A Dance in the Rain:

Race, Resistance and Media in Early Apartheid South Africa

by

Maneo Refiloe Mohale

University of British Columbia

April 15, 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

In my mother tongue, we say *"Motho ke motho ka batho"* meaning "a person is only a person because of other people". With that in mind, it is my immense pleasure and privilege to acknowledge the many uncountable people who have helped me in the researching and writing of this thesis. I could not have accomplished this daunting task alone, and many hands have held me up throughout this challenging journey.

Firstly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) nation on whose traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory I have learned and lived for my four years at UBC. I have been extremely privileged to be an unwelcomed guest on these lands, and am sincerely grateful for every difficult and valuable moment of learning.

Thank you to my incredible thesis advisor, Alejandra Bronfman, for your insightful comments, brilliant advice and your gentle encouragement in my on-going journey to be a better writer. My sincere thanks to Michael Zeitlin, Julie Macarthur, Paul Krause, Delia Douglas and all the professors who have shaped my thinking in valuable ways. Special thanks to Erin Baines for her unconditional support, and for quiet chats over chocolate. My warmest gratitude also to Juliane Okot-Bitek, for sitting me down in the sun and offering this piece of advice: "Do not let anyone teach you what you already know."

My gratitude extends to my wonderful family for your unconditional love, and to Sean Michael James Coady, for your support, and for your ear in our many conversations about my project. Finally, thank you to Professor Paris and the brilliant Honours students whose thoughtful feedback helped me so much. I am truly proud and grateful to be among such dedicated and knowledgeable scholars.

Introduction:
Media, Agency and Resistance in early apartheid South Africa (1948-1960)

On the 26th of May 1948, the government of South Africa, then under the leadership of Daniel François Malan and the Nationalist Party, set out to refashion South African society along deeply segregated racial lines. Under this system, named *apartheid*, an Afrikaans term loosely translating to "the state of being apart" or "separateness", South Africa was exposed to a climate of racial discrimination – the impact of which is still felt to the present day. Based on the principles of Afrikaner nationalism, apartheid tried to impose white supremacist ideals on South Africa's diverse population. This led to a complex mechanism known as 'grand apartheid', "the process whereby the population of South Africa was to be divided into what were seen as its constituent 'national groups'."[1]

As historians such as Shula Marks, Richard Rathbone, William Beinhart and many others remind us, the seeds of apartheid's racial logic were planted long before 1948. Evidence of segregation can be traced as far back as 1660, when Dutch colonial administrator Jan van Riebeeck planted a hedge as a boundary around the Dutch East India Company's settlement in the Cape in order to keep the Khoi, one of Southern Africa's many indigenous groups, away from resources hidden in Dutch refreshment stations. These seeds germinated throughout South Africa's various colonial conflicts, deepening during the South African War, and throughout the struggles associated in both the formation and the undoing of the Union of South Africa.[2] However, it was

---

[1] Robert Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 126.

[2] For more, see Shula Marks and Richard Rathbone (eds.), *Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa: African Class Formation, culture and consciousness, 1870-1930.*

under Malan's Nationalist government that the seeds of racial discrimination finally bore fruit, in the institutionalisation of the machinery of apartheid.

Within apartheid's policies, four central principles were present. The first was concerned with who would receive to the right to vote. Under apartheid, the franchise was strikingly restricted so that a monopoly of state power was left firmly within white hands, particularly the hands of the white Afrikaner elite. The second principle was spatial – under the new system, South Africa's urban and rural space was divided up along strict racial lines. Thirdly, the supply of labour was also segregated and placed under state control. Finally, the power of the state was applied in what was seen as the maintenance of order, regulating all aspects of South African life, particularly in the lives of black South Africans – a group that was placed at the bottom of apartheid South Africa's strict racial hierarchy.[3]

When we examine the list of apartheid laws passed between 1948 and 1960 in isolation, a particularly bleak picture presents itself. The Population Registration Act assigned racial (and for black South Africans, tribal) categories to all, thereby freezing these categories into place for decades to come. The 1949 Mixed Marriages Act, along with its more sinister companion, the Immorality Act, banned heterosexual intercourse between races. The Group Areas Act endeavoured to enforce racially segregated residential areas, often with painful consequences. A great number of families were broken up on account of relatives being (often arbitrarily) assigned to, or making claims

---

(London and New York: Longman, 1982), and Richard Elpick and Hermann Giliomee, The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840. (Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1989).

[3] To give you an idea of the racial demographics at this time, of the roughly 14 million South Africans living in the country by 1950, black South Africans constituted about 68% of the population, 21% were white, 9% were 'coloured', or of mixed descent, and 2% were of either South Asian or East Asian descent. Robert Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, 126.

towards different racial statuses. The 1953 Bantu Education Act, proposed by Minister

for Native Affairs, Dr H.F. Verwoerd, facilitated the design of syllabi that severely limited

the education of young black South Africans and was created for the purpose to

"retribalise" and prepare black South Africans for state-controlled forms of labour.[4] The

1954 Natives Resettlement Act began the gradual process that culminated in the

removal of 57 000 black South Africans from multi-racial townships, termed 'black

spots' that were seen to blemish the western areas of Johannesburg, one of South

Africa's largest urban centres. The infamous Pass Laws limited the movement of black

South Africans alone, in an attempt to regulate both the migrant labour system, and the

rising rate of black urbanisation.

And so the list continues until the tragic end of the decade when, on the 21st of

March 1960, thousands of black South Africans marched in protest of the Pass Laws,

and 69 black Africans were shot and killed by state police, with over 180 wounded in

Sharpeville, a township located in South Africa's predominately urban Transvaal.[5] The

Sharpeville Massacre is widely stated in the historiography as representative of a

profound turning point in South Africa's history.[6]

As historian and ethnomusicologist Christopher Ballantine remarks, "the year

1960, in turn, marked the onset of the long night of apartheid's darkest period; it

produced a climate of repression from which no aspect of social life was exempt and

which only the sustained, heroic struggle of the ensuing three decades would eventually

---

[4] Hendrik F. Verwoerd, "Statement to the Senate", 1954 in Thomas G. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds.) *From Protest to Challenge: Challenge and Violence, 1953 – 1964* (Auckland Park: Jacana, 2013), 287

[5] For more on the Sharpeville Massacre, see Jennifer Robinson's *The Power of Apartheid: State, Power and Space in South African Cities* (Oxford: Butterworth, 1996)

[6] See Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido (eds.) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa* (London: Longman, 1987), and Thomas G. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart (eds.) *From Protest to Challenge: Challenge and Violence, 1953 – 1964*.

dispel."[7] Thus, Sharpeville marked the beginning of one of South Africa's most most difficult periods, and as Ballantine evocatively suggests, this period was characterised both by its dark violence and its enduring length.

However, if we view the period between apartheid's birth in 1948 to the state's lethal use of force in 1960 without an eye on the myriad levels of agency and resistance, we are left with a bleak and incomplete history. On one vital level, political resistance was waged by parties such as the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress, (PAC) the United Democratic Front (UDF), the ANC Women's League and the ANC Youth League – wherein iconic leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo and Anton Lembede received their political training.

On another important level, the level on which this thesis is most concerned, marginalised South Africans and their many allies found powerful weapons against the prevailing social order in the media. The theatre, film, journalism, photography and music produced in early apartheid South Africa was remarkable, not only for its sheer variety but also more importantly in the variety of oppositional perspectives to the repressive order in which these facets of media were produced.

In writing about the rise of *marabi*, *kwela, umbhaqanga* and other forms of black South African township jazz within this period, Sibongile Khumalo, a South African singer and social activist, notes that these various forms of music were "the articulation of a sound through which a segment of society was defining a vocabulary and finding voice and an expression that sought to defy the prevailing political order, asserting and defining its own musical language against both the ruling elite and the educated among them."[8] Similarly, Todd Matshikiza, a journalist and columnist who worked for *Drum,* an

---

[7] Christopher Ballantine, *Marabi Nights*, (Johannesburg: Ravan, 2012), 2
[8] Sibongile Khumalo, as quoted in Christopher Ballantine, *Marabi Nights*, xv.

iconic South African magazine, writes that throughout the fifties, and into the heady climate around the prospect of African independence, "the writers and photographers of *Drum*, and the readers who lapped up their words and images, seemed to behave as if anything was possible. They carried themselves with an absurd confidence, as if that drunken wave of freedom that was already pounding across the north and west and the east of the continent would soon be lapping against the shores of South Africa . . ."[9]

Much of the work examining the media produced in early apartheid South Africa is organised according to genre. Christopher Ballantine's remarkable book, *Marabi Nights: Jazz, 'race' and society in early apartheid South Africa* and Viet Erlmann's two influential books, *African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance* and *Nightsong: Performance, Power and Practice* concentrate on the socio-political conditions that gave rise to various incredible black South African jazz musicians. Film historians such as Keyan Tomaselli and Peter Davis examine early apartheid film in their respective works, *The Cinema of Apartheid* and *In Darkest Hollywood: Exploring the jungles of cinema's South Africa*. Print media (short stories, investigative journalism, magazines and photography) is the subject of works such as Mark Chapman's *The Drum Decade*, Angela Caccia's *The Beat of Drum: The Rise of Africa,* as well as photographer, Jürgen Schadeberg's *The Fifties People of South Africa*.

Very few works, with the exception of David Coplan's *In Township Tonight: Three Centuries of African Black City Music and Theatre* examine the relationships between various genres. It is into this relative void that this thesis steps. In my review of the primary sources to which I've had access from this unique period in South African history, I have found patterns, threads, and important interventions that connect the

---

[9] Todd Matshikiza, as quoted in Mark Chapman, *The Drum Decade*, (Scottsville: Kwa-Zulu Natal Press, 2001), x

genres to each other in significant ways. The *marabi* music produced in the early 1940s informed and deepened the cinema produced and consumed in the late 1940s and well into the 1950s. Many of the films produced at this time such as *African Jim* (1949), *The Magic Garden* (1951), *Cry the Beloved Country* (1952) and *Come Back Africa* (1959) drew from black South African musical traditions and street performance, layering these forms into narratives that often held covert and overt political and social messages. In the case of *Come Back Africa*, prominent black South African writers and public intellectuals such as Can Themba and Lewis Nkosi co-wrote and starred in the film – changing and appropriating the cinematic medium to articulate their own struggle. The dominant historiography on this period separate what was interconnected all along. For this reason, the structure of my thesis is designed to explore how each of these three genres "speak" to each other, in the recognition that no one genre could have existed in the same way without the others, while simultaneously providing a window into the many forms and instances of oppositional agency and resistance to apartheid.

In my first chapter, I sketch out the development of South African jazz culture, in the later 1940s and into the 1950s, and show how its development was intertwined with American jazz culture in multiple ways. In challenging the argument within some of the historiography that South African jazz performers were connected to their American counterparts through a relationship characterised by "the politics of imitation", I present the case of the Manhattan Brothers (one of the most popular all-male, black South African close harmony groups of the period).[10] Far from mere imitators, I argue that the Manhattan Brothers' music complicates the dominant

---

[10] Christopher Ballantine, *Marabi Nights*, 122

argument by blurring the lines between African and American, imitation and invention and role of music as either political or pleasurable.

Having established the contours of South African jazz culture and its transnational connections, my second chapter moves into the films produced in the early apartheid period. Here, I examine and unpack two ground breaking films produced in South Africa at the time. I begin by looking at *African Jim* (1949), the first film to feature an all black South African cast. In using the work of film theorists Lindiwe Dovey and Angela Impey in their work around "hidden transcripts", I argue that the film presents us with a far more profound picture than its simple narrative conveys. In the second section of the chapter, I look at Lionel Rogosin's film, *Come Back Africa* (1959), and explore how the contributions of black South Africans writers shaped the anti-apartheid film in fundamental ways.

Finally, in my third chapter, I look at the legacy and work of black South African writers, as well as journalists and photographers who worked for *Drum*, a publication that defied easy categorisation in its day, due the breadth of its material and the complexities of its characters both within and outside of its pages. In describing the magazine, historian Graeme Addison explains that:

> *Drum* was neither a political paper nor a newspaper of record but was an entertainment-exposé-picture periodical crammed with fiction and muckracking, busty broads and huckster advertising. . . . The curious thing about *Drum* – the *problem* one could say – was that it appeared to function as a political instrument in spite of its tawdry irresponsible air; - that its commercial guise somewhat belied its importance as an articulator of the black experience and black aspirations. [11]

---

[11] Graeme Addison, "Drum Beat: An Examination of *Drum*", *Speak*, 1 no. 4, (1978), 5-6

In exploring how the magazine became a political instrument through its coverage and creation of aspects of black South African urban culture, I argue that *Drum* reflected the contradictions of its historical context while remaining a valuable example of black South African agency.

In her book, *Always Already New*, Lisa Gitelman writes, "media are ... historical because they are functionally integral to pastness. Not only do people regularly learn about the past by means of media representations – books, films and so on – using media also involves implicit encounters with the past that produced the representations in question."[12]

In presenting a small glimmer of the impressive variety of the media produced in early apartheid South Africa, I hope to provide the reader with an encounter with this brief and miraculous moment in South Africa's past. As Gitelman illustrates in her book, media are not only valuable because of their content, media are valuable in the conditions and contexts that *give rise* to such content. It is for this reason that I sketch out a little of the socio-political as well as the commercial forces around the creation of the media produced in early apartheid South Africa. By introducing you to the singers, the pianists, the photographers, the screen-writers, the gangsters, movie stars and directors, as well as showing you how they are all connected to each other, I hope to capture the "pastness" of this moment and thus do justice to the feats of remarkable resistance presented in these pages.

---

[12] Lisa Gitelman. *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture,* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), *5*

Chapter One
That Manhattan Music: Beyond the Politics of Imitation

Where the rainbow ends
There's going to be a place brother
Where the world can sing all sorts of songs
And we're going to sing together brother
You and I. – Richard Rive[13]

Throughout the 1950s, various black South African magazines and newspapers such as *Bantu World*, *Drum* and the *Golden City Post* began to announce a new and exciting form of jazz. In 1954 for example, *Bantu World* reported that, "a new kind of record has burst upon the market." This music, it announced, featured "monotonous solid beats and crazy ad-lib solos", and proved that "Africans prefer 'beat' jazz with rocking instrumental accompaniment, honking saxophones, and more sophisticated singers."[14]

The press often linked these new 'sophisticated' singers to American artists who were their influences. For instance, Dolly Rathebe, a young female jazz vocalist, was affectionately referred to as "South Africa's Lena Horne".[15] Emily Kwenane, who frequently sang African-American jazz singer Ella Fitzgerald's tunes, was nicknamed "*onse* Ella" (our Ella) by her fans. And Nathan 'Dambuza' Mdledle, a member of the all-male close harmony vocal group, the Manhattan Brothers, was sometimes referred to as "the Bing Cosby of Africa."[16]

In this chapter, I explore how American jazz music, particularly the music produced by African-American artists, influenced South African jazz performers in ways that defy the easy conclusion that South African performers were mere imitators of the

---

[13] Richard Rive, "Black and Brown Song", *Drum*, May 1955
[14] *Bantu World*, 20 February, 1954
[15] Dolly also featured in the first South African film with an all-black cast, an aspect I discuss in the next chapter on early apartheid cinema.
[16] Bloke Modisane, "The New Nite Life", *Golden City Post*, 1958

American music to which they listened. Through charting the career of the aforementioned close harmony jazz group, the Manhattan Brothers, as well as analysing their music, I argue that South African performers defied what the historiography defines as "the politics of imitation" by creating new meanings and forms of music from popular American jazz songs. Furthermore, in unpacking the lyrics from one of the Manhattan Brothers' songs, I argue that the use of their own, frequently politicised lyrics sung in local languages created entirely new forms of music rooted in the socio-political realities of early apartheid South Africa.

Introducing…The Manhattan Brothers

At a small school in Soweto, a predominately black South African township in the south-western corner of Johannesburg, four young men made history. Joseph (Joe) Mogotsi, Rufus Khoza, Ronnie Sehume and Nathan 'Dambuza' Mdledle all attended the same school in a poor section of Soweto named Pimville. After school, they would all meet, and go somewhere to listen to records of their favourite African-American jazz groups. Sometimes, they would go to the Goldberg cinema – one the few places where they were allowed entry – to watch films featuring their favourite American musical groups, such at the Inkspots, the Andrews Sisters, and the all-male, close-harmony vocal group, the Mills Brothers. It was in the cinema that the four young men decided that they wanted to sing just like the Mills Brothers, and possibly even better.[17]

With this new goal, the young men began to seek out various American jazz records, digging into friends' and families' collections for more sounds they wanted to emulate. They started out singing their favourite songs at school concerts, matching the

---

[17] David Coplan, *In Township Tonight!: Three Centuries of South African Black City Music and Theatre*, (Auckland Park: Jacana Press, 2007), 215

harmonies they heard note for note. As Louis Radebe Petersen, one of their first

accompanists recalls:

> [I]f a hit record came out, we buyed it [*sic*] . . . and put it down and
> listen at the hit record and study it. And compared the singing
> exactly like that, because we couldn't read [music]. We only knew
> tonic solfa.[18]

The group also began to watch American films more closely, incorporating the visual

idiosyncrasies they saw on screen into their own routines. They were especially

impressed by elaborate dance routines performed by groups such as the Nicholas

Brothers – an African-American male jazz performance group that was popular during

the 1930s Harlem Renaissance. Recalling a particular tap dance routine, Joe Mogotsi

remembers that "they used to do a tumbling sort of dance and step on the wall and, you

know, an acrobatic sort of thing. Which eventually we ourselves in our variety we used

to practise and we managed to get it also."[19]

As Mogotsi, Khoza, Sehume and Mdledle's performances drew larger crowds,

they decided to become professional. The group called themselves the Manhattan

Brothers, reflecting their aspirant association with the United States, and began

performing all over South Africa, as well as touring neighbouring countries. Even

though the Manhattan Brothers also drew upon and were influenced by established

traditions within South African jazz music (forms such as *mbaqanga* and *marabi*), their

initial success was often attributed to their ability to accurately reproduce popular

American songs, especially songs performed by African-American artists. As Mogotsi

---

[18] Louis Radebe Petersen, as interviewed by Christopher Ballantine, *Marabi Nights*,
(Scottsville: University of KwaZulu Natal Press, 2012), 120
[19] Joe Mogotsi, as interviewed by Christopher Ballantine in *Marabi Nights*, 120

again recalls, "people used to marvel to see us mimicking all this stuff, and doing it almost right . . . singing Mills Brothers songs almost as perfectly as they did."[20]

The Manhattan Brothers went on to become one of the most successful South African performers of the 1940s and 1950s. They recorded more than 141 songs, and succeeded in becoming the first South African group to have a record listed in the U.S. *Billboard* 'Top 100' chart in 1956. The record, entitled 'Lovely Lies', peaked at number 45, and was an English version of a popular song in isiZulu called 'Laku Tshoni 'Langa' (When the Sun Sets).[21] At first glance within the historiography, the Manhattan Brothers' career appears to be a success story predicated on the imitation of American forms of jazz music and culture. In Christopher Ballantine's book, *Marabi Nights*, the group appears in a chapter entitled "Looking to the United States", in which the author classifies local identification with American culture as "the politics of imitation."[22] Similarly, David Coplan frequently links the Manhattan Brothers to their American inspirations. However, when we take a closer look at the shifts that occurred over time within their musical oeuvre, as well as the broader socio-political shifts that occurred from apartheid's birth in the late 1940s throughout the 1950s, we begin to see aspects that complicate this view.

As Ballantine writes in his chapter devoted to the politics of male South African close-harmony song style:

> In the era prior to the mid 1940s, [the] infatuation with African-American culture served many purposes. It provided examples for imitation, standards to be striven for, exhortations to achievement and criteria of success, all of which were premised on the confident assertion of a racial and cultural identity between black

---

[20] Ibid., 120
[21] David B. Coplan, *In Township Tonight!*, 217
[22] Christopher Ballantine, 122

people in South Africa and those in the United States. In the era

after the mid-1940s, this identity took on a new resonance: it

became also a *political* identification.[23]

This sense of political identification is what interests me most when looking at the

Manhattan Brothers' body of work. Over the course of the 1950s, their songs began to

take on a political edge that reflected the changes within South Africa's socio-political

fabric since apartheid's instalment. Prominent journalists, fellow performers, public

intellectuals, and forces within South Africa's shifting music industry all influenced the

Manhattan Brothers' growing politicisation, just as the films and music that the young

men absorbed from the United States influenced their sound and performance. In this

section, I draw out a few of the voices that illustrate this shift, and end with an analysis

of one of the Manhattan Brothers' most poignant and political songs.

The transnational movement of music and ideas between the United States and

South Africa was not only unidirectional from the West to the South, nor was it singular

in the form of South Africans' imitation of American musical and cultural styles. In fact, I

would argue that imitation is a superficial and limited way at analysing the reciprocal

exchange of ideas and histories that created new forms of music and thought.

For example, by the 1930s, a complex kinship network had already been formed when

prominent African-American writers and poets formed pen relationships with their

South African counterparts. These relationships carried through into the 1950s, as

evidenced by renowned African-American poet Langston Hughes' extensive

correspondence with young black writers affiliated South Africa's *Drum* magazine.[24]

---

[23] Ibid., 121.

[24] See Shane Graham, John Walters, (eds.) *Langston Hughes and the South African Drum generation: The correspondence*. (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. 2010). Also, for a deeper discussion about the *Drum* writers, see my third chapter on the famous South African magazine.

With regards to jazz music specifically, the connection between South African and African-American artists also took on more complex dimensions. Hugh Masekela, a world-famous South African jazz trumpeter, composer and singer who grew up in the heady atmosphere of the 1950s, recalls his intense grief when he heard about the death of African-American trumpeter Clifford Brown in 1956. In his interview with Christopher Ballantine, Masekela evocatively remembers the impact of the news:

> When Clifford Brown died I cried like a baby, you know. But my grandmother mourned with me because she knew how attached I was. I mean, that's how intense our music life was, you know. I mean, like we lived in New York, although we were in Johannesburg. Because urban life in South Africa, the only thing you could relate to in the urban way and the only thing where there was success for a person of colour like us – you know, black people, Africans – was in music. In other words, you read about, in the States, you read about everybody that made it, that we knew about, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, was all through music. And, ah, these were Africans who were brought there, but their only way out of the plantation was through their musical prowess, you know. And there was no difference – to me there was no difference – between African-Americans who went to the States and came out of the plantation and Africans who were taken away from their lands, into the plantation which is where we live in South Africa right now.[25]

What Masekela's account shows us is that on a profound level, black South African artists empathised, and identified with the oppression of African-Americans under slavery, and later under racially discriminatory Jim Crow laws in the United States. Despite the differences in their circumstances, Masekela draws parallels between the slave plantation economy in the United States' history and the systematic establishment of Bantustans (nicknamed 'native reserves') under the apartheid government's 1951

---

[25] Hugh Masekela, quoted in Christopher Ballentine, *Marabi Nights*, 123

Bantu Authorities Act. In mourning the death of an African-American musician, Masekela reveals the political solidarity he felt for African-Americans who were also struggling against racist systems in their desire to be successful performers.[26]

This idea of transnational identification also resonates with performance scholar and theatre historian Joseph Roach's work in his book *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance*. In his book, Roach uses cultural studies scholar Paul Gilroy's diasporic notion of the "Black Atlantic" (the Atlantic region bounded by Europe, Africa and the Americas), and examines how the transnational concept is specifically embodied through performance.[27] Although Roach concentrates his study on London and New Orleans, I argue that his ideas can be applied in looking at the relationship between Hugh Masekela and Clifford Brown, and through them, between South African and African-American performers. In crystallizing his argument, Roach writes that "[t]he key to understanding how performances worked *within* a culture, [is to] recogni[se] that a fixed and unified culture exists only as a convenient but dangerous fiction."[28] It is this fiction that I wish to unpack by examining how the Manhattan Brothers' music challenged easy categorisation by incorporating elements from South-African culture and American culture while also creating something completely new.

Not all black South Africans shared the sense of identification between oppressed groups that we see in Hugh Masekela's account. In the socio-political climate in which the Manhattan Brothers began to define their sound, there were still voices that criticised the relationship between South African jazz music and African-American jazz music. Many of these critics were eager to have a distinctly South African sound,

---

[26] Robert Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, 216
[27] See Paul Gilroy. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness.* (London: Verso, 1993) as well as Joseph R. Roach *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996)
[28] Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, 5

based on their own musical and cultural past. They wanted a sound powerful enough to reveal and critique the unjust system of the day, believing that American jazz was "facile", "cheap" and "devoid of emotional depth."[29] As one journalist succinctly reminded his readers in *Fighting Talk*, a popular South African periodical, "We don't sing because we want to forget our troubles."[30]

Of the many voices that sought to trouble South Africans artists' associations with the United States, few pushed artists to influence society using their own realities in the hopes of political liberation. One of the most influential voices that pushed for the use of music and art as political weapons was Herbert 'H.I.E.' Dhlomo, a newspaper editor and author who made his case in a 1949 editorial called "The African Artist and Society". Although he reiterated his claims in various pieces throughout the 1950s, it is in this piece that Dhlomo makes his most impassioned appeal. He begins by asking:

> How can [the African] assert himself and influence others? In the past, the African has used the political weapon. But in a country where he has no direct representation in the councils of state and where there are discriminatory and muzzling laws against him, the political weapon has not been as effective as it might have been under a different set-up. Of recent years, the political struggle has been given a new impetus by organised African labour which, if properly handled and used, can be a most effective weapon. But even in this case, strong measures have been taken by those in power to see that this movement is not effective as it should be. . . . It seems to us that there is one weapon that the African has not organised and used effectively. And that is the weapon offered by the arts - painting, music and literature. Many do not realise the power of this weapon. Others think of art as a luxury and pastime of the well to-do and the economically secure. This is wrong. History tells a different story.[31]

---

[29] Naledi, "African Music – Which Way?" *Fighting Talk*, July 1956
[30] Ibid.
[31] Herbert Dhlomo, "The African Artist and Society", *Ilanga Lase Natal,* 1949

In the midst of these challenges, the Manhattan Brothers' music experienced marked changes in the mid 1950s. On the one hand, the group continued to record covers to popular American songs. Yet on the other, at the behest of Gallo Music, the white-owned record label to which the Manhattan Brothers belonged, the group began to tailor American songs to black South African audiences by writing their lyrics in South African vernacular languages. Gallo Music, originally the Singer Gramophone Company, was founded by Eric Gallo, and later grew to become the largest record company in South Africa.[32] At Alec Delmont's request, Gallo's artists and repertoire (A&R) manager, Gallo was eager to break new ground in the South African market, and wanted to the Manhattan Brothers to "introduce something new in the [country's] record business" and for the group to become the "first to record this kind of song in Bantu languages."[33]

The Manhattan Brothers' new direction went on to change the face of South African jazz both in the style and quality of the vernacular songs they went on to record, as well as in the sheer volume of songs recorded. However, despite Gallo's desire for the Manhattan Brothers to be musical pioneers, they were not the first South African jazz group to do so. For example, in 1934, Ndaba Majola and the Jazz Revellers released a few cover songs such as 'Mandula Pesheya', an isiXhosa version of a minstrel song written by Stephen Foster called 'Old Folks at Home'.[34]

What *was* remarkable and unprecedented was how the Manhattan Brothers' songs were not simply translated from the original American English lyrics into local languages such as isiZulu, seSotho, and isiXhosa. The group wrote new lyrics that took a

---

[32] Lara Allen. "Preserving a Nation's Heritage: The Gallo Music Archive and South African Popular Music" *Fontes Artis Musicae - Journal of the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives, and Documentation Centres* 54, no. 3 (2007): 275
[33] Delmont, as quoted in Christopher Ballentine's *Marabi Nights*, 130
[34] David B. Coplan, *In Township Tonight!*, 156

particular theme and redirected its meaning to better reflect black South African social and cultural realities. Though it proved to be difficult for them, the Manhattan Brothers worked nightly to produce vernacular lyrics despite their uncertainty in how the songs would be received. In relating the mixed feelings that the young men felt leading up to the release of their first vernacularized record, Manhattan Brother 'Dambuza' Mdledle recounts:

> In those days, there were no good records in Zulu, Sotho and Xhosa of well-known English dance tunes and we knew that the record would come as a surprise to people. We expected some people to criticise us, but we knew that others would love it.[35]

Love it they did. Reception for their records was so enthusiastic that the jazz vocal group continued writing, recording and performing popular American songs in local languages. Billy Strayhorn and Duke Ellington's jazz hit 'Take the A Train' – a song that was originally written about the subway service that ran through New York City into Harlem – transformed into 'Bawo Bethu' (Our Father). Erskine Hawkins' 'Tuxedo Junction', a song about a jazz and blues club in Birmingham, Alabama, became 'Namhlanje' (Today) and so on.

Gallo, their record label, was also impressed by the demand and market for the Manhattan Brothers' music. As Ballantine quips, "[Gallo] had correctly understood a national mood and thus found a way of translating political sentiment into capital gain."[36] Yet, as I mentioned above, what makes many of these songs remarkable is how starkly many of them stand in contrast to their American originals. In redirecting their original meanings, the Manhattan Brothers' songs often narrate stories of poverty, loss,

---

[35] Mdledle, as quoted in Ballentine, *Marabi Nights*, 131.
[36] Ibid., 131

alienation, urbanity, migrancy, and longing for families left behind in the rural

Bantustans.

One the songs that best illustrates this idea is the Manhattan Brothers' version of

Jack Stapp and Harry Stone's 1950 hit, 'Chattanoogie Shoe-Shine Boy'. Where the

original lyrics tend to paint a more romantic picture of poverty, and even evoke the

image of the "Happy Negro" that was so popular in 1930s minstrelsy, the Manhattan

Brothers' version, entitled 'Umtwana weSizwe' (Child of the Nation) gives us a different

image:[37]

Chattanoogie Shoe-Shine Boy

Have you ever passed the corner of Forth and Grand?
Where a little ball o' rhythm has a shoe-shine stand
People gather 'round and they clap their hands
He's a great big bundle o' joy
He pops the boogie woogie rag
The Chattanoogie shoe-shine boy

He charges you a nickel just to shine one shoe
He makes the oldest kind o' leather look like new
You feel as though you wanna dance when he gets through
He's a great big bundle o' joy
He pops the boogie woogie rag
The Chattanoogie shoe-shine boy

It's a wonder that the rag don't tear
The way he makes it pop
You ought to see him fan the air
With his hoppity-hippity-hippity-hoppity-hoppity-hippity-hop

He opens up for business when the clock strikes nine
He likes to get up early when they're feelin' fine
Everybody gets a little rise 'n shine
With the great big bundle o' joy
He pops the boogie woogie rag
The Chattanoogie shoe-shine boy[38]

---

[37] See Andrew Womack, "Ridicule and Wonder: The Beginnings of Minstrelsy and New York" *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History* 36, no. 2 (2012): 86-115.
[38] Words and Music written by Harry Stone and Jack Stapp (1950), lyrics accessed at: *http://www.oldielyrics.com/lyrics/red_foley/chattanoogie_shoe_shine_boy.html*

'Umtwana weSizwe' (isiZulu Lyrics)

(Child of the Nation – English

Uhamb'ezula
Ayeke ukufun'umsebenzi
Imali akanyo
Nengubo akanazo
Abantu bakhuluma ngaye
Imihla le

Translation)

He keeps on wandering
instead of looking for work
He has no money
and neither does he have clothes
People talk about him
at all times

Bethi wena undlal'izizwe
Besithi ufana name
Ungumuntwana wesizwe

They say you are a game in the
hands of foreigners
Saying you are like me

Uhamb'ezula yedwa
Imihla ngemihla
Ingabe abantu bathini nje

You are a child of the nation

The nation is destroyed because of
money

Isizwe siyaphela ngenxa yemali
Sisithi wena
Ungumuntwana wesizwe
Sesithi ufana nani
Ungumuntwana wesizwe-ke?

And we say
You are a child of the nation
And we say what do you look like
Are you a child of the nation?

Uhamb'ezula yedwa
Efuna umsebenzi
Imali akanyo
Nezingubo akanazo
Abantu bakhuluma ngaye
Imihla le
Bethi wena
umtwana wesizwe

He keeps on wandering alone
in search of work
He has no money
and neither does he have clothes
The people talk about him
daily
And say you
are a child of the nation

Akadli lutho
Alambile
Nabantwana
Bakhala imihla
Balambile[39]

He eats nothing
He is hungry
And the children
cry every day
They are hungry [40]

---

[39] Ballentine, *Marabi Nights,* 133

[40] Translation by Themba Mbhele

What a comparison of the respective lyrics reveals is an intricate relationship and a transformation of meaning from the original American song to the Manhattan Brothers' isiZulu version. In 'Umtwana weSizwe', the child we meet is representative of many children all over the nation, as the song's title suggests. The world underneath the song's jazzy melody is bleak, and yet, in singing their own lyrics over the melody of a popular American song, the Manhattan Brothers open up new meanings informed by their own reality.

In order to help us unpack the relationship between the Manhattan Brothers' politicised music and its American template, post-colonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha's concept of cultural hybridity could perhaps be of some assistance. In his essay, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences", Bhabha critiques "the positive aesthetic and political values we ascribe to the unity and totality of cultures, especially those that have known long and tyrannical histories of domination and misrecognition."[41] He goes on to argue that cultures are never unitary in themselves nor are they dualistic in a Self and Other configuration. In introducing the concept of a 'Third Space', Bhabha writes:

> The intervention of the Third Space, which makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process, destroys this mirror of representation in which cultural knowledge is continuously revealed as an integrated, open, expanding code. Such an intervention quite properly challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenising, unifying force, authenticated by the originary Past, kept alive in the national tradition of the People.[42]

In light of Bhabha's assertions, it is perhaps fitting to view the Manhattan Brothers' music as symbols of this Third Space. As we have seen, when voices such as

---

[41] Homi K. Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences" in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, (New York; London: Routledge, 1995), 207
[42] Ibid., 209

Herbert 'H.I.E.' Dhlomo appealed to artists to dip into South Africa's own history in order to create art that could serve as political weapons against the apartheid regime, the Manhattan Brothers (encouraged, of course, by the record industry) did not fully let go of the American music that was so popular amongst black South African audiences. Instead, they created a bridge, where their music served as 'an integrated, open, expanding code', that had one foot in the 'originary Past' and another in a complex, shifting and culturally heterogeneous present.

This sense of cultural hybridity, as well as the existence of complicated alliances between commercial and political forces is a theme that characterised much of the music produced in early apartheid South Africa. In navigating these forces, the Manhattan Brothers give us a fascinating window into how musicians were able to produce music that reflected the popular tastes and currents of the day, while producing songs that can be viewed with a subversive lens. In the next chapter, we see how these factors play into the production and consumption of films made in the early apartheid era, and how black South African writers, actors and actresses navigated similar challenges to give us glimpses of political resistance both on and off the screen.

Chapter Two
To be Seen and Heard: politics and cinema in early apartheid South Africa

Just to sit in this dark place, and magic takes place on the wall. For a moment, we forgot apartheid, we forgot there was another world that wasn't good, we sat there and were carried away by the dream of these American movies – John Kani, actor and playwright.[43]

1946 proved to be an important year in South Africa's cultural history. In October of this year, Sophiatown – one of South Africa's most famous multi-racial townships located on the fringes of the city of Johannesburg – saw the opening of its first "super de luxe" cinema.[44] The Odin, as it was called, had a seating capacity of 1200, and soon became one of Sophiatown's premier venues.[45] Prior to its opening, township residents had to travel into Johannesburg to see films, and could only do so in cinemas that were not exclusively reserved for white South Africans.

Three years after the opening of the Odin Cinema, *African Jim* (1949), the first film to feature an all-black cast, was released. Two young British men produced the film: a scriptwriter named Donald Swanson and a young actor named Eric Rutherford. Upon first viewing, the 50-minute film tells the simple story of a young black South African man's search for love and fortune in Johannesburg after he leaves his rural home. What I wish to show in this chapter, however, is how *African Jim* offers us a far more complex picture that its simple narrative conveys. In analysing two central scenes in the film, I

---

[43] Quoted in Peter Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood: Exploring the Jungles of Cinema's South Africa.* (Randburg: Ravan Press, 1996), 23

[44] Townships, (alternately called "locations" or "slums") are the urban residential areas that were specifically reserved for "non-whites" (black South Africans, Coloureds [persons of mixed descent], and people of Indian descent) under apartheid. After the passage of the 1950 Group Areas Act, members from the three designated "non-white" racial groups were evicted from their properties over time, and forcibly moved into racially segregated residential areas.

[45] Lara Allen, "Music, film and gangsters in the Sophiatown imaginary: featuring Dolly Rathebe". *Scrutiny2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa* 9, no. 1: (2004): 19

argue that *African Jim* contains profound evidence of black South African political agency both within and outside of the film's narrative.

In the second section of the chapter, I juxtapose *African Jim* to another film that follows a similar narrative of a young South African man's journey into Johannesburg. *Come Back Africa* (1959), directed by an American filmmaker named Lionel Rogosin, presents a far bleaker picture of the process of migration than sunnily musical *African Jim*. Equally important in South Africa's cultural history, *Come Back Africa* was the first feature film made with black South African scriptwriters. In this section, I argue that the contributions of black South African writers such as Bloke Modisane and Lewis Nkosi transformed the film in important ways, so much so that they can viewed as the minds behind the film's strikingly defiant tone.

In presenting these two films side-by-side, I wish to show how cinema is early apartheid South Africa was a powerful instrument both in the articulation and in the representation of black South African life during this compelling era in South African history.

African Jim (1949)[46]

"*Whites always feel that we, the blacks – our minds are black, our breath is black, everything is black. Now they never gave us a chance. People who really gave us chances are people from overseas who come in here and feel that these people have got talent.*" - *Dolly Rathebe, 1950s singer, dancer and actress.*[47]

In *African Jim's* main musical spectacle, Dolly Rathebe – who plays a young South African singer named Judy – makes her celebrated appearance on the stage of the fictional Ngoma Club. Draped in a floor-length dress, swaying slightly to a bluesy

---

[46] *African Jim* was also alternatively titled *Jim Comes to Joburg*.
[47] As quoted in Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, 21

rhythm, Dolly begins to sing her own song, set to the tune of '*I Lost my Sugar in Salt Lake City*'.[48] The lyrics differ significantly from the original version. She sings:

> *Oh I came to Joburg*
> *the golden city*
> *What did I come here for?*
> *I'm a long way from home in Joburg city*
> *So far away from my home*

Just as the Manhattan Brothers wrote their own lyrics to American tunes, Dolly Rathebe modified the original song and thus, I argue, redirected its meaning from a lament about lost love to a reflection of her own gendered experience of migrancy. Mae E. Johnson – an African-American actress, first sang the original version in the 1943 film, *Stormy Weather*. Dolly's adapted version however, speaks directly to the confusion and alienation felt by millions of black South Africans in their experiences of migrancy and urban life. In this way, I argue that Rathebe projected herself onto the already popular Hollywood imaginary while injecting the socio-political context to which she belonged into *African Jim*. Thus, Rathebe's song can be viewed as an example of black South African agency, and thus, an example of political resistance. In this section, I show how the scene in which Dolly appears is not the only example that can be read in this way, as instances of resistance can be found both within and outside of *African Jim*'s narrative.

Diving into the narrative itself, *African Jim* tells the story of Jabulani "Jim" Twala (played by Daniel Adnewmah), a young Zulu man who decides to leave his rural village

---

[48] The original song was composed by Leon Rene and Johnny Lange in 1942, but entered into American popular consciousness when it featured in the 1943 film, *Stormy Weather.* The original lyrics are:
I lost my sugar in Salt Lake City
Oh, why did I go there?
I should have stayed down in New Orleans
And never gone nowhere
(See Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, 21)

to seek his fortune in Johannesburg, "the Golden City". However, upon arrival, he is robbed by *tsotsis* (gangsters), but is later befriended by a night watchman and his family. After various failed attempts at seeking a job, Jim finds employment as a waiter at the Ngoma Club, where he eventually meets jazz singer Judy, played by the abovementioned Dolly Rathebe. Predictably, good triumphs over evil: Jim gains revenge over his robbers, is given a music contract by one of the white employers who initially fired him, and wins Judy's heart in the proverbial happy ending.

Though a scrolling title at the beginning of the film claims that *African Jim*'s "quaint mixture of the naïve and the sophisticated is a true reflection of the African native," various film theorists and historians have justifiably pointed to its unrealistic and problematic narrative. Film theorist Lara Allen scathingly argues that the film is "a thinly disguised vehicle for music and farce enacted by two-dimensional characters."[49] Similarly, historian Jacqueline Maingard argues that the film is "clearly rooted in a liberal, patronising, and simplistic narrative", a narrative that, she argues, can trace its roots to the fervently didactic African Colonial Film Units of the 1930s.[50]

While the above arguments are compellingly made, I, in turn, argue that such arguments flatten the film's complexity while overlooking a number of important aspects. With regards to the Colonial Film Units, (which were a series of screenings in mines and other areas of mass African labour), *African Jim* deviates from these screenings in two central ways.[51] Firstly, unlike the colonial units, *African Jim* is not explicitly instructional. Outside of its romanticisation of music as a foolproof instrument

---

[49] As quoted Lara Allen, "Music, film and gangsters in the Sophiatown imaginary: featuring Dolly Rathebe", 23
[50] Jacqueline Maingard, *South African Cinema: Histories and Futures,* (London: Routledge, 2007), 27
[51] See Manthia Diawara, *African Cinema: Politics and Culture*. (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992)

for black social mobility, *African Jim* does not immediately set out to 'teach' black South

African viewers anything about a specific aspect of apartheid life. Secondly, *African Jim*

does not attempt to make an explicit moral statement on how black South Africans

should spend their time.[52] Unlike the Colonial Film Units, which often moralised African

leisure time, *African Jim* is wholly invested in the communication of its simple narrative.

More importantly, what Maingard and Allen both overlook in their focus on the film's

problematic production, are the instances of black South African agency and even

resistance within and outside of the film's simplistic narrative.

A key signal that complicates the dismissal of the film as reductive and

patronising is the fact that black South African audiences responded to the film in an

overwhelmingly positive manner.[53] One possible explanation for this is that black South

Africans audiences recognised familiar community figures such as Dolly Rathebe on

screen. Rathebe was already something of a celebrity before *African Jim* was produced,

with her celebrated as an emerging jazz singer and dancer in Sophiatown's most

popular shebeens.[54] As Can Themba, a prominent writer and journalist in South Africa's

township scene remembers:

> Even people who normally thought that the *bioscope* was not quite the
> place where decent people went for entertainment, they went in their
> thousands to see Dolly Rathebe in *Jim Comes to Joburg.* . . . It sounded as if
> Africa was being transported into the fascinating world of Hollywood.[55]
> And [Hollywood] meant glamour and wealth and idolatry . . . [Dolly] was a
> spangled, glitter bespattered star, up above the heavens so high.[56]

---

[52] Though, it could be argued that the film makes an implicit statement through its
underlying messages.
[53] Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, 22
[54] Lara Allen, "Music, film and gangsters in the Sophiatown imaginary: featuring Dolly
Rathebe" 26
[55] "Bioscope" is a popular local term for the cinema.
[56] Quoted in Allen, "Music, film and gangsters", 19

Another aspect reflected in Themba's quote is the delight in seeing Africa "transported in the fascinating world of Hollywood". As historian Peter Davis echoes, Hollywood's influence on black South African urban life was nearly inescapable. In discussing how Hollywood jazz culture permeated attitudes both within and outside of *African Jim*'s cinematic universe, Davis writes:

> If you listen to the music [in the film], it would be virtually impossible to say that these musicians came from South Africa. Their very attitudes in performance, down to the cigarette dangling from the lips of Sam Maile [who plays a jazz pianist in the film] as he tickles the piano keys, speak of an influence so seductive that they have given themselves to it body and soul.[57]

While Davis is certainly persuasive in his characterisation of the 'seductive' influence of Hollywood culture in early apartheid South Africa, I argue that his assertion that black South Africans gave themselves over to this influence 'body and soul' is overstated, as we've seen with the example of the Manhattan Brothers in the previous chapter.

In support of my argument, I now turn to the work of Lindiwe Dovey and Angela Impey in their essay, "*African Jim*: sound, politics, and pleasure in early South African 'black' cinema." Impey and Dovery complicate the view that black South African culture was completely subsumed by Hollywood cinema. The film theorists write that:

> *African Jim* represents not simply the importation of Hollywood into Africa, but a complex transcultural dialogue in which African culture becomes an important resource for charging the pleasure of music with political resonance, where the local and the international, and pain and pleasure, are simultaneously articulated.[58]

---

[57] Davis, *In darkest Hollywood,* 64

[58] Lindiwe Dovey and Angela Impey. "'African Jim': Sound, politics, and pleasure in early 'black' South African cinema" *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 22 no. 1 (2010): 58

Thus, scenes such as the one that opens this particular section, where Dolly Rathebe

sings her own version of *'I Lost my Sugar in Salt Lake City'* can be read as both political

and pleasurable. In this way, the alienating and gendered experience of migrancy under

apartheid is made not only made visible but also audible. By making space for cultural

hybridity, we are able to both see and hear Rathebe's inherently political act

underneath the seemingly sweet, state-approved veneer of *African Jim*'s narrative.[59]

Adapting political scientist James C. Scott's work, Dovey and Impey call such

latent political acts "hidden transcripts."[60] 'Hidden' because such moments remained

unrecognised by the film's white British filmmakers among others, which nonetheless

does not erase their significance. In their recognition of these hidden moments, Dovey

and Impey suggest that, "these hidden transcripts can be read as an epiphenomenon of

resistance against apartheid."[61]

An excellent example of such an "epiphenomenon" can be seen in a seemingly

innocuous scene. In this scene, Jim and Judy are walking home after a day of work at the

Ngoma Club. As they round the corner of a quiet Johannesburg street, the couple comes

across a group of black South African male workers attempting to lift a heavy load onto

the back of a truck. As they struggle under the load's weight, the workers chant a song in

isiZulu:

> *Sanibo qhaqhe* (Hello/loosen up)
>
> *Nansi poyisa* (There are the police/supervisor)
>
> *They call us Jim!*
>
> *They call us Jim!*

---

[60] See James C. Scott, *Domination and the arts of resistance*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990)
[61] Dovey and Impey, "African Jim", 58

Abelungu goddamn! (White people goddamn!)

Abelungu goddamn! (White people goddamn!)

They call us Jim!

Bheka phansi! (Put it down!)

Donsa! (Pull!)

Phansi! (Down!)[62]

Completely unscripted, the above song's meaning eluded both *African Jim*'s filmmakers and the National Department of Native Affairs, who would have surely censored the scene had it come to their attention. As Dovey and Impey explain, the above scene works on two levels. Firstly, the scene reveals one of the myriad ways in which black South Africans used music, even in common working songs, to comment on the political and racial oppression they experienced under apartheid. Secondly, the scene demonstrates black South Africans use of language and aural/oral elements in order to hide their subversive commentary in plain sight. As a moment that the filmmakers uncritically recorded, perhaps for its musicality, the workers' song constitutes a moment where the everyday acts of political resistance were captured onto celluloid, thus immortalising this transgressive moment into cinema history. Even though the workers' song remains a "hidden transcript" for those who do not understand and therefore recognise it as such, the lyrics would have been understood and appreciated in this scene by black South African spectators, who would have found the mixture of "audacity and familiarity" in the scene deeply amusing.[63]

Dovey and Impey's work thus reveals that the dominant consensus on *African Jim* misses these fascinating examples of political resistance. In this way, they remind

---

[62] *African Jim* (1949) directed by Donald Swanson, South Africa: Milestone Film and Video, 50 minutes, DVD.
[63] Dovey and Impey, "African Jim", 58

those of us interested in black political agency to shift our analytical focus from those behind the camera watching to those being watched. In so doing, compelling visual and sonic worlds unfold that reveal complex and unexpected sites of resistance.

On the other side of the decade, nearly ten years after the making of *African Jim*, another film bares its political and oppositional message in plainer sight. Assisted by the tumultuous political events of the 1950s, Lionel Rogosin's *Come Back Africa* challenges ideas about the unseen and unheard aspects of apartheid in a completely new way.

Come Back, Africa (1959)

Sophiatown, Softown, Kofifi, Kasbah, Sophia, Place of Freedom Square, and Back of the Moon. Place of Can Themba's House of Truth. Place of the G-men and Father Huddleston's Mission. Place of Balansky's and the Odin Cinema. And let's never forget Kort Boy and Jazz Boy and the Manhattan Brothers, and Dolly Rathebe singing her heart out – here in Sophia… - "Sophiatown", Act 1, Scene 1.[64]

Come Back, *Africa* opens in the stark, urban heart of 1950s Johannesburg. The first shot we see is a still, black-and-white image of an abandoned building. Next, the camera slowly pans over the city, offering us a montage of high angle shots; towers, centres, high-rises and more buildings silently fill the screen. In another part of the city, we are briefly presented with the doorway of a township house, before transitioning into shots of the morning hustle and bustle of the Johannesburg central business district. Here, we see hundreds of black South African migrants walk down the quiet Johannesburg streets. In a close-up shot, we see the slightly confused face of one of these migrants, a young man named Zacharia Mgabi, as he lifts up his head to scan one of the towering buildings above him. Slowly, he lowers his eyes, and follows the growing procession of migrants as they solemnly march towards the city.

Against this background, a legend appears on the screen proclaiming that:

---

[64] Junction Avenue Theatre Company, *Sophiatown,* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand Press, 1986), 1

> This film was made secretly in order to portray the true conditions of life in South Africa today. There are no professional actors in this drama of the fate of a man and his country. This is the story of Zacharia, one of the thousands of Africans forced off the land by the regime and to the gold mines.[65]

In this section of the chapter, I chart the production of Lionel Rogosin's film and show how black South Africans were involved in some *Come Back Africa*'s most vital aspects. In doing this, I wish to show how black South Africans such as the *Drum* writers were also creators of the film, perhaps even more so than Rogosin himself. In so doing, I argue that black South Africans were at the centre of what went on to become one of the most powerful anti-apartheid films in South African cinematic history.

In *Come Back Africa*, the protagonist's story begins in a gold mine, deep under Johannesburg's bustling surface. We learn of Zacharia's famine-induced migration from rural Zululand through subtitled conversations with fellow black South African men, and watch as he connects with them in their shared hopes for steady pay. However, a number of prohibitive apartheid laws prevent him from easily finding and keeping employment. After eventually finding a job as a domestic servant for an ill-tempered English-speaking white woman named Mrs Myrtle. Myrtle eventually fires Zachariah after a heated altercation in her home. Scenes of the endless procession of black South African migrants punctuate Zachariah's own journey as he moves from one demeaning job to another. Eventually, he befriends an elderly man who introduces him to the vibrant, burgeoning *shebeen* culture of Sophiatown – one of Johannesburg's most

---

[65] *Come Back Africa* (1959) directed by Lionel Rogosin, South Africa: Africa Film Library/M-Net, 86 minutes, DVD. (My own transcript)

famous, multi-racial townships. [66] After Zachariah eventually settles in Sophiatown, his young wife, Vinah, joins him, along with their children.

As Zachariah and his family slowly adjust to living in their one-room Sophiatown shack, life in the city continues to be exceedingly challenging. At the film's apex, policemen raid the couple's home as they sleep, violently arresting Zachariah. While he is in prison, a local township *tsotsi* named Marumu breaks into Zachariah's shack and harasses Vinah. Marumu eventually kills her by asphyxiation, and upon his release, Zachariah returns home to find his wife's lifeless body on their bed. The film ends in a close-up shot of Zachariah's face, as he violently lashes out and destroys his own meagre belongings – crying in a fit of exhaustion, frustration and grief. [67]

The history that underpins and informs Zachariah's story in *Come Back Africa* is as harrowing and complex as the film's narrative. The existence of densely populated and chronically under-developed townships such as Sophiatown was predicated on an extensive record of colonial policy. Such policy set the underlying groundwork for apartheid legislation. Laws such the 1913 Natives Land Act established a clear legal distinction between rural land owned by black South Africans and white farming areas. The Act, passed by the colonial Union government, ordained that black South Africans could no longer purchase land within areas demarcated as "white", and, as a result, 87 percent of the country's land was considered "white land", with only seven percent allocated for Africans.[68] The effect of policies such as the 1913 Act (alternately called

---

[66] "Shebeen" is a common South African word for a nightclub, or a township pub.
[67] "Tsotsi" is a term for a South African gangster.
[68] Robert Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, 95-96

the Black Lands Act in some of the historiography) was to drive black South Africans

such as Zachariah into the cities.[69]

    As a provision for the overwhelming influx of people into South Africa's

previously white urban areas, the Union government passed the Native Urban Areas Act

in 1923. This act attempted to move urban locations for migrant labourers and

permanent residents away from urban areas exclusively reserved for white residents.

The Act was enthusiastically supported by proponents such as Colonel C.F. Stallard, who

famously enunciated that "South Africa's towns [were] for the whites, and the blacks

were only there in so far as they [were] ministering to the white man's needs."[70] All

through the 1940s and well into the 1950s, black South Africans gradually came to be

urbanised and set about sowing the seeds of a vibrant and multi-faceted black urban

culture.

    Such an establishment of black urban culture did not follow without resistance.

As historians such as James Barber illustrate, the emerging apartheid government

became increasingly hostile to black social and political claims on South Africa's urban

space, derisively calling areas such as Sophiatown "black spots."[71] Hendrik Verwoerd,

the Minister of Native Affairs and "architect of apartheid" during the 1950s, maintained

that industrialisation was not in keeping with the "competencies of the natives" and that

urbanisation would only lead to racial integration – a well-known, albeit prohibited

feature of Sophiatown life. In its defiant existence as a multi-racial space, Sophiatown

undermined the fundamental tenets of apartheid as a policy aimed at 'separate

---

[69] As Ross writes, of the six million South Africans recorded at Union, two-thirds of the
population was considered to be of African descent, with a fifth to be of "full European
descent" (Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, 93).
[70] As quoted in Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa,* 106
[71] James Barber, *South Africa in the Twentieth Century*, (New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell,
1999), 113

development'.[72] Thus, at the time of the making of *Come Back, Africa*, in 1958, the demolition of Sophiatown (and other "black spots" similar to it) was already under way.

Come Back Africa was the brainchild of Lionel Rogosin, an independent American filmmaker born in New York. According to film historian Kenneth Hey, the initial idea for *Come Back, Africa* developed after Rogosin sat down with Walter White, who was the secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) at the time.[73] *Come Back Africa* was first intended to feature in a series commenting on the transnational nature of racism, featuring clandestinely acquired material from the United States and South Africa.

As Rogosin remembers:

> I had heard about South Africa and the rise of apartheid and the National Party and it sounded very ominous to me. I was very concerned about the reawakening of fascism. […] I thought that it would re-emerge and continue in different forms. So I was alarmed at what was happening in South Africa.[74]

Acting on this alarm, Rogosin decided to travel to South Africa. Along with a multi-national crew, he entered the country on the pre-text of being a tourist and misinformed the South African authorities that he was making a musical travelogue.[75] Understanding the risks involved in shooting an anti-apartheid film, Rogosin and his crew set up a plan to smuggle the most politically explosive material out of the country, lest the footage be discovered and confiscated. Given a list of useful contacts such as Father Trevor

---

[72] Ibid., 142-143

[73] Kenneth R. Hey. "Come Back Africa (1959): Another Look." *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies* 10 no. 3 (1980): 43

[74] Lionel Rogosin, *Come Back Africa: A Man Possessed*, (Parktown: STE Publishers, 2004), 47

[75] Lionel Rogosin, *Come Back Africa: A Man Possessed*, 42

Huddleston (a well-known and widely respected Sophiatown pastor and activist),

Rogosin decided against getting in touch with figures such as Huddleston:

> I had decided not to contact any of them, because I felt that South Africa being
> somewhat of a police state ... I'd be trailed ... For two or three weeks, I didn't
> know what to do. I sort of wandered around doing nothing ... [76]

In the midst of all this fear and intrigue, Rogosin received an anonymous tip that

would change the nature of his project forever. After being advised to go to the United

States Information Service, Rogosin was given the names of black South African

journalists who worked for *The Golden City Post* and *Drum* – two of the most influential

and widely read black urban publications of the 1950s. As Lewis Nkosi, one of the

journalists who would later co-write *Come Back Africa*'s script, remembers: "By the end

of the fifties *Drum* and *Post* had become widely accepted as the most authoritative

newspapers on the life of black South Africans that visiting writers and journalists

would inevitably call at the *Drum* offices on their way across the country."[77]

When Rogosin himself called at the *Drum* offices, he met three of the most active

members of Sophiatown's emerging black literati: associate editor Bloke Modisane, staff

journalist and creative writer Can Themba, and the abovementioned staff journalist

Lewis Nkosi.[78]

Upon meeting, Rogosin, Themba, Nkosi and Modisane had an instant connection.

As Nkosi recounts:

> Suddenly there was a rapport. An American artist, who seemed a
> committed artist, coming to us and then suddenly discovering ways of

---

[76] Quoted in Davis, *In Darkest Africa*, 43
[77] Lewis Nkosi, *Home and Exile*, (London: Longmans, 1965), 40
[78] I will later discuss this group in depth in the next chapter devoted to the print media
produced in *Drum* magazine, a 1950s South African publication that featured the work
of a number of black South African writers.

presenting our lives to anybody who really wanted to know what we

thought we were like.[79]

In their explorations and reviews of every facet of black urban identity in South Africa's

townships, the *Drum* writers were constantly preoccupied with what it is they thought

they were like. Under the often-hostile eye of the state, the *Drum* writers wrote political

exposés alongside jazz reviews, they penned scathing satires of the system whilst

covering the latest township fashion trends, and printed investigative journalistic pieces

alongside articles exploring the innovative use and reinvention of South Africa's diverse

township languages.[80] The *Drum* writers were connected to the heart and pulse of black

South African urban life in a completely unique way. Thus, I argue, Rogosin could not

have chosen a better group of collaborators for his cinematic exploration of the multi-

faceted black South African experience of apartheid.

Within a few days of meeting, Rogosin and the *Drum* writers immediately set out

to work. However, in the ensuing discussions about the issues involved in translating a

sense of black urban identity to the screen, Rogosin and his collaborators were

overwhelmed with the enormity of the task. In recalling the poignant question that he

and his fellow writers asked themselves, Lewis Nkosi asks: "How does one translate into

visual terms the heinous effects of [apartheid?]". How does one even begin to make the

horrors of apartheid "seeable"?[81]

For Nkosi, the answer lay in escaping the realm of facts and statistics, and

entering the intimate realm of lived experience. He recounts:

---

[79] Nkosi, *Home and Exile,* 50
[80] *Tsotsitaal* ("*Tsotsi*-language") was one of these innovative languages, which featured a mix of American slang, Afrikaans, isiZulu, SeSotho and other local South African languages.
[81] Lewis Nkosi, *Home and Exile, 96*

Before [Rogosin, Modisane and I] could even collate a mass of confusing facts in which any stranger coming to South Africa immediately becomes bogged down, Lionel had to try and relate these facts to concrete life situations. That was precisely the problem: the effort to try and find a "seeable" relationship between a mass of statistics and the real life situations which they purport to interpret.[82]

In endeavouring to make apartheid life "seeable", Rogosin and his collaborators took to Johannesburg's streets. With the invaluable assistance of the *Drum* writers, Rogosin spoke to a diverse group of South Africans situated on various points of the racial spectrum. This is highly notable and commendable because the risk of arrest was so great, a fact that the *Drum* writers knew too well. The simple act of asking people about their thoughts and experiences of the National Party's inhumane system flew in the face of the apartheid government's meticulously organised system of segregation. As the film theorist Litheko Modisane contends, "the audacity with which *Come Back Africa* was made, was coterminous with the investigative and highly politicised journalism of the writers, itself constantly subjected to state harassment."[83]

Once the writers began to embark on their research, more and more people began to step forward. Lewis Nkosi remembers the excitement with which people began to come forward with their stories. For him, the making of *Come Back Africa* meant that at least for a time, the black press would cease to be the only site through which black life and identity could be made visible. In expressing his joy at the diversity of people that he encountered, Nkosi remembers:

Whether the group consisted of ordinary workers or a number of articulate intellectuals, in that single moment of excited conversation,

---

[82] Ibid.,97

[83] Litheko Modisane. *South Africa's Renegade Reels : The Making and Public Lives of Black-Centered Films*. (Gordonsville, VA, USA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 44

> these people fumbled around with words that revealed an inner
> experience of which we had not been aware. We used these recorded
> conversations as rough guidance as how to shape the ultimate movie
> story . . . they talked the movie into being.[84]

The inclusion of diverse perspectives from 'ordinary' South Africans thus proved to be vital both to the *Drum* writers themselves, and the larger project in which Rogosin and the writers were involved.

Once the script's rough outline had been written, Rogosin and his team discovered the connecting theme of migrancy. Both men and women told of their experiences leaving the rural areas and coming to the city, motivated by an array of factors. Accounts of adjusting to city life, navigating the often-impenetrable job market, and longing for an ever-fading ideal of home and belonging, dominated their initial interviews into city experience, and as they collected more and more stories, Rogosin and the *Drum* writers decided to use non-actors to reflect the realism they encountered.

Thus Rogosin, accompanied by Bloke Modisane, decided to scout for their cast at Johannesburg railroad stations. It was at one of these stations that they found their main protagonist. In his autobiography entitled *A Man Possessed,* Rogosin remembers the encounter:

> I found Zachariah, my main character, in the railroad station. [Bloke and I]
> stood in the station, and probably 20 000 people in that hour
> passed me, very rapidly. And I saw two people, and I picked them. . . .
> Bloke ran over and they looked very frightened. They probably thought
> we were police.[85]

Elaborating on his decision to use non-actors in an essay entitled "Interpreting Reality", Rogosin describes Zachariah Mgabi, the individual he eventually chose:

---

[84] Nkosi, *Home and Exile,* 13
[85] Rogosin, *A Man Possessed*, 50

> [Zachariah's] personal history was almost identical to the script. . . . He
> was born in the heart of Zululand and grew up with almost no education.
> He had come to Johannesburg a few years ago where he had met and
> married his Xosa [*sic*] wife. . . . Zachariah's face had said much to me.
> Other experience has also confirmed my feelings conclusively about the
> crucial importance of the face in the portrayal of a role. At least, it was
> true in the making of *Come Back, Africa*. My aim was to express realism in
> a dramatic and poetic manner, to abstract and then humanise, or better
> still, synthesise. This is how the film evolved. The plot was neither purely
> factual nor really fictional.[86]

By blurring the lines between the factual and fictional, Rogosin and his team ensured that viewers of the film would be unable to separate the film's narrative from its material and socio-political reality. In this way, *Come Back, Africa* narrows the divide between the migrant characters we encounter on screen, who all play themselves and their lived experiences, which they dramatise and thus replicate the film.

Thus, Zachariah's on-screen struggles in the limited labour market as well as his attempts at creating a life in Johannesburg's dilapidated locations function on two levels. On a personal level, Zachariah is enacting the details of his own life, expressing the confusion, humiliation and anguish (as well as the discovery, connection and transience) present in the experience of migrancy under the apartheid regime on a personal level. On a broader level, I argue that Zacharia is, (at least partly) representative of the experiences of hundreds, perhaps thousands of other migrants who come into Johannesburg city only to experience the brute force of what Bloke Modisane calls "an alienating capitalist modernity."[87]

---

[86] Lionel Rogosin, "Interpreting Reality (notes on the Esthetics and Practices of Improvisational Acting)", *Film Culture*, 1 no. 21, (1960), 21.
[87] Bloke Modisane, *Blame Me On History*, (Johannesburg: AD Donker, 1986), 45

This sense of realism that Rogosin, Nkosi and Modisane stitched into the script often came uncomfortably close to the writers' own social realities. In describing the filming of the film's final scene, Bloke Modisane evocatively recalls how Zachariah's own face communicated a pain that the writers knew very well.

In recalling his experience of watching the filming of final scene, Modisane recalls that:

> The script called for him to breakdown mentally, and in a rage of hysteria, to smash up whatever his temper directed him to. The crack-up of the character and the man were so closely linked that we were horrified to be in the presence of the destruction of a man. It was a nightmare, which we could not stop to turn our faces from, and when Lionel did assume the presence of mind to shout "cut" we were sick. The scene had come – for us – too close to the real thing and for Zacharia it was the real thing, it was in his face.[88]

For the *Drum* writers and for the many South Africans to whom the *Come Back Africa* team spoke, the reality of life under apartheid did not end when Lionel Rogosin called "cut". A year after the film's release, the long night of struggle set in after the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre.[89] What *did* change however, was that a remarkable film came into existence that captured a little of the texture of life in early apartheid South Africa. *Come Back Africa*, like *African Jim* before it, bore testimony to both the bold and the subtle acts of defiance black South Africans carried out every day.

---

[88] Ibid., 283

[89] Due to the wave of state repression that South Africa experienced after 1960, *Come Back Africa* was censored and barred from any kind of circulation within South Africa. Initially, wide circulation of the film in North America also proved to be difficult due to segregationist attitudes in the 1950s and the 1960s. Interestingly, *Come Back Africa* first entered North America through Vancouver, at the 1959 Vancouver Film Festival. At the festival, the Canadian Federation of Film Societies gave *Come Back Africa* the award for "the film showing the most significant advance in content, means of expression and technique." Some time after, *Time* magazine listed the film as one of the "Ten Best Pictures of 1960". (As quoted in Litheko Modisane, *South Africa's Renegade Reels*, 41)

Chapter Three
Drum Magazine and Defiance

"The 50s was a never-ending dance in the rain..." – South African musician and activist, *Stan Motjuwadi.*[90]

As we've already seen, the 1950s saw the rise of musicians, filmmakers, writers, vocalists, actresses and directors who all contributed to a powerful and complex current of cultural resistance in early apartheid South Africa. One of the most important sites of this resistance can be seen in *Drum* – a popular magazine that arose out of this period and became a central platform from which many of these figures emerged and found their voices. The magazine was so integral to the 1950s that the period widely became known within South African historiography as "The *Drum* Decade".[91] In this chapter, I now move my focus on to this exceptional magazine, and chart its development from a problematic, pseudo-anthropological publication, to a media space within which black South Africans were able to imagine, construct, and challenge notions of blackness, urbanity and resistance.

In providing spirited commentary on most of the major political events of the 1950s, *Drum* magazine acted as a kind of social barometer of the decade. The publication featured stories and photographs covering events such as the 1955 Sophiatown removals (where more than 2000 policemen forcibly removed black families from the multiracial township of Sophiatown to a township called Meadowlands in Soweto); the 1955 Congress Alliance's adoption of the Freedom

---

[90] *Have You Seen Drum Recently?* Directed by Jurgen Schadeberg (1989; South Africa, The Schadeberg Movie Company), DVD.
[91] See Thomas Karis and Gwendolin M. Carter. *From Protest to Challenge: A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa, 1882 – 1964.* (Stanford: Hoover Institute Press, 1986), as well as Tom Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945.* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983).

Charter (a document that eventually heavily influenced the South African constitution after the country's first democratic elections in 1994); the Treason Trial of 1956 (where 156 prominent activists, including Nelson Mandela, were arrested and tried for treason) and, of course, the aforementioned Sharpeville massacre that tragically marked the end of the decade in 1960.

Seemingly in contrast, the magazine also served as a portal into the dizzying world of jazz, alcohol, shebeens and *tsotsi* (gangster) culture – features that all characterised black urban life in the South African townships located on the fringes of the country's predominately white cities. In exploring the vibrant social lives of black South Africans, as well as taking an overtly antiapartheid stance in its journalism, writing and exposés, I argue that *Drum* reflected the paradox of the times while also being paradoxical in itself.

Lewis Nkosi, one of the prominent writers who later joined *Drum* in his twenties, captures an aspect of this paradox in "The Fabulous Decade", one of the articles he published in *Drum*. He writes that "the fifties was a time of infinite possibilities . . . It was a time when it seemed that the sound of police gunfire and jackboots would ultimately become ineffectual against resolute opposition and defiance from the new 'fringe' society."[92] In this new fringe society, politics made its way into the jazz music that blared in the shebeens, it bubbled over in loud arguments on the streets, it tussled with the various subcultures that either embraced or rejected it, and finally, it inspired a new generation to pick up their pens and write.

---

[92] Lewis Nkosi, 'The Fabulous Decade: The Fifties" in *Home and Exile and Other Selections*. (London: Longman, 1965), 17

Before it came to be known as one of the central publications of the 1950s, *Drum* underwent a number of significant changes. Founded in Cape Town in March 1951, *Drum* was first published as a monthly magazine, under its original title, *The African Drum*. Jim Bailey, the son of Sir Abe Bailey, a wealthy white South African diamond tycoon, used the vast amount of money left to him by his father to finance the magazine. He accepted his father's money, apparently unaware of its historical links to the diamond industry, which derived much of its profit from the use of cheap black labour.[93]

In spite of the original finances in mining capital, Bailey would remain something of an independent spirit in his decisions with the magazine, becoming "part shrewd businessman, part quirky idealist."[94] Bailey's idealism was reflected in his wish to create a magazine for a black South African audience, in spite of his limited knowledge and contact with urban black South Africans.[95]

The first editor Bailey chose, Bob Crisp, a former South African tank commander and cricketer, fashioned *The African Drum* as an anthropological periodical detailing the features of African rural life and culture. As Michael Chapman writes in his book *The Drum Decade*, in its first iteration, the magazine "adopted an educative, even a moralising air" and featured stories on farming, religion, cultural dress, 'African' art and articles such as 'Music for the Tribes'.[96] Chapman asserts that, "although the first cover designs, in counterposing silhouetted figures of a tribesman and a city dweller, showed

---

[93] See Phillip Bonner, Peter Delius and Deborah Posel, *Apartheid's Genesis, 1935 – 1962*, (Johannesburg: Ravan and Witwatersrand University Press, 1993).

[94] Michael Chapman, *The "Drum" Decade: stories from the 1950s*. (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1989), 186

[95] Interestingly, Bailey's motivations for wanting to create a magazine for black South Africans also remain unclear.

[96] Michael Chapman, *The Drum Decade*, 186

some alertness to the transitional nature of black life, Crisp did not grasp the full extent of the urbanising process."[97]

As a result, Bailey replaced Crisp with Anthony Sampson, a childhood friend with whom he studied at Oxford, and relocated the editorial offices to Johannesburg. Bailey had already lost a substantial amount of money after the publication of the first four issues of *The African Drum* between March and June 1951. Having lost £2000 a month, Bailey needed to improve the magazine's circulation which was only at 20 000 in mid-1951.[98]

It was then that they met Henry Nxumalo, a young black journalist who rose through the rank while working for a black newspaper called *Bantu World*. Nxumalo led Sampson and Bailey into black townships to conduct informal surveys of potential readers. Sampson recalls this experience in his book, *Drum: A Venture into the New Africa*, when writing about the reactions he and his colleagues received from the black South Africans he met:

> 'Ag, why do you dish out that stuff man?' said a man with golliwog hair in a floppy American suit, at the Bantu Men's Social Centre. 'Tribal music! Tribal history! Chiefs! We don't care about chiefs! Give us jazz and film stars, man! We want Duke, Satchmo, and hot dames! Yes, brother, anything American. You can cut out this junk about kraals and folk-tales and Basutos in blankets – forget it! You're just trying to keep us backward, that's what! Tell us what's happening here, on the Reef! . . . Drum's what white men want Africans to be, not what they are . . . And we're trying to

---

[97] Ibid., 187.
[98] Tom Odiahambo, "Inventing Africa in the Twentieth Century: Cultural Imagination, Politics and Transnationalism in *Drum* Magazine" *African Studies,* 65, no. 2 (2006): 160.

get away from our tribal history just as fast as we can. We don't want

Drum to remind us.'"[99]

As we have seen in previous chapters, the influence of American culture, and the

aspirational allure of African-American jazz greats such as Duke Ellington and Louis

Armstrong (mentioned as 'Duke' and 'Satchmo' above), were transformative forces that

affected many diverse aspects of black urban life. Along with Hollywood films, jazz

music was one of the primary means of accessing American culture. This especially

influenced *tsotsis*: dapper urban gangsters clad in black who created their own

subculture characterised by sharp zoot suits, angle tipped hats, theft, opportunistic

violence, and an idiosyncratic form slang called *tsotsitaal* – a mixture of Afrikaans,

isiZulu, seSotho and American English phrases picked up from the films they saw.[100]

In their interviews in the streets and shebeens of Johannesburg's black urban

townships, Nxumalo, Bailey and Sampson encountered *tsotsis*, shebeen queens, aspiring

photographers, musicians, models, beauty queens, and many black South Africans who

merely wanted to see their own diverse lives reflected in the pages they read. They

were no longer content with reading imported magazines such as *Ebony*, a popular

African-American magazine. As Ezekiel Mphahlele (who also later joined the *Drum*

team) remembers "the overall message[s] that leapt out of every page of *Ebony* [were

the] achievements of the black race. Something to celebrate. And oh, how badly we

needed that in our corner of Africa."[101]

---

[99] Anthony Sampson. *Drum: A Venture into the New Africa.* (London: Collins, 1956), 20.
[100] See Clive Glaser's *Bo-Tsotsi: The Youth Gangs of Soweto 1935 – 1976*, (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2000).
[101] Ezekiel Mphahlele, *Your History Demands Your Heartbeat: Historical Survey of the Encounter Between Africans and African Americans*. (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2002), 161.

Thus, Bailey and his team sought to address this need in their efforts to transform the moral and thinly anthropological *African Drum* into *Drum* magazine, a publication focused on the achievements, perspectives and lives of urban black South Africans. In leaving Crisp's vision behind, *Drum* was on its way to becoming a periodical that thrummed with the politics, satire, culture and music of South Africa's townships.

In his effort to shake off the charge that *Drum* was "what white men want[ed] Africans to be", Bailey appointed an African Advisory Board, though the magazine continued to have white editors throughout the 1950s, an aspect that would prove to be a complicating factor towards the end of the decade. The board comprised of prominent members of Johannesburg's township communities: Job Rathebe, a secretary of the Bantu Men's Social Centre, Dan Twala, a sportsman and broadcaster, Dr. A.B. Xuma, the former-President General of the African National Congress, and Andy Anderson, the board's only coloured representative. One of the collective's first decisions was to discontinue the problematic column 'Music of the Tribes', thus signalling a formal break with *Drum's* patronising past.

When we look at the racial dynamics involved in *Drum*'s reinvention, it becomes clear that resistance in this context does not fit neatly into clean categories. On the one hand, we have the all-black (and I might add, all-male) Advisory Board, which can be viewed as both integral to the project of a black publication as well as subversive in the socio-political context of apartheid South Africa, which deemed such alliances illegal. On the other, however, the decisions of the advisory board were mediated by the presence of *Drum*'s white editors. What becomes clear then, is that essentialist notions such as 'resistance' and 'accommodation' prove to be too narrow to encapsulate the different dynamics at play.

One aspect in which this particular theme is made visible is when we look at the young men who wrote for *Drum*. One of the most vibrant of the *Drum* writers was Todd Matshikiza – a well-known musician and jazz composer who joined the magazine as a regular contributor in 1953. Matshikiza wrote regular reviews of jazz performances and records and had a distinctive style and use of language that his fellow writers coined as 'Matshikeze'.[102] An example of his style can be seen in the following excerpt, in which he reviews a recording session featuring a young jazz singer named Mabel Mafuya. The review was originally published alongside a photograph of the young woman, who was known for her dynamic tone:

> Don't let this picture fool you. It is the sombre, dolorous and docile portrait of a lively bubbling brook of a hep cat, Mabel Mafuya. The jazzingest twenty-four inch waist I've ever seen in a recording studio. And what can you get in a wiggly waggly twenty-four inch waist that heps and jives and dashes behind partition to release the next verse in the middle of the recording session? Lots. You get her Troubadour AFC 353 that paints the grim grime of a miner's life in jumping tones.[103]

Matshikiza's column would go on to become one of *Drum*'s most popular sections throughout the 1950s, not only for his colourful use of language but also for his vibrant coverage of township nightlife and music in Johannesburg. In replacing the much-criticised 'Music of the Tribes' column, Matshikiza's contributions pushed back against apartheid's retribalising agenda. After the Sharpeville Massacre, however, Matshikiza eventually emigrated to England, bitterly frustrated about apartheid's deepening violence.[104]

---

[102] Michael Chapman, *The "Drum" Decade*, 183
[103] Todd Matshikiza, *Drum*, February 1956.
[104] Tom Odhiambo, "Inventing Africa in the Twentieth Century", 171

Another prominent voice among Drum's literati was Arthur Maimane, a young

writer from Rosettenville. Maimane wrote boxing commentaries and joined the team of

charismatic writers after Trevor Huddleston, a famous Sophiatown bishop and activist,

recommended him to *Drum*'s editors. Maimane wrote detective stories in the style of

hard American fiction, under the pen-name, Arthur Mogale. Under this pseudonym,

Maimane drew from township culture and *tsotsi* culture to add grit to his stories, and

enjoyed a wide readership until he also left to live in London in 1961.

Can Themba, famous for his articulate cynicism and love of literature, joined the

Drum team after winning a short-story competition in 1953. While writing for the

column "Talk o' the Town", Themba entertained writers, musicians, journalists and

white liberals in his home in Sophiatown, which was nicknamed "The House of

Truth".[105] Themba also played a prominent role in the production of Lionel Rogosin's

Come Back Africa, which I discussed in the previous chapter. Like many others in the

film, Themba plays himself, and in the much-discussed shebeen scene, espouses his

belief in the transformative power of "getting at each other" through "talk". Surrounded

by many of his fellow *Drum* writers in the scene, Themba states:

> I'd like to get people to get at each other. If I could get my worst enemy
> over a bottle of beer, maybe we could get at each other. It's not just a
> question of getting at each other. It's a question of understanding each
> other. Living in the same world. [106]

Themba's belief in rational debate, public engagement, and what historian Litheko

Modisane calls "communicative rationality" is an attitude that informed many of the

---

[105] Mike Nicol. *A Good Looking Corpse: The World of Drum – jazz and gangsters, hope and defiance in the townships of South Africa*, (London: Secker and Warburg, 1991), 159
[106] *Come Back Africa* (1959), directed by Lionel Rogosin, (1959; South Africa: Milestone Films), DVD, my own transcription.

Drum writers' work.[107] Their belief in humanism informed their ideas that apartheid's many injustices were born out of ignorance. Thus, their writing and journalism sought out to combat ignorance while simultaneously reflecting the glamour, buzz, and vitality that stubbornly persisted despite South Africa's repressive climate.

As David Coplan writes in his book, *In Township Tonight!*:

> The sense of glamour and excitement that pervaded the Johannesburg black entertainment world in the 1950s was largely created by African journalists like Todd Matshikiza, Walter Nhlapo, Can Themba, Stan Motjuadi, Casey Motsitsi, Henry Nxumalo, Mike Phahlane and others writing for *Drum*. . . [These writers] produced the best investigative journalism, short fiction, satirical humour, social and political commentary, and musical criticism South Africa had ever seen.[108]

No *Drum* journalist exemplified the magazine's important political and social roles more than its first black co-founder, Henry Nxumalo. Although Nxumalo fought hard against social injustice, he also needed to navigate the constraints of his position as a writer in a white-run magazine, much like *Drum*'s black Advisory Board. Nxumalo rose from a childhood characterised by the poverty that many black South Africans faced. However, in gaining a position as a messenger on the daily newspaper *Bantu World*, he was able to pursue his ambition to become a writer. After working for a few years, he ascended to the position of a sportswriter and befriended South African novelist, Peter Abrahams. After serving in the South African military in London and Cairo during World War II, he returned to South Africa as a freelance reporter. Joining Bailey and Sampson

---

[107] Litheko Modisane, "From Africa to America, and Back Again", *South Africa's Renegade Reels*, (Gordonsville: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 38
[108] David Coplan. *In Township Tonight! South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre,* (London: Longmans, 1985), 168 and 179.

in 1951, Nxumalo fashioned himself as *Drum*'s first African journalist and later became

known as "Mr Drum".[109]

In March 1952, on the one-year anniversary of the magazine's first issue, *Drum*

entered a new era when Nxumalo wrote a special feature and exposé of the working

conditions that black convict labourers and farm workers suffered on the Bethel's

potato farms in South Africa's Transvaal. Alongside photographer Jurgen Schadeberg's

striking photographs, *Drum* published the story under the headline "Bethal Today –

Drum's Fearless Exposure of Human Exploitation".[110] As Mike Nicol recounts in his book

A Good-Looking Corpse:

> Bethal – which ironically means 'House of God' – was a name that struck
> terror into black hearts. Such terror that farmers 'collecting' labourers at
> the border with Rhodesia [now Zimbabwe] had to change their Bethal
> number plates . . . Nxumalo interviewed more than fifty labourers. He was
> told stories of labourers flogged to death, of others who died of the cold,
> of repeated beatings, of farmers known as *Mabulala* ('The Killer') and
> *Fakefutheni* ('Hit him in the marrow').[111]

Nxumalo's article caused a sensation, and introduced *Drum's* central feature of the

social exposé, which would increase *Drum*'s readership from 20 000 in 1951, to 65 000

in October 1952.[112] In March 1954, Nxumalo published "Mr Drum Goes to Jail", where,

in his investigation into Johannesburg prison conditions, Nxumalo had himself arrested.

With the publication of this particular piece, *Drum*'s readership soared to 70 000,

outselling *Zonk!*, its "politically non-contentious" rival.[113]

---

[109] Michael Chapman, *The "Drum" Decade*, 192
[110] Henry Nxumalo, *Drum*, March 1952
[111] Mike Nicol. *A Good Looking Corpse,* 122 and 126
[112] Michael Chapman, *The "Drum" Decade"*, 190
[113] Ibid. 194

In deliberately getting himself arrested, Nxumalo echoed the tactics of thousands of anti-apartheid activists who deliberately broke apartheid laws in 1952, as part of the now-famous Defiance Campaign. The campaign's objective was to strategically expose both the brutality and the absurdity of six apartheid laws, nicknamed "The Six Unjust Laws", by filling South African prisons until they overflowed.[114]

Nxumalo's own deliberate imprisonment had a similar aim. In the tense political climate that followed the campaign, editor Anthony Sampson was very careful in skirting around explicitly commissioning Nxumalo to write an inside story, as doing so would be illegal. Sampson relates that he "told Henry to take a holiday. And I added something like if he did get arrested I would be interested to hear about it."[115] After being arrested for drunken behaviour and assault, Nxumalo was detained for five days in a Johannesburg prison known as "The Fort" and nicknamed 'Number Four' by inmates. What resulted from his detention was Nxumalo's personal testimony on the ill-treatment of black South African prisoners, accompanied by striking images taken by a young photographer named Bob Gosani.

---

[114] Robert Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, 133
[115] Anthony Sampson. *Drum: A Venture into the New Africa.* London, Collins, 1956. p.26

Fig 1.[116]   Fig. 2[117]

The photographs were clandestinely taken from a nearby high-rise apartment. The first

of the photographs (Fig. 1) features a naked prisoner doing the 'tausa' dance, "a way of

searching naked prisoners for tobacco, *dagga* [marijuana] or anything else hidden in

their rectums."[118] Of his own experience of the *tausa* dance, Nxumalo writes:

> We were ordered to undress and 'tausa', a common routine of undressing
> prisoners when they return from work and searching their clothes, their
> mouths, their armpits, and rectum for hidden articles. I didn't know how
> it was done, I turned round and round and didn't jump and clap my hands.
> The white warder conducting the search hit me with his fist on my left
> jaw, threw my clothes at me and went on searching the others.[119]

---

[116] Photograph by Bob Gosani: accessed at http://www.baileyseippel.co.za/artists.php
[117] Ibid.
[118] Mike Nicol. *A Good Looking Corpse*, 126.
[119] Henry Nxumalo, "Mr Drum Goes to Jail", *Drum*, 1954

Nxumalo ends the personal account of his experience with a scathing critique of the prison system, while reminding his readers that his experiences are not unique. He writes:

> This account by Mr Drum describes nothing extraordinary in South Africa. Most Africans living in towns can expect to be sent to jail sometime during their lives. Every year nearly a quarter of a million people in South Africa are sent to jail, out of a total population of 12 million. . . . The events in Mr Drum's story are common knowledge to many of our readers. [My] account makes it clear that prisoners are in fact 'treated like beasts' that they are degraded, humiliated and leave jail in a worse moral state than when they went in. This prison does not cure criminals; it makes them.

What follows such an indictment, perhaps unsurprisingly, are Nxumalo's recommendations for prison reform. What *is* surprising however, is that Nxumalo uncritically bases his recommendations on the 'correct' procedures of Prison Regulations from the Landsdowne Commission on Penal Reform. What Nxumalo does not account for is how these Prison Regulations were themselves based on racist apartheid laws that contributed to the criminalisation that Nxumalo so passionately indicts in his exposé.[120] His depiction of South Africa's racism as ignorance, or a human aberration rather than a manifestation of a deep-seated and malignant social-historical situation is illustrative of the liberal-journalistic style shared by many of his contemporaries.

Just as Can Themba's belief that all that was required for his 'enemies' to recognise him as a human being was "talk", so that they could "get at each other", Nxumalo's appeal towards responsible prison regulations reveals the limits of the perspective, and thus the resistance, that the *Drum* writers offered. Historian Michael Chapman gives us a possible reason for this limit in his argument that "Nxumalo,

---

[120] Michael Chapman, *The Drum Decade*, 195

whatever his predilections, could not have adopted anything other than an ameliorative voice of social conscience. Like other *Drum* writers, he had to indict white-ruled society while accepting the gatekeeping of 'responsible' white trusteeship."[121] Thus, just as the decade (and *Drum* itself as the decade's tenuously representative mirror) held the paradox of both violence and vibrancy, the *Drum* writers also had to navigate a paradox of resistance against systematic white racism, while working underneath the direction of white editors.

Like its writers, its readers, and its covers, *Drum* had many faces. In its role as a platform for remarkable oppositional journalism, and in its facilitation in the creation of multiple notions of what it meant to be black in the 1950s, *Drum* was both vital and instrumental. In centring black urban communities at a time where they were both literally and figuratively placed on the fringes of society, *Drum* gives us a compelling, layered picture of black identity in early apartheid South Africa – a time where both music and misery lived side by side.

---

[121] Ibid., 196

Conclusion
High Apartheid: The Long Night Sets In

"…[The 50s] constituted a significant moment because it was the period between the establishment of the mass media for black consumers and the full institutionalization of high apartheid. It was a time of change and negotiation, in which alliances between commercial and political forces formed and dissolved as hybrid styles sought to articulate the experience and aspirations of township audiences." – Lara Allen[122]

In his essay entitled, "Zero World", Southern African historian Achille Mbembe writes that "life under apartheid was lived in-between and behind the lines."[123] As we've seen, life in early apartheid South Africa as reflected by the media produced in this period was captured, created, performed, filmed, written and photographed in-between complex and shifting lines. The musicians, actors, directors and writers we have met thus far all found ways to express something of themselves and their various contexts – sometimes in direct opposition to the harsh monochromatic reality of South Africa's apartheid system. After apartheid was formally introduced in 1948, the boundaries of what was possible for black South Africans were still in the process of being drawn. However, after 69 unarmed protesters were shot in Sharpeville, these lines hardened as the heady era of the 1950s gave way to a long, sombre night. Within this long night, a harsher and more severe apartheid was consolidated.

In the wake of the Sharpeville Massacre, the apartheid government launched a decisive campaign to suppress all opposition to white rule. On March 30, 1960, the apartheid government declared a state of emergency in South Africa, and proceeded to

---

[122] Lara Allen, "Commerce, Politics and Musical Hybridity: Vocalizing Black South African Identity during the 1950s", *Ethnomusicology* 47:2 (2003), 229
[123] Achille Mbembe, "Zero World", in *Rise and Fall of Apartheid: Photography and the Bureaucracy of Everyday Life*, (London: Prestel, 2013), 67

arrest more than 2000 people between March and August of that year. The state of

emergency lasted 154 days.[124]

The period after Sharpeville was characterised by intense state repression,

prosecution and militancy. The National Party banned two of South Africa's main

oppositional political parties (the African National Congress and the Pan-African

Congress), after the Unlawful Organisations Act was swiftly passed on April 8, 1960.

Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and many other members of these political parties were

sentenced to life in prison after the 1964 Rivonia Trial. On September 6, 1966, a young

man named Dimitri Tsafendas assassinated former Minister for Native Affairs, H.F.

Verwoerd, which led to the passage of the 1967 Terrorism Act. The Act allowed for the

indefinite detention any person without trial. More importantly for media in South

Africa, on December 2, 1968, the United Nations General Assembly requested that all

states and organisations suspend cultural, educational and sporting ties with South

Africa, signalling a massive boycott that had widespread repercussions all over the

country.[125]

The music industry was one of the first areas to experience the debilitating blow.

After the apartheid government actively destroyed cultural hotspots such as

Sophiatown in the mid-1950s, many other urban black areas were flattened. As David

Coplan argues in his book, *In Township Tonight!*, this dispossession was aimed both at

the emerging hubs of black cultural life, as well as at cosmopolitan styles of

performance that were deemed subversive.[126]

All throughout the 1960s, central aspects of black South African show business

were specifically targeted. Restrictive laws prevented local black artists from accessing

[124] Ibid., 172
[125] Okwui Enwezor and Rory Bester, *Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, 174
[126] David Coplan, *In Township Tonight!*, 225

African-American music and cinema. Legislation such as the Bantu Education Act
prevented young black students from receiving any kind of education in performance
fields, and actively shut down spaces and tuition for professional development in acting,
choreography and any kind of musical instrumentation. Apartheid officials ordered that
spaces such as Sophiatown's Odin Cinema were to be gutted and torn down. By 1970,
not a single legal city venue for black performers existed. Bands such the Manhattan
Brothers were steadily confined to playing at smaller venues, which proved to be unsafe
both for performers and for audiences.[127]

The *Drum* writers were also not impervious to such repressive forces. The first
blow to the magazine occurred when Henry Nxumalo, "Mr Drum" himself, was
murdered in 1957, while working on a story about a white doctor who performed
numerous fatal illegal abortions. After 1960, the apartheid government branded many
of the *Drum* writers as "statutory communists", thus banning their work from
distribution within South Africa. Can Themba, the owner of the famous "House of Truth"
that we encountered in the previous chapter, was branded as such and subsequently
moved to Swaziland in 1966. He died shortly after moving.[128]

Other *Drum* writers emigrated in frustration of the repressive climate. Lewis
Nkosi, whom we met as one of the black South African scriptwriters for Lionel Rogosin's
Come Back Africa, left South Africa in 1961 after receiving a scholarship to study at
Harvard University. Todd Matshikiza, jazz composer, musician and *Drum* writer also left
to live in London in 1960. He eventually returned to the continent in 1964, where he
lived in exile in Zambia until his death in 1968.[129]

---

[127] David Coplan, *In Township Tonight!*, 226-228
[128] Michael Chapman, *The Drum Decade*, 217
[129] Ibid., 218

Despite the onset of South Africa's own nadir, pockets of activity and innovation stubbornly remained. For example, in their efforts to discourage the transnational movement of ideas that proved to be so important in the early apartheid period, apartheid authorities declared that black vocalists were no longer allowed to sing in English. This, they hoped, coupled with the ban on international music reaching black audiences, would assist in the apartheid project of 'separate development' and retribalisation. However, the decision had ironic consequences. As David Coplan writes:

> It is one of the paradoxes of apartheid cultural policy that programming intended to promote 'separate development' in the cultural sphere, prevent the spread of cosmopolitanism, and keep Africans African had the unintended consequence of reinvigorating cultural pride and self-knowledge among urban black people, advancing black nationalist consciousness.[130]

Musicians and vocalists such as Letta Mbulu, Susan Gabashane, Miriam Makeba, Thandi Klassens and Sylvia Moloi ushered in new musical styles such as *simanje-manje* ("now-now") that drew on black South African myths, folk-tales and stories to compliment the sharpening resistance to apartheid that occurred all through the 1970s and well into the turbulent 1980s.

What examples such as these show us is that agency can always be found if we look hard enough. The multi-faceted media produced in the early apartheid period proves this, in all its intricate complexity and sometimes hidden political content. The interconnectedness of such media only adds to the picture of an era shaped by paradoxes. Without the heady, energetic jazz of vocal groups such the Manhattan Brothers, we would not have scenes in *African Jim* such as young Dolly Rathebe's bluesy song that hid her unique understanding of migrancy within the melody of the original

---

[130] David Coplan, *In Township Tonight!*, 227

American song. Without the *Drum* writers' audacious confidence and sharp writing, we would not have Lionel Rogosin's extraordinary film indicting the brutality of the apartheid system. What I hope to have shown in this thesis is how apartheid media proved to an interrelated site where memory and forgetting, hope and despair, black and white, and repression and agency all existed together in one of the most unique periods in South African history.

All the photographs in this appendix were taken by Jürgen Schadeberg, a young photographer from Berlin who moved to South Africa in 1950, and later worked for *Drum* magazine from 1951-1959. The photographs are featured in his book, *The Black and White Fifties* (Johannesburg: Protea Book House, 2001).

Nathan 'Dambuza' Mdledle (1951)
Nathan Mdlele was the composer, arranger and mastermind of the Manhattan Brothers.
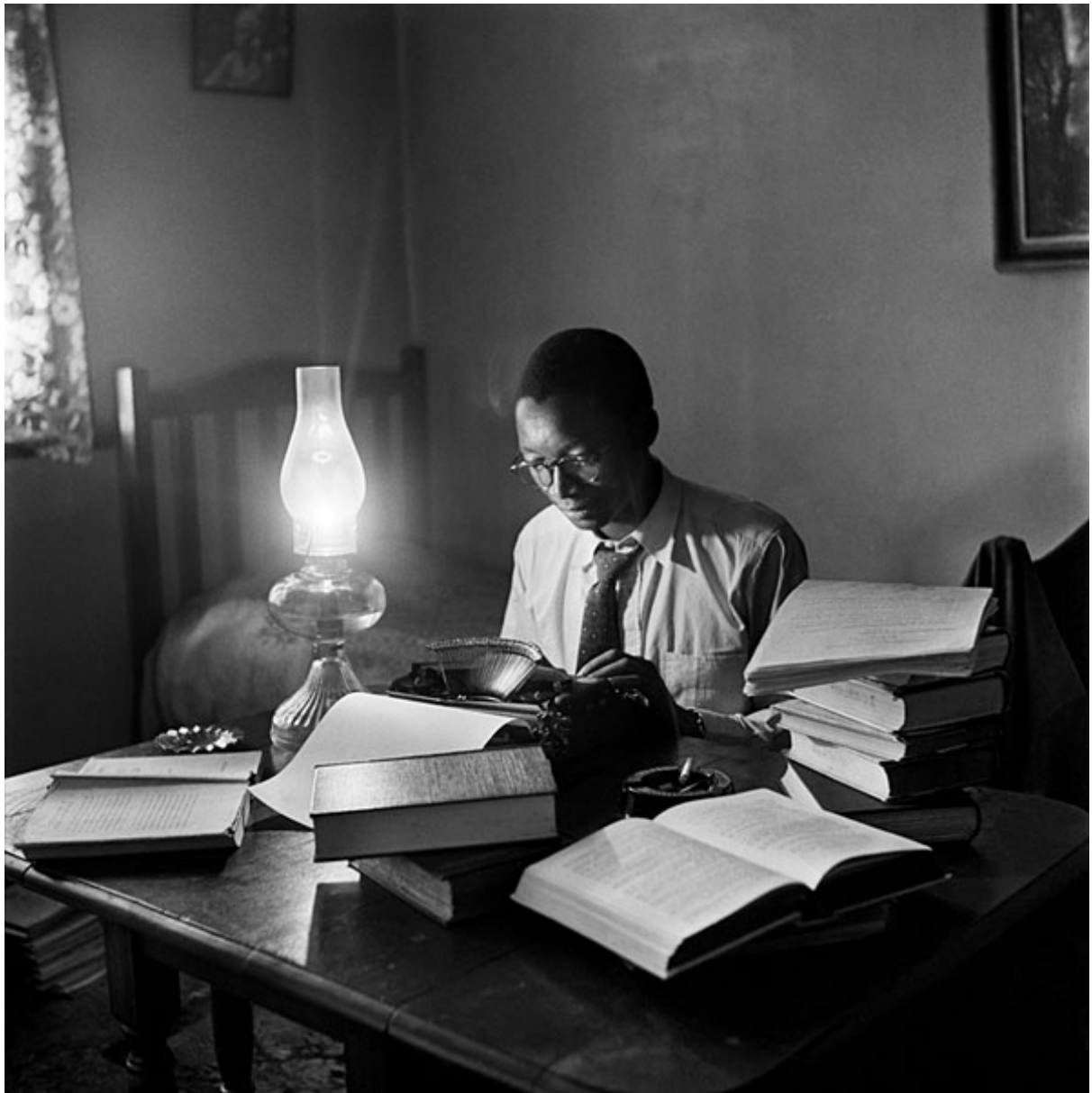
Hugh Masekela receives a trumpet from Louis Armstrong, a gift organised by Father Trevor Huddleson, an avid supporter of South African jazz (1954).

Dolly Rathebe, singer, actress in *African Jim* (1955).

*Tsotsi*s play dice in Sophiatown before the 1955 forced removal of Sophiatown residents (1954).

Drum writer Can Themba at his desk (1956).

Drum writer Henry "Mr Drum" Nxumalo (n.d.)

The *Drum* office in Johannesburg, featuring (from left to right) Henry Nxumalo, Casey Motsitsi, Ezekiel Mphahlele, Can Themba, Jerry Ntsipe, Arthur Maimane (wearing hat, drooping cigerette), Kenneth Mthetwa (on floor), Victor Xashimba, Dan Chocho (with hat), Benson Dyanti (with stick) and Robert Gosani (right with camera) (n.d.)

Bibliography

Addison, Graeme. "Drum Beat: An Examination of *Drum*", *Speak*, 1 no. 4, (1978), 5-6.

African Jim (1949) directed by Donald Swanson, South Africa: Milestone Film and Video, 50 minutes, DVD.

Allen, Lara. "Preserving a Nation's Heritage: The Gallo Music Archive and South African Popular Music" *Fontes Artis Musicae - Journal of the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives, and Documentation Centres* 54, no. 3 (2007): 263-279.

_____ "Music, film and gangsters in the Sophiatown imaginary: featuring Dolly Rathebe". *Scrutiny2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa* 9, no. 1: (2004): 19-38.

_____ "Commerce, Politics and Musical Hybridity: Vocalizing Black South African Identity during the 1950s", *Ethnomusicology* 47:2 (2003), 218-234.

Ballantine, Christopher. *Marabi Nights*, Johannesburg: Ravan, 2012.

Barber, James. *South Africa in the Twentieth Century*, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999.

Bhabha, Homi. K. "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences" in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, New York; London: Routledge, 1995.

Bonner, Phillip, Peter Delius and Deborah Posel, *Apartheid's Genesis, 1935 – 1962*, Johannesburg: Ravan and Witwatersrand University Press, 1993.

Coplan, David. *In Township Tonight!: Three Centuries of South African Black City Music and Theatre*, Auckland Park: Jacana Press, 2007.

Come Back Africa (1959) directed by Lionel Rogosin, South Africa: Africa Film Library/M-Net, 86 minutes, DVD

Chapman, Mark. *The Drum Decade*, Scottsville: Kwa-Zulu Natal Press, 2001.

Davis, Peter. *In Darkest Hollywood: Exploring the Jungles of Cinema's South Africa*. Randburg: Ravan Press, 1996.

Diawara, Manthia. *African Cinema: Politics and Culture*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992.

Dovey, Lindiwe and Angela Impey. "'African Jim': Sound, politics, and pleasure in early 'black' South African cinema" *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 22 no. 1 (2010): 57-73.

Elpick, Richard and Hermann Giliomee. *The Shaping of South African Society*, *1652-1840*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1989.

Enwezor Okwui and Rory Bester (eds.), *Rise and Fall of Apartheid: Photography and the Bureaucracy of Everyday Life*, London: Prestel, 2013.

Gilroy. Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, London: Verso, 1993.

Gitelman, Lisa. *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture,* Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006.

Glaser, Clive. *Bo-Tsotsi: The Youth Gangs of Soweto 1935 – 1976*, Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2000.

Graham, Shane and John Walters, (eds.) *Langston Hughes and the South African Drum generation: The correspondence*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. 2010.

Have You Seen Drum Recently? Directed by Jurgen Schadeberg (1989; South Africa, The Schadeberg Movie Company), DVD

Hey. Kenneth R. "Come Back Africa (1959): Another Look." *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies* 10 no. 3 (1980): 43-46.

Junction Avenue Theatre Company, *Sophiatown,* Johannesburg: Witwatersrand Press, 1986.

Karis, Thomas. G and Gail M. Gerhart (eds.) *From Protest to Challenge: Challenge and Violence, 1953 – 1964*, Auckland Park: Jacana, 2013.

Lodge, Tom. *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983

Maingard, Jacqueline. *South African Cinema: Histories and Futures,* London: Routledge, 2007.

Marks, Shula and Richard Rathbone (eds.), *Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa: African Class Formation, culture and consciousness, 1870-1930*, London and New York: Longman, 1982.

Modisane, Bloke. *Blame Me On History*, Johannesburg: AD Donker, 1986.

Modisane, Litheko. *South Africa's Renegade Reels : The Making and Public Lives of Black-Centered Films*, Gordonsville, VA, USA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Mphahlele, Ezekiel. *Your History Demands Your Heartbeat: Historical Survey of the Encounter Between Africans and African Americans*, Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2002.

Nicol, Mike. *A Good Looking Corpse: The World of Drum – jazz and gangsters, hope and defiance in the townships of South Africa*, London: Secker and Warburg, 1991.

Nkosi, Lewis. *Home and Exile*, London: Longmans, 1965

Odiahambo, Tom. "Inventing Africa in the Twentieth Century: Cultural Imagination, Politics and Transnationalism in *Drum* Magazine" *African Studies,* 65, no. 2 (2006): 156-173

Roach, Joseph, R. *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

Robinson, Jennifer. *The Power of Apartheid: State, Power and Space in South African Cities*, Oxford: Butterworth, 1996.

Rogosin, Lionel. "Interpreting Reality (notes on the Esthetics and Practices of Improvisational Acting)", *Film Culture*, 1 no. 21, (1960), 21-33.

Ross, Robert. *A Concise History of South Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Sampson, Anthony. *Drum: A Venture into the New Africa,* London: Collins, 1956.

Scott, James. C. *Domination and the arts of resistance*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.

Trapido, Stanley and Shula Marks (eds.) *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa,* London: Longman, 1987.

Womack, Andrew. "Ridicule and Wonder: The Beginnings of Minstrelsy and New York" *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History* 36, no. 2 (2012): 86-115.

Drum Magazine

All Drum Publications from 1951-1960 and selections from the *Golden City Post* were accessed at the Bailey African History Archive online at: http://www.baha.co.za

Drum Publications

The Beat of Drum: Foundations of the Future in Africa, Volume II, ed. H. Lunn. Johannesburg: J.R.A. Bailey, 1983.

The Fifties People of South Africa, ed. Jurgen Schadeberg. Johannesburg: Bailey's African Photo Archives, 1987.