

**THE MUSIC OF PHILIP TABANE – AN HISTORICAL ANALYTICAL STUDY
OF
MALOMBO MUSIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

BY

SELLO EDWIN GALANE

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF
THE DEGREE
DOCTOR MUSICAE
IN THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR MEKI NZEWI

PRETORIA – OCTOBER 2009



DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented for a degree requirement in any other university. No part of this thesis may be produced without the prior permission of the **author** and / or **University of Pretoria**.

.....

EDWIN SELLO GALANE

REGISTRATION NUMBER: 24494926

.....

DATE

This thesis has been approved by my supervisor:

.....

PROFESSOR MEKI NZEWI

.....

DATE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would not have been accomplished if it were not for the generosity of Dr Philip Nchipi Tabane and his late wife Sesi Thuli Tabane, as well as their son Thabang Tabane for allowing me space into their home anytime of the day to spend time with them. I would like to thank my company, KAMR, for sponsoring the research financially.

I am particularly grateful for Professor G. Nkondo for teaming up with me when I did the '35 Years of Malombo Music of South Africa' in 1998 by awarding the Doctor of Philosophy in Music Degree to Dr Philip Tabane. This was such a fitting acknowledgement by the University of Venda in Limpopo, given that Malombo is a Venda word for healing force and spirit of healing. I am particularly grateful to my supervisor Professor Meki Nzewi for his clairvoyance, open mind and effort to develop African music theories that attempt to humanise musicological views of African Musical Arts.

I am thankful to Bongani Mahlangu, Entertainment Editor of *Sowetan Sunday World*, for helping me with archived material from Sowetan Publishing. Gratitude goes to the late Dr Aggrey Klaaste, and Elliot Makhaya for allowing open discussion on the subject of Malombo during their time. May their souls rest in peace. To the entire journalist crop of the 1960s to 1970s who attempted a scientific definition of Malombo music. Your efforts practically shaped the body of this work. Without these journalists' intellectual postulations that ignited public debate by other journalists and other critical readers, there would absolutely be no record of the earliest development of Malombo music of South Africa. Thanks to Tshediso Serei for editing this thesis.



Finally, thanks to the Almighty, for life, living, and blessings of sorts. May the world know that inner peace begins and ends with knowing that you are the fulcrum of life.

Sello Edwin Galane

ABSTRACT

This study seeks to investigate the origin and development of the thinking, make up, evolution, meaning, impact, essence of originality, and attempts to reclaim the true identity of African music of South Africa from 1963 to date by Philip Tabane through his concept of Malombo Music.

This study introduces Philip Tabane's biographical background, and sketches out the socio political milieu in which he has had to do creative work, maps out stages of development of Malombo music, and investigates how media was bent on shaping a particular public opinion about Malombo music. The latter is juxtaposed against Philip Tabane's own philosophy of music making. The research further investigates what Tabane's own definition of Malombo is.

Primary and secondary sources of data are consulted, including a collection of primary data drawn from continuous dialogue with Dr Philip Tabane himself from 1990 to 2008, and getting to do media scan of public statements made in interviews with journalists. One on one discussions were held with Dr Philip Tabane in order to understand and verify popular views held about him and about his work. Secondary sources included newspaper articles, journals, policy documents, and internet survey.

Findings of this research are a record of Philip Tabane's life, discography; philosophy; compositions; key debates on the management of heritage; rights and ownership of intellectual property in South Africa; analysis of Tabane's compositional and stylistic format; Tabane's national and international profile; and suggestions for the development of true national heritage and culture. Above all the research findings will help in providing necessary understanding of South African music history, especially future challenges on concept development in music, ownership and rights, recommended amendments to the



existing legislative framework that governs broadcast and copyrights, as well as the very history of one of the least celebrated but honoured son of the soil, Dr Philip Nchipi Tabane.

Keywords: Malombo, Afrophonia, originality, mbaqanga, kwela, marabi, cothoza jo, mqashiyo, kiba music, kwaito, kwaai-jazz, Malombo-jazzmen, SAMRO, SARREL, NORM, local quota, Diasporaphonia.



DEDICATION

To Dr Philip Nchipi Tabane for allowing me the privilege to study his life. To my family: my wife Machokwe, our children Ipeleng, Galaletsang, and Semakayana for your understanding over the years with all these secondary and primary sources kept all over the house. To my late father Maeke, my late mother Moaki Cecilia, to my late brothers Malesela and Lesetša, thank you for sharing your joy and pain with me and our entire family. My sisters and the surviving brother for your love and support. Thanks to the South African Arts and Culture Fraternity of Africa and the world. You have embraced me and shared with me the invaluable knowledge of your cultures in a way that helped shape my understanding of working with knowledge areas of arts, culture and heritage. May this work be a living proof that upholding one's national ethos and redefining the essence of one's cultural being, is an exercise that yields repositories of national identity and pride to one's own nation and to broader humanity. Each one of us is unique, and his or her contribution to any sphere of knowledge is unique and special. Pula!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration

Abstract

Dedication

Acknowledgements

Chapter one: Introduction

1.1 Background of the study.....	1-1
1.1.1 Ethnographic research approach.....	1-2
1.1.2 Scope of historical time.....	1- 6
1.1.3 Theoretical approach of the research.....	1- 7
1.1.4 Case study research: The qualitative dimension.....	1-8
1.2 Conclusion.....	1-15

Chapter two: Literature review

2.1 Introduction.....	2-1
2.1.1 Scope of literature survey.....	2-2
2.1.2 Published academic sources.....	2-3
2.2 Conclusion.....	2-4

Chapter three: Biographical history of Philip Tabane

3.1 Introduction.....	3-1
3.1.1 Biographical background.....	3-1
3.1.2 Family influence.....	3-3
3.1.3 Human contexts of early life.....	3-3



3.1.4 Early childhood music education.....	3-5
3.1.5 Music knowledge background.....	3-6
3.1.6 The early career path of Philip Tabane.....	3-10
3.2 Conclusion.....	3-13

Chapter four: Elements of the *Malombo* ritual practice and Tabane’s popular music format of Malombo

4.1 Introduction.....	4-1
4.1.1 Introducing Tabane’s Malombo.....	4-1
4.1.2 Novelty that remains new.....	4-2
4.1.3 Indigenous <i>malombo</i> music.....	4-4
4.1.4 Philip Tabane’s Malombo.....	4-4
4.1.4.1 Short lyrical text.....	4-5
4.1.4.2 Vocal timbre.....	4-6
4.1.4.3 Phonaesthetics.....	4-6
4.1.4.4 Crepitating scattling and onomatopoeia.....	4-8
4.1.4.5 Guitar carpet motif.....	4-9
4.1.4.6 Talking drumming.....	4-10
4.1.4.7 Use of sudden stops.....	4-10
4.1.4.8 Creating soundscapes ambiances.....	4-11
4.1.4.9 Praise text.....	4-11
4.1.2 Performance format and style.....	4-11
4.1.3 Philip Tabane’s music literacy skills.....	4-13
4.2 Conclusion.....	4-15

Chapter five: Twelve phases, faces, paces and traces of Philip Nchipi Tabane

5.1 Introduction.....	5-1
5.1.1 First phase: 1940-1943.....	5-1
5.1.2 Second phase: 1943-1958.....	5-1
5.1.3 Third phase: 1958-1959.....	5-2
5.1.4 Fourth phase: 1959-1962.....	5-2
5.1.5 Fifth phase: 1962-1963.....	5-3
5.1.6 Sixth phase: 1963-1964.....	5-4
5.1.7 Seventh phase: 1964-1977.....	5-6
5.1.8 Eighth phase: 1977-1978.....	5-11
5.1.9 Ninth phase: 1978-1997.....	5-11
5.1.10 Tenth phase: 1998.....	5-11
5.1.11 Eleventh phase: 1999-2002.....	5-12
5.1.12 Twelfth phase: 2003-2009.....	5-12
5.2 Conclusion: The extended Malombo family.....	5-13

Chapter six: Socio-political context of the development of Malombo

6.1 Introduction.....	6-1
6.1.1 The case of Philip Tabane.....	6-1
6.1.2 Challenges of an international breakthrough.....	6-7
6.1.3 Wider repression of artists and the black arts in South Africa.....	6-10
6.1.4 Affecting the fan base.....	6-10

6.2 Conclusion.....	6-11
---------------------	------

Chapter seven: Historical traces of the biased profiling of jazz in South Africa

7.1 Introduction.....	7-1
7.1.1 The development of popular music in South Africa.....	7-1
7.1.2 John Mehegen records the first two Jazz LPs to South Africa, 1959.....	7-3
7.1.3 The advent of jazz obscures indigenous music.....	7-10
7.1.4 The jazz-sensed social-milieu of black South Africa in the sixties.....	7-11
7.1.5 Early usage of western music instruments in recordings of African music.....	7-15
7.1.6 Emergence of Philip Tabane and Malombo music.....	7-15
7.1.7 Social behaviour in support of jazz.....	7-19
7.2 Conclusion.....	7-20

Chapter eight: Media perceptions of Philip Tabane’s performance style of Malombo music

8.1 Introduction.....	8-1
8.1.1 Novelty that sparked critical reviews.....	8-2
8.1.2 Broader principles of the reviews of Tabane’s Malombo music.....	8-12
8.2 Conclusion.....	8-14

Chapter nine: Public agitation against the dominance of the Diaspora culture over South African music and challenges of the strategy generation of royalty

9.1 Introduction.....	9-1
-----------------------	-----

9.1.1 Post 1994: Scenario of protection of South African Arts.....	9-1
9.1.2 The problem of the quota for local content.....	9-2
9.1.3 The legislative framework regarding the protection of South African Music performers, composers, and compositions.....	9-7
9.1.4 The provisions of the quota for local content.....	9-12
9.1.5 Protecting one's Copyright.....	9-16
9.2 Conclusion.....	9-26

Chapter ten: Festival names and sponsorship, the blemish of branding

10.1 Introduction.....	10-1
10.1.1 Travesty in naming festivals.....	10-1
10.1.2 Contemporary sponsorship blemish on novel talent.....	10-8
10.1.3 Emerging tenets of how to mainstream a tradition into the realm of popular music.....	10-9
10.2 Conclusion.....	10-12

Chapter eleven: Analysis of Tabane's royalty payout at the zenith of his career

11.1 Introduction.....	11-1
11.1.1 Analysis of both record sales and radio play.....	11-2
11.1.1.1 Analysis of Tabane's sales royalty payout data.....	11-2
11.1.1.2 Analysis of Tabane's broadcast royalty data.....	11-8
11.1.2 Data Analysis.....	11-11
11.1.2.1 Exploitation of indigenous music and not musicians.....	11-15
11.1.2.2 Status and role.....	11-15
11.1.2.3 Ensuring that deserving beneficiaries benefit.....	11-17
11.3 Conclusion.....	11-17

Chapter twelve: Conclusion.....12-1

Bibliography.....B1

Appendices 1 – 6

Appendix 1: Philip Tabane’s research consent

Appendix 2: A gallery of Philip Tabane’s photos and newspaper cuttings of significance

Appendix 3: Philip Tabane’s discography

Appendix 4: Tabane’s literary sources

Appendix 5: Tabane’s drama Script - *Ekufeni*

Appendix 6: The international profile of Philip Tabane’s career

Appendix 7: Tabane’s CD and a DVD