimbya

Doh is C

X., X : X . X | X., X : X . X | : | : | X., X : X . X | X., X : X . X |

Thi mbya ri mbya thi mbya ri mbya thi mbya ri mbya thi mbya ri mbya

X . X : X . X | X . X : - . X | : | : |

Ku ve le ka vu ko si

4 | : | : X . X | X . X : X . X | X., X : X . X | : | : . X |

Ni ku thi mbya ri mbya thi mbya ri mbya Swa

X . X : X . X | X . X : - . X | : | : | X . X : X . X | X . X : - . X |

Ku ve le ka vu ko si Ku ve le ka vu ko si

7 | X . X : | : . X | X . X : | : . X | X . X : | . X : X . X | X . X : | : |

man lesw swaman lesw swaman lesw ni ku swa man lesw

: . X | X . X : | : . X | X . X : | : . X | X . X : | : . X | X . X : |

swa we na swa we na swa we na swa we na

11 | X . X : X . X | X . X : X . X | : | : | X . X : X . X | X . X : X . X |

Thi mbya ri mbya thi mbya ri mbya thi mbya ri mbya thi mbya ri mbya

: | : | X . X : X . X | X . X : - . X | : | : |

ku ve le ka vu ko si

14 | : | : | X . X : X . X | X . X : X . X | : | : |

thi mbya ri mbya thi mbya ri mbya

X . X : X . X | X . X : - . X | : | : | X . X : X . X | X . X : - . X |

ku ve le ka vu ko si ku ve le ka vu ko si

Piece 10: Thimbyarimbya

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Thimbyarimbya</i>	Dance
<i>Ku veleka vukosi</i>	Giving birth is priceless
<i>Swa man' lesw'?</i>	Whose is this?
<i>Swa wena</i>	It is yours

Embedded meaning

Thimbyarimbya expresses the movement of Xibelani, as women dance. When a child is born, a celebration ceremony is organised and the Vatsonga dance as they celebrate. The lead singer encourages fellow performers to dance with vigour to express their happiness upon the arrival of the new born. *Ku veleka vukosi* is a powerful statement meaning that there is no amount of money that matches the feeling of achievement upon giving birth. *Vukosi* means chieftaincy which according to Africans, is a position based on a birth right rather than votes or financial position.

The piece *Yiva yiva* (see piece 1), is a practical example of desperation experienced by a woman who is infertile. Infertility is not easily fathomed by members of the community, hence a woman who is infertile normally becomes

an element of ridicule. It is not surprising that when the opposite, birth, occurs, the Vatsonga celebrate.

Musical characteristics

The piece is in four four. *Thimbyarimbya* does not have a sense of tonality. It has no notation that defines a particular melody, however, the other element of music (rhythm) does exist, meaning that the note value is well indicated in the piece. The note value brings a rhythmic pattern that characterises the piece in the absence of melodic line/s. Call and response is another characteristic of this cyclic piece.

Mhi ni vona mihlolo

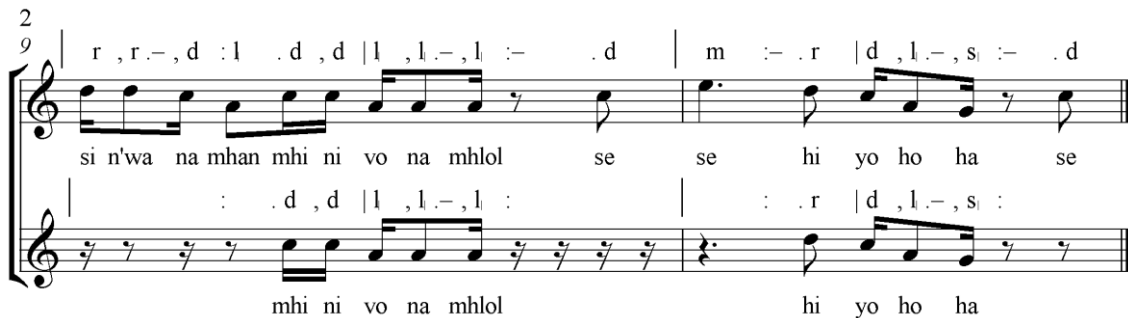
Se se hi ya ho ha se si n'wa na mhan mhi ni vo na mhlol se
hi ya ho ha mhi ni vo na mhlol

se hi yo ho ha se se n'wa na mhan mhi ni vo na mhlol swa ku
hi yo ho ha mhi ni vo na mhlol

te ki wa mu ti ni wa swi va la vu la se si n'wa na mhan mhi ni vo na mhlol swa ku
wa swi va la vu la mhi ni vo na mhlol

te ki wa mu ti ni wa swi va la vu la se
wa swi va la vu la

2
9



si n'wa na mhan mhi ni vo na mhlol se se hi yo ho ha se
mhi ni vo na mhlol hi yo ho ha

Piece 11: Mhi ni vona mihlolo

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Sese hi yo ho ha</i>	Sister, onomatopoeia
<i>Sesi n'wama mhan'</i>	Sister, my mother's child
<i>Mhi ni vona mihlolo</i>	I am suffering
<i>Swa ku tekiwa mutivi wa swivalavula</i>	I am married in a family of squabbles

Embedded meaning

The piece *Mhi ni vona mihlolo* is about a married woman who is experiencing hardships in her marriage. The lead singer represents the married woman who is suffering. She states that she is married in a family where squabbles are the order of the day. This worried woman is not suggesting any remedial action. She is

reporting the case to her sister hoping that the sister will sympathise with her and therefore come up with a solution that could rescue the worried woman.

Musical characteristics

The syllable “*mhi*” is an elision, the complete word is *mina*. Another elision is the word “*mihlo*”, the complete word is “*mihlolo*”. The piece is in anacrusis and is also in four four time signature. The piece is characterised by call and response. Each time the response is sounded, it is in unison with the lead singer, showing that there is no harmony. The piece *Mhi ni vona mihlolo* is cyclic.

Valungu va na nsele



He va lu ngu bi__ de He va lu ngu bi__ de

He he he va lu ngu va__na nse__ le

4 va hi te ke la va nu na hi na hi ta bu la na ma__

He he he va lu ngu va__na nse__ le va hi te ke la va nu na hi na hi ta bu la na ma__

7 ni lo mu ndlwi ni si! he le! go! de met! swi swa kon He va lu ngu bi__ de

ni lo mu ndlwi ni si! he le! go! de met! swi swa kon

10 He va lu ngu bi__ de

He he he va lu ngu va__na nse__ le

Piece 12: Valungu va na nsele

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>He valungu bide</i>	Oh, whites, onomatopoeia
<i>He he he valungu va na nsele</i>	Onomatopoeia, whites are cruel
<i>Va hi tekela vanuna</i>	They took our husbands away
<i>Hina hita bula na mani lomulwini</i>	Who will we speak to in our houses
<i>Si! Hele! Go! Demet! Swi swa kona</i>	Onomatopoeia, these things

Embedded meaning

In this piece, Vatsonga women are raising a point that affects African (black) women in general. “*Valungu va na nsele*” means “whites are cruel’. African men leave their wives behind at their villages and go to urban areas to look for employment and the whites were mainly the once who employed blacks. At first the wives used to understand but after a while, when wives realised that their husbands were not returning home, they began to complain blaming the whites who took their husbands away.

Women would then sing the piece *Valungu va na nsele* to express their unhappiness about the fact that they do not live with their husbands. Worried women say that they are bored at home because they have no one to speak to.

Words such as “*go! demet!*” were used by singers (women) to express their anger. They were telling the whites to stay as far away as possible from their husbands. The point the wives were driving at is that they miss their husbands as life was incomplete without them. These women were not suggesting that their husbands should quit their jobs because they knew that their husbands had to work in order to provide for the family.

Musical characteristics

The piece starts with anacrusis and as usual, it is in four four. Calls and response exist between bar 1 to bar 4. From bar 5 to bar 8, the two parts sing together in unison. Triplets dominate in this cyclic piece.

Tihosi Ntsena



Voice 1: Va lweta - no la-vantsana - noo! Tsu-tsu-mani miya

Voice 2: Ti-ho - se, ti ho - si ntse na! Yho-ha!

Voice 1 (5): bye-la Xi-ga-lo Kwale Nto-me - mi le-xi va lwela-ka xo - noo! xo - noo!

Voice 2: bye-la Xi-ga-lo Kwa le Nto- me - mi le-xi, va lwe la-ka xo - noo!

Piece 13: Tihosi ntsena

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Tihose-ha tihosi ntsena</i>	Chiefs, chiefs only!
<i>Valwetano, lavantsananoo</i>	The young ones are in conflict
<i>Tsutsumani mi ya byela Xigalo kwale</i>	Hurry, go to and inform Xigalo
<i>Ntomeni lexi va lwelaka xonoo!</i>	at the jakalbury tree and report the cause of squabble

Embedded meaning

When people engage in either a verbal or a serious physical fight, spectators call upon the intervention of the chief so that he can help resolve the problem. In this piece, the young ones are engaged in serious altercations and the chief is being called to intervene or else the squabbles would lead to a fight that could be fatal.

This piece is a sign of the importance of the role played by the chief in people's lives. The Vatsonga believe that when people have wronged each other, the dispute could be solved by the chief rather than the police. A serious fight that would need the intervention of the police could be entertained by the chief and whoever would be found guilty would be fined but not imprisoned.

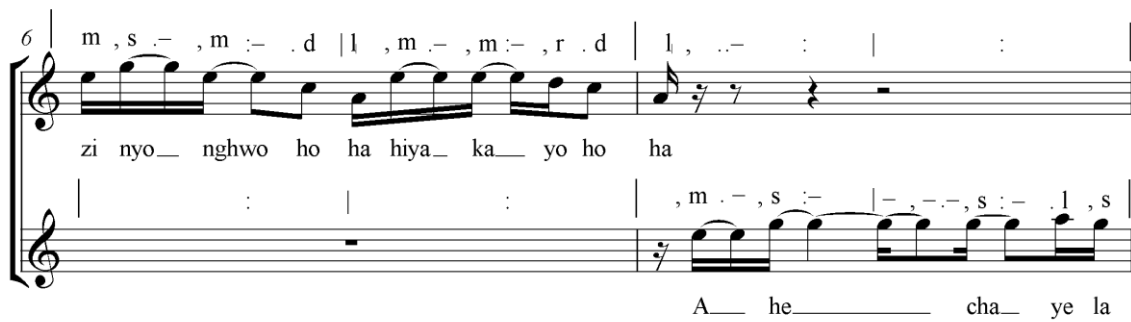
Musical characteristics

Tihonsi ntsena differs from many pieces discussed earlier. The second melodic line is the one that makes a call and it is answered by the first melodic line. When the first line responds, the second line does not imitate the note arrangement but complements it by singing the words "yoho ha" in bar 3 and 4. In bar 5, the two melodic lines then come together. The change of the time signature in bar 7 helps to keep the piece flowing, avoiding an unnecessary pause that could have a negative effect on the flow of the rhythm.

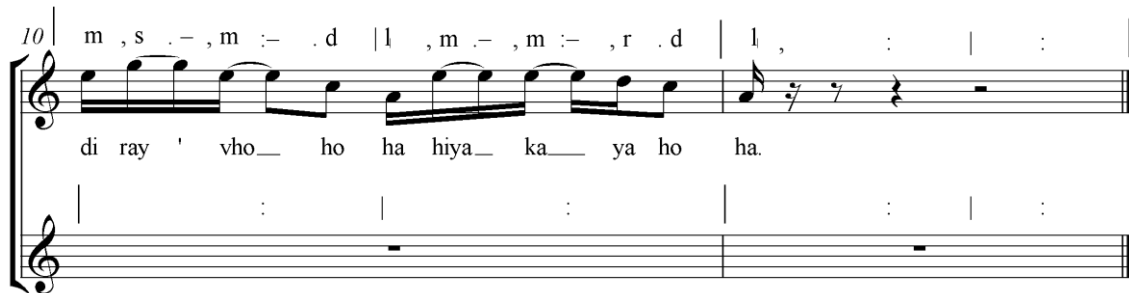
Chayela dirayivha


 , m . - , s : - | - , d . - , s : - . l , s | m , s . - , m : - . d | l , m . - , m : - , r . d | l , : | : |
 Cha_ ye____ la_ cha_ ye la di ray ' vho ho ha hiya ka_ ya ho ha.
 : | : | : | : | : | , m . - , s : - | - , s : - . l , s |
 A_ he____ cha_ ye la


 4 | : | : | : | , m . - , s : - . s | d , s . - , l : - , l . s , s |
 Ha_ fa_ mbo ho hi_ fa_ mba na ma
 m , s . - , m : - . d | l , m . - , m : - , r . d | l , : - : | : | : |
 di ray ' vho_ ho ha hiya_ ka_ yo ho ha.


 6 | m , s . - , m : - . d | l , m . - , m : - , r . d | l , : - : | : | : |
 zi nyo_ nghwo ho ha hiya_ ka_ yo ho ha
 : | : | : | : | , m . - , s : - | - , s : - . l , s |
 A_ he____ cha_ ye la


 8 | : | : | : | , m . - , s : - | - , d . - , s : - . l , s |
 Cha_ ye____ la_ cha_ ye la
 m , s . - , m : - . d | l , m . - , m : - , r . d | l , : - : | : | : |
 di ray ' vho_ ho ha hiya_ ka_ yo ho ha.



10 | m , s . - , m :- . d | l , m . - , m :- , r . d | l , : : | : : |

di ray ' vho_ ho ha hiya_ ka_ ya ho ha.

Piece 14: Chayela dirayivha

Translation

Text

Translation

Chayela dirayivo ho ya

Drive, driver, onomatopoeia

Hi ya kayo ho ha

We are going home

Ha fambo ho

We are leaving

Hi famba na mazinyonghwo ho ha

We are leaving together with the in laws

Hi ya kayo ho ha

We are going home

Embedded meaning

The piece, *Chayela dirayicha* is a bridal piece. When there is a marriage agreement between the groom and the bride, elders of the groom visits the family of the bride to conduct a *lobola* ceremony. As far as Xitsonga culture is concerned, such a ceremony is regarded as a formal one to granting permission for the marriage to take place since it is sung after *lobola* has been paid. *Chayela dirayivha* is an order given to the driver that he must drive them home since they have paid the *lobola*. There is also a piece called “*Hi famba na yee nsati wa ka hina*” (meaning “we are leaving with our wife”); this is also sung during the same occasion.

This is a joyous piece since the performers are celebrating the amalgamation of the two families as a result of marriage. Performers further state that they are going home together with the sisters-in-law who are called *Mazinyonghwa*. It is a norm that when a married woman goes to live with the husband, she should be accompanied by one or two other ladies who are not yet married to serve as *mazinyonghwa*. The role of *mazinyongwa* is to help the newly wife with house chores upon her arrival in the groom’s family. The two ladies would stay there for about two weeks after which they should return home, leaving the bride in her new family.

Nowadays, other Vatsonga conduct traditional wedding ceremonies after paying *lobola*, however, mention should be made that some people experience financial

challenges after paying the lobola and they do not organize a wedding ceremony. It is completely understandable for one to get married without a wedding.

Musical characteristics

The piece, *Chayela dirayivha* is also in four four and it starts with anacrusis. It is a good example of call and response throughout. It uses semiquavers and is cyclic.

Hina ha swi lava

X
P
B
N



Voices

Hi na ha swi la_ vo le swa ka Kho so Hi na ha swi la_ vo le swa ka Kho so

2

X
P
B
N



Voices

Hi na ha swi_ la_ vo_ le swa_ ka_ Kho_ so

3

X
P
B
N



Voices

Piece 15: Hina ha swi lava

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Hina ha swi lavo</i>	We want them
<i>Le swa ka khoso</i>	The Khosa's

Embedded meaning

There were two groups at Merwe A (Malamulele) which performed *Xincayincayi*. One belonged to a large family of *Jindhava* while the other belonged to another large family, *Khosa*. The *Jindhava* group was allowed by the leadership of its family to perform *Xincayincayi* while the *Khosa* group was not allowed. This was due to the classes of the two families. The leadership of the *Khosa* regarded indigenous music and dance as pure example of illiteracy, lack of civilisation and inferior. The *Khosa* believed that children who perform indigenous Xitsonga music and dance had more chances of not going to school and therefore become uneducated.

On the other hand, the *Jindhavas* encouraged their children to perform indigenous Xitsonga music and dance as they believed that there was nothing wrong with their culture. The *Khosa* boys, however would sneak out and form a group of *Xincayincayi* in order to enjoy the music with the *Jindhava* boys. It was not supposed to be known by the *Khosa* family leaders that their young boys perform *Xincayincayi* since they would be punished for such actions.

The two groups agreed to compete during 1993 Christmas day. When it was time for their competition, the *Khosa* boys were nowhere to be found, they had been ordered to go to church. The situation got out of hand when the *Jindhava* boys decided to take their music instruments and walk to the *Khosa* family performing the piece *Hina ha swi lava*, meaning they wanted the *Khosa* boys to come out so that the competition can go on as planned. They were immediately chased away by the leaders of the *Khosa* family. Naturally, that day, the *Khosa* boys were in trouble with their family leaders. The piece *Hina ha swi lava* was composed that day and it became a hit.

Musical characteristics

This piece also has no sense of tonality. It is in four four and starts with anacrusis. The words are sung rhythmically as they are accompanied by the site drums that serve as response. The piece is also cyclic.

Thamsoni



Musical score for the first system of 'Thamsoni'. It features four staves for X, P, B, and N, and a vocal line. The vocal line includes the lyrics: Tham so ni u ga de xpho ngho Tham so ni xi n'wu ra hi le Tham so ni u ga de xpho ngho.

2



Musical score for the second system of 'Thamsoni'. It features four staves for X, P, B, and N, and a vocal line. The vocal line includes the lyrics: Tham so ni xi n'wu ra hi le Tham so ni u ga de xpho ngho Tham so ni xi n'wu ra hi le.

Piece 16: Thamsoni

Translation

Text

Translation

Thamsoni u gade xiphongho

Thamson is riding a billy goat

Thamsoni xi n'wu rahile

Thamson got kicked

Embedded meaning

This piece is about a boy called Samson who was riding a billy goat and got kicked. Vatsonga boys used to ride donkeys so it was unusual to ride a billy goat. Seemingly, Samson was just trying his luck and it proved dangerous. The piece reprimands people not to do certain things that are taboo according to the Vatsonga. The composer of this piece is saying that if one's behaviour does not follow the norms and values of the Vatsonga, the consequences can be unpredictable and unbearable.

Musical characteristics

Unlike many pieces that start on a strong beat, this one starts with anacrusis. It is in four four. The piece, *Thamsoni* does not have a sense of tonality as well as is clearly marked by the rhythmic notation. When they perform this piece, dancers demonstrate the kick action of the billy goat each time they sing “*xi nwu rahile*” which means “it kicked him”.

2

6



S. D.
T. D.
B. D.
Cym.
A. Gtr.
A. Gtr.

xe we xe we xe we xe we xe we
Ma may lo Ma khu.vel lo ko ni ku tan

3

11



S. D.
T. D.
B. D.
Cym.
A. Gtr.
A. Gtr.

lo ko ni ku e! lo ko ni ku i! Ma may lo Ma khu.vel

Piece 17: Mamayilo

Translation

Text

Translation

Mamay'lo, xewe!

Mamay'lo, helo!

Makhuvel

Makhuvel

Loko ni ku tan

When I swerve

Loko ni ku e!

Where I swerve

Loko ni ku i!

Where I swerve

Embedded meaning

The piece *Mamayila* is sung by a man who is calling his wife, *Mamayila*. The man states that *Mamayila* should always pay undivided attention to him so that each time he calls her, she is ready to answer. The statement “*loko ni ku e!*” implies that he might even decide not to use her name but use gestures to call her, and he expects a response immediately.

Musical characteristics

This piece is the second composed in three four time signature. Most indigenous Xitsonga pieces are composed in four four. The piece *Mamayila* starts with anacrusis and also has no sense of tonality. Call and response characterises this piece throughout. *Makhuvel* is an elision, as the complete word is *Makhuvele*. The piece, *Mamayila* is cyclic.

Ni ku swekela

X
P
B
N

Acoustic Guitar

Doh is C

Ni ku swe ke la Ma gez hi xi po twa na Ni ku swe ke la Ma gez hi xi po twa na Ni ku swe ke la Ma gez hi xi

2 7

X
P
B
N

A. Gtr.

po twa na Ni ku swe ke la Ma gez hi xi po twa na Ni ku swe ke la Ma gez hi xi

3

11

X
P
B
N

A. Gtr.

po twa na Ni ku swe ke la Ma gez hi xi po twa na

Piece 18: Ni ku swekela

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Ni ku swekela Magezi</i>	I cook for you Magezi
<i>Hi xipotwana</i>	In a small pot

Embedded meaning

It is a norm for Vatsonga women to wake up early in the morning and cook pap for their husband. This piece is about a woman who is asking her husband whether she should cook for him or not. *Xipotwana* is a small pot that is only used to cook for one man (*Magezi*, in particular). According to Vatsonga, *xa Magezi* is a phrase that is used across, even if the husband's name is not *Magezi*. "*Xa Magezi*" means "the one for Magezi" (referring to pap that is only consumed by the husband).

The wife is the only one with the responsibility to cook *xa Magezi*. Other meals of the day, those to be consumed by everyone, could be prepared by anyone in the family regardless of their status. Most African man eat pap as their breakfast rather than tea.

Musical characteristics

The piece *Ni ku swekela* is unusually composed in two four, making it the only piece (in four four) discussed in this study. It starts with anacrusis and in order to avoid monotony in terms of the melodic contour, the two notes are changed in bar 7. Instead of starting with the two tonics (doh doh or C C in staff notation), it starts with the two mediant (mi mi or E E). The piece is also cyclic.

Hostlhava



Musical score for Hostlhava, measures 1-5. The score includes parts for X, P, B, N, and Voice. The voice part has lyrics "Hos ttha va" and a rhythmic pattern above it.

2



Musical score for Hostlhava, measures 6-10. The score includes parts for X, P, B, N, and Voice.

Piece 19: Hostlhava

Translation

Text

Translation

Hostlhava

Onomatopoeia

Embedded meaning

Hostlhava is an onomatopoeia that expresses fast movement in a *Xincayincayi* dance although it does not have a specific meaning. In such cases, a composer would come up with a good rhythmic pattern with an intention to suit a particular choreography, but without knowing what to say as message. *Hostlhava* is an example of such pieces.

Musical characteristics

Hostlhava is unlike the rest of the pieces discussed in this study. It starts with anacrusis and the lead singer only sings, without any sense of tonality, three notes and it ends there. Furthermore, *Hostlhava* and *Giyani* (see piece 28) are the only two pieces that are not cyclic, which is rare in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compound.

Khombo ra Joni

Doh is C

SOPRANO 1

Mi - na van' dla ye le ma ha lo

SOPRANO 2

An 'nga mbye l'hi

ALTO

3

Va ka Ngho nya ma van' dla ye le ma ha lo

kho mbo ra Jo ne

6

An 'nga mbye l'hi kho mbo ra Jo ne An 'nga mbye l'hi kho mbo ra Jo ne



The musical score is written for Soprano 1, Soprano 2, and Alto. It begins with a 'Doh is C' instruction. The first system shows Soprano 1 singing 'Mi - na van' dla ye le ma ha lo' while Soprano 2 and Alto are silent. The second system shows Soprano 1 singing 'Va ka Ngho nya ma van' dla ye le ma ha lo' and Soprano 2 singing 'An 'nga mbye l'hi'. The third system shows Soprano 1 singing 'kho mbo ra Jo ne' and Soprano 2 singing 'An 'nga mbye l'hi kho mbo ra Jo ne'. The fourth system shows Soprano 1 singing 'An 'nga mbye l'hi kho mbo ra Jo ne' and Soprano 2 singing 'An 'nga mbye l'hi kho mbo ra Jo ne'. The Alto part is silent throughout the first two systems and then provides accompaniment for the final two systems.

2

8



d . s₁ , s₁ : l . l , d | d . d , d : d . | d . s₁ , s₁ : l . l , d | d . d , d : d . |

A hi tsa ke ni hi tsha ma swi n'we A hi tsa ke ni hi tsha ma swi n'we

s₁ . d , d | : f . f , s₁ | s₁ . s₁ , s₁ : s . | s₁ . d , d | : f . f , s₁ | s₁ . s₁ , s₁ : s . |

10



d . d : l . , r | d , d . d , l : d , . | d . d : l . , r | d , d . d , l : d , . |

An 'nga mbye l'hi kho mbo ra Jo ne An 'nga mbye l'hi kho mbo ra Jo ne

s₁ . s₁ : f . , l | s₁ , s₁ . s₁ , m . , . | s₁ . s₁ : f . , l | s₁ , s₁ . s₁ , m . , . |

Khombo ra Joni accompaniment



Xitete

Phendhu

Bidela

Ndlhazi

S. D.

T. D.

B. D.

Cym.

xewe! xewe! xewe! xewe!

Piece 20: *Khombo ra Joni*

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Mina van'dlayela mahalo</i>	They are killing me for nothing
<i>An'nga m'byel'hi khombo ra Jone</i>	Didn't I warn you about Jo'burg
<i>Va ka Nghonyama van' dlayela mahalo</i>	The Nghonyamas are killing me for nothing
<i>A hi tsakeni hi tshama swinwe</i>	Let us be happy and live together
<i>An'nga m'byel hi khombo ra Jone</i>	Didn't I warn you about Jo'burg

Embedded meaning

The composer is complaining about the dangers in Johannesburg. The danger referred to in this case pertain to moral behaviour, rather than physical action. The composer is not referring to criminal activities taking place in Johannesburg but how the Vatsonga live with one another when they are far away from their homes. In most cases, the Vatsonga who leave their homes to seek jobs in Johannesburg do not support or assist each other when they are there. Instead, they have disagreements and become jealous of each other's progress, while they were supposed to be supportive of one another, as members of the same ethnic group. The composer emphasises that Vatsonga should be happy and live together in harmony, especially when they are far from home, because that is where they most need one another.

Musical characteristics

I deliberately decided to separate the vocal lines from the rhythmic lines because of the nature of the piece. This is amongst the few *Xincayincayi* songs that has many lyrics, a thicker structure in terms of voices and instruments. That compromises calligraphy, hence the decision to separate the voices and the accompaniment. Another reason is that this piece starts accapella and then later there is a separate sound of accompaniment, except for the few cases where the leader improvises with a few words to help build the climax of the piece.

The piece is in four pulse measures and it starts with a male soloist. He is answered by voices singing in two parts harmony. The call and response structure also applies in this piece. The soloists mostly scoops the last note (the tonic) of the melodic line. The first section (voices) is slower but the second one (instrumental) is faster. The words “xewe” in bar 7 of the accompaniment (instrumental section) are there to break the monotony and to build the climax, as mentioned earlier. The very last notes are sounded in such a way that *vacini* would also end the piece after jumping in a style called “*mukapa*” and falling on the ground. During that moment there would be so much dust caused by the “*mukapa*” action. That marks the end of the piece which ends on a fast tempo, unexpectedly.

Mkhupula

X
P
B
N
Alto
Tenor




Alto: Doh is C | 1 . 1 : - . m | : . s | s . 1 : 1 . s | s . f : - | s . s : - . m | : | 1 . 1 : - . m | : . s |

Tenor: | : . m | d . r : - . d | : : . d | d . r : - . d | Doh is C : . m | d . r : - . d | : : . d | d . r : - . d |

He mkhu pu la mukhu pu la He mkhu pu la mukhu pu la

2
6



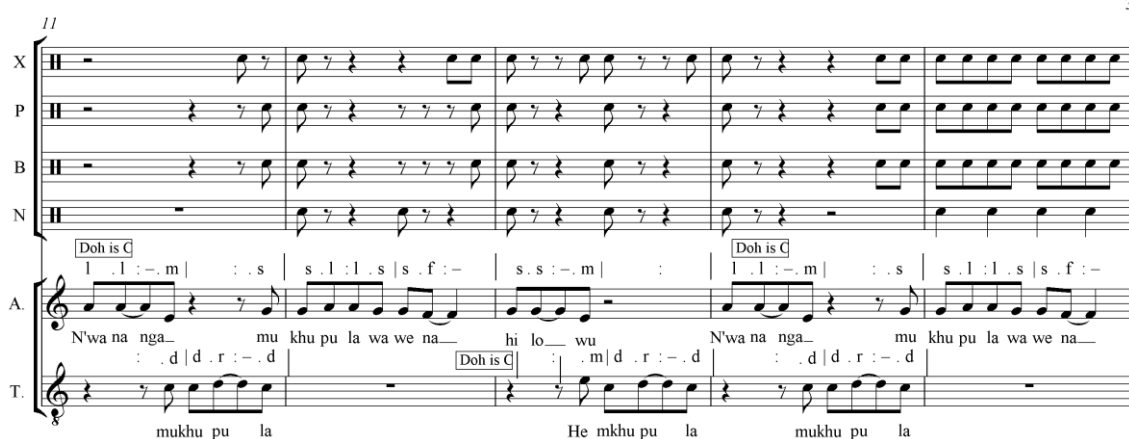
Alto: s . 1 : 1 . s | s . f : - | s . s : - . m | : | Doh is C | 1 . 1 : - . m | : . s | s . 1 : 1 . s | s . f : - | s . s : - . m | : |

Tenor: Doh is C : . m | d . r : - . d | : : . d | d . r : - . d | Doh is C : . m | d . r : - . d |

khu pu la wa we na_ hi lo_ wu N'wa na nga_ mu khu pu la wa we na_ hi lo_ wu

He mkhu pu la mukhu pu la He mkhu pu la

11
3



Alto: Doh is C | 1 . 1 : - . m | : . s | s . 1 : 1 . s | s . f : - | s . s : - . m | : | Doh is C | 1 . 1 : - . m | : . s | s . 1 : 1 . s | s . f : - |

Tenor: | : . d | d . r : - . d | Doh is C : . m | d . r : - . d | : : . d | d . r : - . d |

N'wa na nga_ mu khu pu la wa we na_ hi lo_ wu N'wa na nga_ mu khu pu la wa we na_

mukhu pu la He mkhu pu la mukhu pu la

4

16

X
P
B
N

A. *s . s : - . m | : | l . l : - . m | : . s | s . l : l . s | s . f : - | s . s : - . m | : | l . l : - . m | : . s | s . l : l . s | s . f : - |*
 hi lo__wu N'wa na nga. mu khu pu la wa we na__ hi lo__wu N'wa na nga. mu khu pu la wa we na__

T. *[Doh is C] : . m | d . r : - . d | : . d | d . r : - . d | : . s | s . d : | : |*
 He mkhu pu la mukhu pu la He skhu yu Heshkuy' Heshkuy' Heshkuy'

5

22

X
P
B
N

A. *s . s : - . m | : | l . l : - . m | : . s | s . l : l . s | s . f : - | s . s : - . m | : | l . l : - . m | : . s |*
 hi lo__wu N'wa na nga__ mu khu pu la wa we na__ hi lo__wu N'wa na nga__ mu

T. Heshkuy' Heshkuy' Heshkuy' Heshkuy' Heshkuy'

6

27

X
P
B
N

A. *s . l : l . s | s . f : - | s . s : - . m | : | [Doh is C] l . l : - . m | : . s | s . l : l . s | s . f : - | s . s : - . m | : |*
 khu pu la wa we na__ hi lo__wu N'wa na nga__ mu khu pu la wa we na__ hi lo__wu

T. *[Doh is C] : . m | d . r : - . d | : . d | d . r : - . d |*
 He mkhu pu la mukhu pu la

Piece 21: Mukhupula

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>He mkhupula</i>	Indigenous attire
<i>N'wananga mukhupula wa wena hi lowu</i>	Here is your Mukhupula my child
<i>Heskhuyu, heshuy</i>	Onomatopoeia

Embedded meaning

Mukhupula is one of the garments *Muchongolo* dancers wear during performance. Calvin Mahlaule from Xivulani Village, the composer of the piece, told the researcher that one day they had a performance and he realised that he could not locate his *mukhupula*. He then asked his mother whether or not she had seen his *mukhupula*. Fortunately, the mother responded positively by saying: “here is your *mukhupula*, my child”. The piece is in a form of a conversation between Calvin and his mother. That was how the piece was composed.

Musical characteristics

The piece starts with a soloist and is answered by voices in unison. In the first four bars, the instruments leave a gap for the voices to be heard clearly. From bar eight to bar nine, the gap is closed by instruments that play quavers, which compromises the clarity of lyrics but once again the structure is thin from bar ten to fourteen, which leaves a gap for voices. That is how the piece sounds and it is cyclic in nature. In bar nineteen, the lead singer improvises by singing: “*Heskhuyu*”, which is a meaningless word that breaks the monotony and builds

the climax of the piece. In bar twenty-eight, the lead singer changes from ‘*Heskhuyu*’ to “*mukhupula*” again. Words such as “*heskhuyu, heskhuy*”, are part of onomatopoeia, which is the formation of words that imitate or suggest a particular sound. In this case, onomatopoeia are words that are used to break the monotony by means of bringing variation; they also help to build the climax of the piece.

Chesa

5



Musical score for measures 5-8. The score is for four parts: X (Xenlo), P (Piano), B (Bass), and N (Nylon). The time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: Heyo Heyo Heyo Heyo.

9



Musical score for measures 9-12. The score is for four parts: X (Xenlo), P (Piano), B (Bass), and N (Nylon). The time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: Heyo Haaaaaaaaa.

13



Musical score for measures 13-16. The score is for four parts: X (Xenlo), P (Piano), B (Bass), and N (Nylon). The time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: He! He! He!

Piece 22: Chesa

Translation

Text

Translation

Heyo, Haa

Onomatopoeia

Embedded meaning

This piece has no meaningful lyrics other than the few words used to thicken the structure of the piece. Words such as “*heyo, haaa, he*”, are part of onomatopoeia.

Musical characteristics

Chesa is a *Xincayincayi* piece that is in four pulse measures. In the absence of voices that make the melodic lines, instruments clearly bring out the call and response element. *Xitetete* and *phendhu* call while *bidela* and *ndlhazi* are responsible for answering.

A ha ha loyiwe



Musical score for the first system of 'A ha ha loyiwe'. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of four staves: X (Xenlo), P (Piano), B (Bass), and N (Ngoni). The lyrics 'A ha ha loyiwe' are written under the X staff. The melody in the X staff starts with a rest, followed by a sequence of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F31, G31, A31, B31, C32, D32, E32, F32, G32, A32, B32, C33, D33, E33, F33, G33, A33, B33, C34, D34, E34, F34, G34, A34, B34, C35, D35, E35, F35, G35, A35, B35, C36, D36, E36, F36, G36, A36, B36, C37, D37, E37, F37, G37, A37, B37, C38, D38, E38, F38, G38, A38, B38, C39, D39, E39, F39, G39, A39, B39, C40, D40, E40, F40, G40, A40, B40, C41, D41, E41, F41, G41, A41, B41, C42, D42, E42, F42, G42, A42, B42, C43, D43, E43, F43, G43, A43, B43, C44, D44, E44, F44, G44, A44, B44, C45, D45, E45, F45, G45, A45, B45, C46, D46, E46, F46, G46, A46, B46, C47, D47, E47, F47, G47, A47, B47, C48, D48, E48, F48, G48, A48, B48, C49, D49, E49, F49, G49, A49, B49, C50, D50, E50, F50, G50, A50, B50, C51, D51, E51, F51, G51, A51, B51, C52, D52, E52, F52, G52, A52, B52, C53, D53, E53, F53, G53, A53, B53, C54, D54, E54, F54, G54, A54, B54, C55, D55, E55, F55, G55, A55, B55, C56, D56, E56, F56, G56, A56, B56, C57, D57, E57, F57, G57, A57, B57, C58, D58, E58, F58, G58, A58, B58, C59, D59, E59, F59, G59, A59, B59, C60, D60, E60, F60, G60, A60, B60, C61, D61, E61, F61, G61, A61, B61, C62, D62, E62, F62, G62, A62, B62, C63, D63, E63, F63, G63, A63, B63, C64, D64, E64, F64, G64, A64, B64, C65, D65, E65, F65, G65, A65, B65, C66, D66, E66, F66, G66, A66, B66, C67, D67, E67, F67, G67, A67, B67, C68, D68, E68, F68, G68, A68, B68, C69, D69, E69, F69, G69, A69, B69, C70, D70, E70, F70, G70, A70, B70, C71, D71, E71, F71, G71, A71, B71, C72, D72, E72, F72, G72, A72, B72, C73, D73, E73, F73, G73, A73, B73, C74, D74, E74, F74, G74, A74, B74, C75, D75, E75, F75, G75, A75, B75, C76, D76, E76, F76, G76, A76, B76, C77, D77, E77, F77, G77, A77, B77, C78, D78, E78, F78, G78, A78, B78, C79, D79, E79, F79, G79, A79, B79, C80, D80, E80, F80, G80, A80, B80, C81, D81, E81, F81, G81, A81, B81, C82, D82, E82, F82, G82, A82, B82, C83, D83, E83, F83, G83, A83, B83, C84, D84, E84, F84, G84, A84, B84, C85, D85, E85, F85, G85, A85, B85, C86, D86, E86, F86, G86, A86, B86, C87, D87, E87, F87, G87, A87, B87, C88, D88, E88, F88, G88, A88, B88, C89, D89, E89, F89, G89, A89, B89, C90, D90, E90, F90, G90, A90, B90, C91, D91, E91, F91, G91, A91, B91, C92, D92, E92, F92, G92, A92, B92, C93, D93, E93, F93, G93, A93, B93, C94, D94, E94, F94, G94, A94, B94, C95, D95, E95, F95, G95, A95, B95, C96, D96, E96, F96, G96, A96, B96, C97, D97, E97, F97, G97, A97, B97, C98, D98, E98, F98, G98, A98, B98, C99, D99, E99, F99, G99, A99, B99, C100, D100, E100, F100, G100, A100, B100, C101, D101, E101, F101, G101, A101, B101, C102, D102, E102, F102, G102, A102, B102, C103, D103, E103, F103, G103, A103, B103, C104, D104, E104, F104, G104, A104, B104, C105, D105, E105, F105, G105, A105, B105, C106, D106, E106, F106, G106, A106, B106, C107, D107, E107, F107, G107, A107, B107, C108, D108, E108, F108, G108, A108, B108, C109, D109, E109, F109, G109, A109, B109, C110, D110, E110, F110, G110, A110, B110, C111, D111, E111, F111, G111, A111, B111, C112, D112, E112, F112, G112, A112, B112, C113, D113, E113, F113, G113, A113, B113, C114, D114, E114, F114, G114, A114, B114, C115, D115, E115, F115, G115, A115, B115, C116, D116, E116, F116, G116, A116, B116, C117, D117, E117, F117, G117, A117, B117, C118, D118, E118, F118, G118, A118, B118, C119, D119, E119, F119, G119, A119, B119, C120, D120, E120, F120, G120, A120, B120, C121, D121, E121, F121, G121, A121, B121, C122, D122, E122, F122, G122, A122, B122, C123, D123, E123, F123, G123, A123, B123, C124, D124, E124, F124, G124, A124, B124, C125, D125, E125, F125, G125, A125, B125, C126, D126, E126, F126, G126, A126, B126, C127, D127, E127, F127, G127, A127, B127, C128, D128, E128, F128, G128, A128, B128, C129, D129, E129, F129, G129, A129, B129, C130, D130, E130, F130, G130, A130, B130, C131, D131, E131, F131, G131, A131, B131, C132, D132, E132, F132, G132, A132, B132, C133, D133, E133, F133, G133, A133, B133, C134, D134, E134, F134, G134, A134, B134, C135, D135, E135, F135, G135, A135, B135, C136, D136, E136, F136, G136, A136, B136, C137, D137, E137, F137, G137, A137, B137, C138, D138, E138, F138, G138, A138, B138, C139, D139, E139, F139, G139, A139, B139, C140, D140, E140, F140, G140, A140, B140, C141, D141, E141, F141, G141, A141, B141, C142, D142, E142, F142, G142, A142, B142, C143, D143, E143, F143, G143, A143, B143, C144, D144, E144, F144, G144, A144, B144, C145, D145, E145, F145, G145, A145, B145, C146, D146, E146, F146, G146, A146, B146, C147, D147, E147, F147, G147, A147, B147, C148, D148, E148, F148, G148, A148, B148, C149, D149, E149, F149, G149, A149, B149, C150, D150, E150, F150, G150, A150, B150, C151, D151, E151, F151, G151, A151, B151, C152, D152, E152, F152, G152, A152, B152, C153, D153, E153, F153, G153, A153, B153, C154, D154, E154, F154, G154, A154, B154, C155, D155, E155, F155, G155, A155, B155, C156, D156, E156, F156, G156, A156, B156, C157, D157, E157, F157, G157, A157, B157, C158, D158, E158, F158, G158, A158, B158, C159, D159, E159, F159, G159, A159, B159, C160, D160, E160, F160, G160, A160, B160, C161, D161, E161, F161, G161, A161, B161, C162, D162, E162, F162, G162, A162, B162, C163, D163, E163, F163, G163, A163, B163, C164, D164, E164, F164, G164, A164, B164, C165, D165, E165, F165, G165, A165, B165, C166, D166, E166, F166, G166, A166, B166, C167, D167, E167, F167, G167, A167, B167, C168, D168, E168, F168, G168, A168, B168, C169, D169, E169, F169, G169, A169, B169, C170, D170, E170, F170, G170, A170, B170, C171, D171, E171, F171, G171, A171, B171, C172, D172, E172, F172, G172, A172, B172, C173, D173, E173, F173, G173, A173, B173, C174, D174, E174, F174, G174, A174, B174, C175, D175, E175, F175, G175, A175, B175, C176, D176, E176, F176, G176, A176, B176, C177, D177, E177, F177, G177, A177, B177, C178, D178, E178, F178, G178, A178, B178, C179, D179, E179, F179, G179, A179, B179, C180, D180, E180, F180, G180, A180, B180, C181, D181, E181, F181, G181, A181, B181, C182, D182, E182, F182, G182, A182, B182, C183, D183, E183, F183, G183, A183, B183, C184, D184, E184, F184, G184, A184, B184, C185, D185, E185, F185, G185, A185, B185, C186, D186, E186, F186, G186, A186, B186, C187, D187, E187, F187, G187, A187, B187, C188, D188, E188, F188, G188, A188, B188, C189, D189, E189, F189, G189, A189, B189, C190, D190, E190, F190, G190, A190, B190, C191, D191, E191, F191, G191, A191, B191, C192, D192, E192, F192, G192, A192, B192, C193, D193, E193, F193, G193, A193, B193, C194, D194, E194, F194, G194, A194, B194, C195, D195, E195, F195, G195, A195, B195, C196, D196, E196, F196, G196, A196, B196, C197, D197, E197, F197, G197, A197, B197, C198, D198, E198, F198, G198, A198, B198, C199, D199, E199, F199, G199, A199, B199, C200, D200, E200, F200, G200, A200, B200, C201, D201, E201, F201, G201, A201, B201, C202, D202, E202, F202, G202, A202, B202, C203, D203, E203, F203, G203, A203, B203, C204, D204, E204, F204, G204, A204, B204, C205, D205, E205, F205, G205, A205, B205, C206, D206, E206, F206, G206, A206, B206, C207, D207, E207, F207, G207, A207, B207, C208, D208, E208, F208, G208, A208, B208, C209, D209, E209, F209, G209, A209, B209, C210, D210, E210, F210, G210, A210, B210, C211, D211, E211, F211, G211, A211, B211, C212, D212, E212, F212, G212, A212, B212, C213, D213, E213, F213, G213, A213, B213, C214, D214, E214, F214, G214, A214, B214, C215, D215, E215, F215, G215, A215, B215, C216, D216, E216, F216, G216, A216, B216, C217, D217, E217, F217, G217, A217, B217, C218, D218, E218, F218, G218, A218, B218, C219, D219, E219, F219, G219, A219, B219, C220, D220, E220, F220, G220, A220, B220, C221, D221, E221, F221, G221, A221, B221, C222, D222, E222, F222, G222, A222, B222, C223, D223, E223, F223, G223, A223, B223, C224, D224, E224, F224, G224, A224, B224, C225, D225, E225, F225, G225, A225, B225, C226, D226, E226, F226, G226, A226, B226, C227, D227, E227, F227, G227, A227, B227, C228, D228, E228, F228, G228, A228, B228, C229, D229, E229, F229, G229, A229, B229, C230, D230, E230, F230, G230, A230, B230, C231, D231, E231, F231, G231, A231, B231, C232, D232, E232, F232, G232, A232, B232, C233, D233, E233, F233, G233, A233, B233, C234, D234, E234, F234, G234, A234, B234, C235, D235, E235, F235, G235, A235, B235, C236, D236, E236, F236, G236, A236, B236, C237, D237, E237, F237, G237, A237, B237, C238, D238, E238, F238, G238, A238, B238, C239, D239, E239, F239, G239, A239, B239, C240, D240, E240, F240, G240, A240, B240, C241, D241, E241, F241, G241, A241, B241, C242, D242, E242, F242, G242, A242, B242, C243, D243, E243, F243, G243, A243, B243, C244, D244, E244, F244, G244, A244, B244, C245, D245, E245, F245, G245, A245, B245, C246, D246, E246, F246, G246, A246, B246, C247, D247, E247, F247, G247, A247, B247, C248, D248, E248, F248, G248, A248, B248, C249, D249, E249, F249, G249, A249, B249, C250, D250, E250, F250, G250, A250, B250, C251, D251, E251, F251, G251, A251, B251, C252, D252, E252, F252, G252, A252, B252, C253, D253, E253, F253, G253, A253, B253, C254, D254, E254, F254, G254, A254, B254, C255, D255, E255, F255, G255, A255, B255, C256, D256, E256, F256, G256, A256, B256, C257, D257, E257, F257, G257, A257, B257, C258, D258, E258, F258, G258, A258, B258, C259, D259, E259, F259, G259, A259, B259, C260, D260, E260, F260, G260, A260, B260, C261, D261, E261, F261, G261, A261, B261, C262, D262, E262, F262, G262, A262, B262, C263, D263, E263, F263, G263, A263, B263, C264, D264, E264, F264, G264, A264, B264, C265, D265, E265, F265, G265, A265, B265, C266, D266, E266, F266, G266, A266, B266, C267, D267, E267, F267, G267, A267, B267, C268, D268, E268, F268, G268, A268, B268, C269, D269, E269, F269, G269, A269, B269, C270, D270, E270, F270, G270, A270, B270, C271, D271, E271, F271, G271, A271, B271, C272, D272, E272, F272, G272, A272, B272, C273, D273, E273, F273, G273, A273, B273, C274, D274, E274, F274, G274, A274, B274, C275, D275, E275, F275, G275, A275, B275, C276, D276, E276, F276, G276, A276, B276, C277, D277, E277, F277, G277, A277, B277, C278, D278, E278, F278, G278, A278, B278, C279, D279, E279, F279, G279, A279, B279, C280, D280, E280, F280, G280, A280, B280, C281, D281, E281, F281, G281, A281, B281, C282, D282, E282, F282, G282, A282, B282, C283, D283, E283, F283, G283, A283, B283, C284, D284, E284, F284, G284, A284, B284, C285, D285, E285, F285, G285, A285, B285, C286, D286, E286, F286, G286, A286, B286, C287, D287, E287, F287, G287, A287, B287, C288, D288, E288, F288, G288, A288, B288, C289, D289, E289, F289, G289, A289, B289, C290, D290, E290, F290, G290, A290, B290, C291, D291, E291, F291, G291, A291, B291, C292, D292, E292, F292, G292, A292, B292, C293, D293, E293, F293, G293, A293, B293, C294, D294, E294, F294, G294, A294, B294, C295, D295, E295, F295, G295, A295, B295, C296, D296, E296, F296, G296, A296, B296, C297, D297, E297, F297, G297, A297, B297, C298, D298, E298, F298, G298, A298, B298, C299, D299, E299, F299, G299, A299, B299, C300, D300, E300, F300, G300, A300, B300, C301, D301, E301, F301, G301, A301, B301, C302, D302, E302, F302, G302, A302, B302, C303, D303, E303, F303, G303, A303, B303, C304, D304, E304, F304, G304, A304, B304, C305, D305, E305, F305, G305, A305, B305, C306, D306, E306, F306, G306, A306, B306, C307, D307, E307, F307, G307, A307, B307, C308, D308, E308, F308, G308, A308, B308, C309, D309, E309, F309, G309, A309, B309, C310, D310, E310, F310, G310, A310, B310, C311, D311, E311, F311, G311, A311, B311, C312, D312, E312, F312, G312, A312, B312, C313, D313, E313, F313, G313, A313, B313, C314, D314, E314, F314, G314, A314, B314, C315, D315, E315, F315, G315, A315, B315, C316, D316, E316, F316, G316, A316, B316, C317, D317, E317, F317, G317, A317, B317, C318, D318, E318, F318, G318, A318, B318, C319, D319, E319, F319, G319, A319, B319, C320, D320, E320, F320, G320, A320, B320, C321, D321, E321, F321, G321, A321, B321, C322, D322, E322, F322, G322, A322, B322, C323, D323, E323, F323, G323, A323, B323, C324, D324, E324, F324, G324, A324, B324, C325, D325, E325, F325, G325, A325, B325, C326, D326, E326, F326, G326, A326, B326, C327, D327, E327, F327, G327, A327, B327, C328, D328, E328, F328, G328, A328, B328, C329, D329, E329, F329, G329, A329, B329, C330, D330, E330, F330, G330, A330, B330, C331, D331, E331, F331, G331, A331, B331, C332, D332, E332, F332, G332, A332, B332, C333, D333, E333, F333, G333, A333, B333, C334, D334, E334, F334, G334, A334, B334, C335, D335, E335, F335, G335, A335, B335, C336, D336, E336, F336, G336, A336, B336, C337, D337, E337, F337, G337, A337, B337, C338, D338, E338, F338, G338, A338, B338, C339, D339, E339, F339, G339, A339, B339, C340, D340, E340, F340, G340, A340, B340, C341, D341, E341, F341, G341, A341, B341, C342, D342, E342, F342, G342, A342, B342, C343, D343, E343, F343, G343, A343, B343, C344, D344, E344, F344, G344, A344, B344, C345, D345, E345, F345, G345, A345, B345, C346, D346, E346, F346, G346, A346, B346, C347, D347, E347, F347, G347, A347, B347, C348, D348, E348, F348, G348, A348, B348, C349, D349, E349, F349, G349, A349, B349, C350, D350, E350, F350, G350, A350, B350, C351, D351, E351, F351, G351, A351, B351, C352, D352, E352, F352, G352, A352, B352, C353, D353, E353, F353, G353, A353, B353, C354, D354, E354, F354, G354, A354, B354, C355, D355, E355, F355, G355, A355, B355, C356, D356, E356, F356, G356, A356, B356, C357, D357, E357, F357, G357, A357, B357, C358, D358, E358, F358, G358, A358, B358, C359, D359, E359, F359, G359, A359, B359, C360, D360, E360, F360, G360, A360, B360, C361, D361, E361, F361, G361, A361, B361, C362, D362, E362, F362, G362, A362, B362, C363, D363, E363, F363, G363, A363, B363, C364, D364, E364, F364, G364, A364, B364, C365, D365, E365, F365, G365, A365, B365, C366, D366, E366, F366, G366, A366, B366, C367, D367, E367, F367, G367, A367, B367, C368, D368, E368, F368, G368, A368, B368, C369, D369, E369, F369, G369, A369, B369, C370, D370, E370, F370, G370, A37

2

11



X
A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe

P

B

N

15



X
A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe

P

B

N

19



X
A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe

P

B

N

23



X
P
B
N

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for measures 23, 24, and 25. It features four staves: X (Soprano), P (Alto), B (Tenor), and N (Bass). The X staff has a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes. The P staff has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The B staff has a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes with accents. The N staff has a simple bass line of quarter notes.

26



X
P
B
N

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for measures 26, 27, 28, and 29. The notation follows the same instrumental structure as the previous block, with four staves (X, P, B, N) and consistent rhythmic patterns.

30



X
P
B
N

A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for measures 30, 31, 32, and 33. The X staff includes the lyrics "A ha ha loyiwe" repeated three times. The instrumental parts (P, B, N) continue with their established rhythmic accompaniment.

4

34



X
A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe A ha ha loyiwe

P

B

N

Detailed description: This block contains the first system of a musical score, measures 34-37. It features four staves: X (Xenlo), P (Piano), B (Bass), and N (Ngoni). The X staff has a melody with lyrics 'A ha ha loyiwe' repeated four times. The P staff has a piano accompaniment with eighth notes. The B staff has a bass line with eighth notes. The N staff has a simple harmonic accompaniment with quarter notes.

38



X

P

B

N

Detailed description: This block contains the second system of a musical score, measures 38-41. It features four staves: X (Xenlo), P (Piano), B (Bass), and N (Ngoni). The X staff has a melody with a repeat sign. The P staff has a piano accompaniment with eighth notes. The B staff has a bass line with eighth notes. The N staff has a simple harmonic accompaniment with quarter notes.

42



X

P

B

N

Detailed description: This block contains the third system of a musical score, measures 42-45. It features four staves: X (Xenlo), P (Piano), B (Bass), and N (Ngoni). The X staff has a melody with a repeat sign. The P staff has a piano accompaniment with eighth notes. The B staff has a bass line with eighth notes. The N staff has a simple harmonic accompaniment with quarter notes.

45



Piece 23: A ha ha loyiwe

Translation

Text

Translation

A ha ha loyiwe

We cannot be bewitched anymore

Embedded meaning

Many Africans believe that witchcraft exists even though there are many who do not practise it. The Vatsonga also live in fear of being bewitched. In this piece, the singers indicate that they cannot be bewitched anymore. It is a message that is meant to intimidate witches, so that they may know where to draw the line.

Musical characteristics

A ha ha loyiwe is usually performed as an introduction before the actual performance. In most cases, performers of either *Xincayincayi* or *Muchongolo* would assemble at a distance of approximately one hundred metres from the

performance venue. When the group is called to the stage, that is when they would start performing the piece *A ha ha loyiwe* while approaching the stage. When they had finished performing, they would once again perform the piece *A ha ha loyiwe* as they descended the stage. Vocalists sing *A ha ha loyiwe* in unison; there is no sense of tonality in their singing; they sound as if they are reciting a poem. When performers sing, they sounded similar with *xitetete*, which is part of the call and the response done by *phendhu*, *bidela* and *ndlhazi*. *Ndlhazi* does not sound many notes as it plays the bass figure. It sometimes goes mute in order to bring variation.

Embedded meaning

Marula nuts (*timongo*) are consumed by both males and females, however, boys sing this piece to ridicule girls. Boys believe that girls are too lazy; they do nothing but peel the marula nuts and eat them all the time although boys also do the same.

Musical characteristics

Unlike most indigenous Xitsonga pieces, *Timongo* is in three pulse measure. It is sung during *Muchongolo* performance. It is very thin in texture as there are only two instrumental lines, namely, *xitetete* and *phendhu*. In the case where *bidela* is involved, it is subdued. It is cyclic in form.

Heskiro





Piece 25: *Heskiro*

Translation

Text

Heskiroo

Translation

Onomatopoeia

Musical characteristics

Heskhiro is led by *xitetete* and *phendhu*, even though their notes are not executed at exactly the same value; they form a unit that compliments one another. *Phendhu's* role is to answer rather than to call, but in this case it does call. This suggests that other performers might not know its role since *bidela* and *ndlhazi* are the ones responsible for answering. The piece is also cyclic.

Ngwazi



Piece 26: Nghwazi

Translation

Text

Translation

Hoyoyo

Onomatopoeia

Musical characteristics

Each and every instrument has a different role to play. Xitetete is the one that makes the calls as usual while the rest answer. Even though they sound different values, all instruments come together to make a unified whole.

Dlaya xihoncani



The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of three systems. Each system includes staves for X, P, B, N, and a separate staff for Voices. The lyrics are: "Dlaya xi honcani xi hlupha ngopfu hala ka ya Dlaya xi honcani xi hlupha ngopfu hala ka ya".

System 1: Measures 1-5. The X and P staves play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The B and N staves play a steady bass line. The voice staff begins with the lyrics.

System 2: Measures 6-8. The instrumental parts continue their patterns. The voice staff continues the lyrics.

System 3: Measures 9-11. The instrumental parts conclude with repeat signs. The voice staff concludes with a final phrase.

Piece 27: Dlaya xihoncani

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Dlaya xihoncani</i>	Slaughter a piglet
<i>Xi hlupha ngopfu hala kaya</i>	It is causing trouble here at home

Embedded meaning

Xihoncani refers to a piglet. The composer of this piece has been monitoring a *xihoncani*, which has been causing a lot of trouble at people's houses. In Xitsonga culture, *tihonci* (pigs) live in a kraal rather than outside but in this case, the *xihoncani* was not living in a kraal; it had the freedom to move as it pleased. *Xihoncani* would even enter peoples' houses and steal food, which was considered unusual and unaccepted by the community. Hence, the composer suggests in this piece that the *xihoncani* should be slaughtered so that it does not cause any more trouble.

There are other domestic animals such as goats, dogs, cattle and donkeys which are a nuisance in the community. This piece therefore implies that owners of such troublesome domestic animals should take care of their livestock.

Musical characteristics

As usual, *xitetete* and *phendhu* play the same leading role in a form of a call. In bar 2, *bidela*, *ndlhazi* and voices join in the form of a response. The voices recite in unison and without any sense of tonality. In bar 8, the rhythmic pattern of *bidela* and *ndlhazi* alternate to break the monotony in this cyclic piece.

Giyani



X
P
B
N

Voices

Gi ya ni! va na lav' va na lav' a vay' e xi ko lwen'

2



X
P
B
N

Voices

va na lav' va na lav' a vay' e xi ko lwen' mhi nto va yin? mhi nto va yin? va ka Mti ti ti

Piece 28: Giyani

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Giyani</i>	Stamp your feet
<i>Vana lav' a vay' exikolwen'</i>	These children do not go to school
<i>Mhi' nto va yin'</i>	There is nothing I can do to help them
<i>Va ka Mtititi</i>	Fellow Mtititi residents

Embedded meaning

Mtititi is a village at Malamulele, Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. Many villagers around Mtititi used to enjoy this piece, which was composed to mock Mtititi children for not attending school. During *Xincayincayi* performance, different indigenous Xitsonga music and dance groups would assemble to compete. Some villagers who performed this piece believed that many children from Mtititi Village do not attend school, however, this was not true, there were children who did not attend school but many did.

Children who did not attend school were considered uncivilised. This piece was composed to discourage those who did not love attending school. The composer was not actually referring to Mtititi children only.

Musical characteristics

This piece's call is made by voices and answered by drummers. Voices are also without a sense of tonality but have a rhythmic order. It is normally performed at a very fast tempo because it is a *Xincayincayi* piece. Unlike many indigenous Xitsonga pieces, *Giyani* is not cyclic. It ends in a climax, when boys (*vacini*) make *mukapa*; they jump and land on their backs.

Bundu xikondoni



Musical score for the first system of 'Bundu xikondoni'. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of four parts: X (Xylophone), P (Piano), B (Bass), and N (Ngoni). The lyrics are: Bu ndu xi ko ndo ni so ngo ri kwe ta Bu ndu xi ko ndo ni.

2



Musical score for the second system of 'Bundu xikondoni'. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of four parts: X (Xylophone), P (Piano), B (Bass), and N (Ngoni). The lyrics are: so ngo ri kwe ta Bu ndu xi ko ndo ni so ngo ri kwe ta.

Piece 29: Bundu xikondoni

Translation

Text	Translation
<i>Bundu xikondoni</i>	Pimple on the face
<i>So ngo ri kweta</i>	Do not scratch it

Embedded meaning

The Vatsonga and the Vhavenda do not live far from one another; in fact, some even live together. The effort of Vatsonga to sing in Tshivenda in a typical Xitsonga indigenous piece is an example of the portability of Xitsonga music and dance into other traditional or indigenous music. In this piece, the Vatsonga clearly missed something from a Tshivenda piece. This piece demonstrates the portability of indigenous Xitsonga music and dance into other genres and tribes. The above Tshivenda lyrics are wrongly constructed. Instead of *pundu khofheni, u so ngo li kweta*, the arranger of the piece says *bundu xikondoni, so ngo ri kweta*. Probably the arranger (Mutsonga) heard the piece but forgot what the lyrics said and he came up with his own. The Vatsonga who perform this piece do not care about the meaning of the piece, therefore, they did not even bother to challenge the arranger about the meaning. This happens in many instances where some language groups arrange pieces that are not in their language. For example, a gospel song called “what a Mighty God we serve”, is sung as “*what te mati go we se*”.

Musical characteristics

Unlike many indigenous Xitsonga pieces, this one is not characterised by a call and response. All instruments, including voices, start together. Voices are once again without a sense of tonality. This piece recurs until it is musically desired to stop.

2

12



Tlhe la na___ xo___ na mha___ nta xnyi ka man

Piece 30: Xibelani

Translation

Text

Translation

He xibelani

Onomatopoeia, Xibelani

Tlhela na xona mha nta xi nyika man?

Take it back who will I give it to?

Tlhelela kule

Go far back

Tlhela tlhela na Xibelani xa wena

Go back with your Xibelani

Mha nta xi nyika man?

Who will I give it to?

Embedded meaning

This piece is about someone who brought a *Xibelani* to one of her group members. According to members of the group the *Xibelani* was not in a good condition, it was worn out, therefore, the one who brought it was ordered to take it back since there was not one interested in it. The composer of this piece is encouraging people to give items that are still usable to others.

Musical characteristics

The piece is in four four and it starts with anacrusis. It is another typical example of call and response rather than antiphony. *Xibelani* is characterised by triplets. There is a combination of tonally sound and lack of tonality in this piece. From bar 1 to the first beat of bar 5, there is melody while from the second beat of bar 5 to the first beat of bar 11, there is no sense of tonality. From the second beat of bar 11 there is once again a sense of tonality; the piece is cyclic.

5.4. CONCLUSION

Chapter five consisted of thirty transcribed indigenous Xitsonga pieces; those that accompany *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*. The pieces were studied according to their lyrics and the nature of notation. Instruments accompanying the pieces were also discussed.

Xibelani, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* pieces are generally short and repetitive, even though there are a few that are little longer, especially *Xincayincayi* pieces, for example, *Khombo ra Joni*. Most of the themes are about relationships because the performers are young people who are not yet married. They eventually get married and realise that married life is not as easy as it seems. Shortly after they get married, most of them experience hardships with their in-laws. They therefore composed pieces to express their pain and to teach single people who were still participating in cultural practices. Lessons exemplified in the pieces are not only meant for indigenous Xitsonga music and dance practitioners but for every society.

Xibelani, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* are performed for a variety of occasions. According to many respondents interviewed in this study, originally, indigenous Xitsonga cultural practices were performed after a girl had graduated from initiation school; an occasion called *tikhomba*. Another occasion would be when a child was born, an occasion called “*mbuti ya xidzwele*”. A goat “*mbuti*” would be slaughtered when a child was born and celebration would take place as people enjoy the meat. There are also pieces about marriage, love affairs and complaints, as well as songs of ridicule, chieftaincy and conflicting opinions. Contemporary composers, for example, would compose songs about HIV/AIDS, as well as songs to praise their leaders, history, culture, youth’s behaviour and politics.

The nature of *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* changes all the time; for example, when *Xibelani* started, performers used to perform barefooted, but now they wear sneakers. Moreover, contemporary social and economic patterns of life have introduced new identity shifts and forms in *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* cultural practices amongst the Vatsonga. The focus of girls or contemporary young women has been diverted towards contemporary interests and attractions, such as modern art music, education (attending school). *Xibelani* is now also performed by married people, citing lack of interest among teenagers as the reason for their (married woman’s) involvement.

Previous scholarly writings have demonstrated that dance can lead a person to a different world. This is the case in other genres where artists are involved; they behave differently in an endeavour to express their feelings, in order to communicate effectively with the audience. There are instances where performers forget about everything and get carried away by emotions. That is a demonstration that people's actions are signs intended to convey meanings. In indigenous music and dance performances, it is common to interpret the music according to feelings. Such behaviour is also apparent in indigenous Xitsonga dance and singing. Call and response is amongst the main characteristics of indigenous Xitsonga music and dance. Another feature that grabbed the attention of the present researcher is 'scooping'. More characteristics are discussed in the next chapter, relating them as common trends that influenced traditional Xitsonga music and dance and Shangaan disco.

There are also examples of characteristics of indigenous Xitsonga music dance compound that influenced traditional music. For example, four four time signature and anacrusis that dominate in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compound was applied by Dr Thomas Chauke in his song *Roza* (see example 1). Other artists such as Colbert Mukwevho (reggae) and Penny Penny (Shangaan disco) are influenced by indigenous music.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF THE STUDY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This last chapter will provide the conclusion and offer some recommendations based on the analysis of the collected data. The data was analysed in order to give direction to the appropriate conclusion and recommendations.

The aim of this study was to descriptively analyse indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compound by means of transcribing, documenting and offering brief commentaries on the context of indigenous Xitsonga pieces and their accompaniment. This was done for the purpose of preserving and documenting the pieces in order to keep and record valuable information. By so doing, coming generations will be able to access the information of these indigenous art forms (*Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo*). Interviews that led to information about *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* were conducted in the Vhembe District of Limpopo; Bushbuckridge in Mpumalanga Province was also visited, especially for information regarding *Muchongolo*, which is predominantly practiced in that area. The previous chapters focused on the transcription and discussion of *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* as indigenous art forms. This chapter will serve as an overview of the study.

6.2. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter one dealt with the background of the study, where the Vatsonga live and how *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* cultural practices came into existence. Vatsonga's history was also discussed including their origin. The aim and objectives of the study were outlined. It also dealt with the definitions of key concepts that are likely to challenge readers, especially those without knowledge of music. The structure of the whole study was also outlined.

Literature was reviewed in chapter two. Most reference material that exists regarding indigenous African music and dance were discussed in thematic context analysis. Not much has been written concerning *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* cultural practice; hence the literature review was general. The transcription of Xitsonga cultural songs and dances by previous researchers is also inaccurate and needed to be improved.

In chapter three, the research methodology was outlined. All relevant aspects such as theoretical framework, research design, delimitation of the study and ethical consideration were explained in detail.

Chapter four comprised of aspects that are important in *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* cultural practices. The following are some of the main aspects: data collected during this study and the findings, performers (both direct and participative), *macinelo* (choreography), composers and the themes involved in the compositions and what influenced these themes. The attire that is

worn during *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* performances was also analysed in Chapter four. In closing, the instruments were discussed, how they were constructed, their meaning and respective functions.

Thirty *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* pieces were transcribed and analysed in chapter five. The transcription was done in dual notation: tonic sol-fa and staff notation. Brief commentaries were made thematically, addressing the meaning of pieces and looking at musical elements such as melody, texture, harmony and structure. Accompaniment was amongst the aspects discussed in this chapter.

6.3. CONCLUSION

Xibelani, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* are amongst the main cultural performances of Vatsonga. This is based on the fact that at most occasions the above-mentioned aspects are relevant because the pieces accompanying them comprise of themes that cover a broad variety of moods and circumstances. Moreover, the age group that performs indigenous Xitsonga art forms ranges from teenagers to any young unmarried adults. This is the group that is often active, therefore, they dance as a way of entertaining themselves and also to attract each other as mentioned in chapter four.

Another fact is that nowadays *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* are not only performed for entertainment, as was the case in the olden days, but also for financial gain. Performers are invited to perform and they

are paid for their performances. They also participate during competitions and winners walk away with money and other prizes. There are, however, also those who are not motivated by money to perform, such say they participate in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance cultural practices in order to promote the heritage and culture of Vatsonga.

One of the main issues discussed earlier are some misinformation about the meanings, functions and performance contexts of a number of indigenous musical practices, especially those concerning the issue of associating Xitsonga or rather African cultural practices with alcohol. Some pioneering scholars on the cultures and musical art practices of indigenous African language groups of South Africa are of the view that Africans only dance when they are under the influence of alcohol. Lately, there are African authors who strongly disagree with this unfortunate interpretation. This present researcher concludes by stating that alcohol can be enjoyed without singing and dancing. In addition, singing and dancing can go on without alcohol. Furthermore, not all the dancers take alcohol although they participate in dancing. There are situations where people dance as a form of celebration, where they also drink alcohol whilst dancing, therefore, whether there is alcohol or not, Xitsonga and other African cultural pieces can be performed (Khosa, 2014).

The nature of *Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* has changed over time; for example, when *Xibelani* started, performers used to perform bare footed, however, nowadays they wear sneakers. The idea of a short

xibelani (garment) was not always the case, as *Xibelani* (art form) is also performed by married people. Married women cite lack of interest by teenagers as the reason for their (married women) involvement. The traditional make up is also historic, as performers now decorate their faces the modern way. Below is a picture of a woman with a modern make up.



Figure 30: Modern make up on a woman's face (Khosa, 2017)

Mention should be made that as a result of evolution, *Xibelani* is now mostly performed with the accompaniment of guitars. Under such circumstances, young girls participate with interest due to the nature of events where such performances occur. Examples of artists whose music is played this way is Ben Mayengani, Dr. Hasani Thomas Chauke and George Maluleke. *Xincayincayi* is also receiving attention from young energetic boys when it is performed at same occasions as *Xibelani*.

The Department of Education, through the Arts and Culture learning area, is lately encouraging school pupils to participate in all the indigenous art forms as an endeavour to preserve African cultural practice. Competitions are organized at different levels and learners are encouraged to participate. By so doing, something positive is being done towards the preservation of Xitsonga art forms (*Xibelani*, *Mikhinyavedzo*, *Xincayincayi* and *Muchongolo* included). Below is the picture of school pupils during one of the competitions organised by the Department of Education. The competition took place at Malamulele stadium.



Figure 31: School pupils lining up for a rendition during organized indigenous music and dance school competition (Khosa, 2016)

As far as music is concerned, one can conclude that indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compound has a major influence on the traditional music of the Vatsonga. For example, melodic lines of Dr. Hasani Thomas Chauke are an

example of similarities. His call and response technique is never compromised throughout his compositions. In fact, most *Xincayincayi* pieces are led by a male (call) and backed up (response) by females. The same applies to Chauke's music. Anacrusis and a use of triplets also play a major role in traditional music and disco music. (See example 1)

Four pulse measure has mostly been used in in this study. In few instances, three pulse measure and only once, two pulse measure were used. This represents the usage of four pulse measure in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance in general. Similarly, the genres known as Shangaan disco and traditional Xitsonga music employ common time as a predominant time signature.

Africans in general have a tendency of scooping when they sing, that is also the case in indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compound. When Vatsonga round off their phrases, they scoop (see Khombo ra Joni). Penny Penny is a Mutsonga artist whose music employs scooping, for example, his song titled "*Hayi ka mina*" (See example 2). Another typical example of scooping is Umanji's song "*Mhani*".

Most indigenous Xitsonga music and dance is cyclic in nature. This is the case with many indigenous African music an example is "*Sendekela*" an indigenous Tshivenda *Malende* piece. African music which is not indigenous would rather have choruses recurring with a variety in verses to break the monotony. This discussion does not only confirm the common threads of indigenous Xitsonga music and dance, as well as other African music and dance, but also the

portability of indigenous Xitsonga music and dance compound to other African pieces.

6.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the literature survey and empirical research findings.

There is a lack of interest in indigenous music, hence scholars should contribute in transcription of indigenous cultural practice. It is recommended that the Department of Education should find a way to encourage cultural practice researchers to do more transcriptions and research that will be documented and preserved for the sake of Xitsonga heritage, further study and for the preservation of indigenous cultural practice of African societies. It is recommended that it be compulsory for every school (at primary and high school levels) to participate in competitions of indigenous cultural practices.

It is recommended that tertiary institutions should formalise more programmes based on indigenous cultural practice so that music scholars can realise the need for further research by discovering aspects that are not yet covered. It is also recommended that the Department of Arts and Culture should support indigenous cultural practice groups by buying these groups uniforms, musical instruments as a way of encouraging them to participate in African indigenous musical art practices, such as Xitsonga cultural practices.

In this chapter, the summary of the whole study was given. The summary comprised of an overview of significant aspects discussed in the study. I also concluded by means of stating findings and contradictions in terms of presented data. My observation also managed to reconcile the contradictions with the truth in order to clarify details to the readers. Recommendations that can serve as a way forward towards transcription, documentation and preservation of indigenous art forms were also made in this chapter.

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