

ZULU WOMEN'S MUSIC

by

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Introduction¹

It is with certain qualifications that this paper is titled "Zulu Women's Music". While the ensuing discussion does in fact concern 'music', performed by Zulu women in certain areas of KwaZulu, it is not wished to infer that the practices described are necessarily homogeneous throughout the whole of the Zulu-speaking areas of Natal and KwaZulu. The terms 'music', 'song' and 'dance' are used advisedly. There are no direct Zulu equivalents of the Western concepts of music, song and dance; nevertheless these terms are retained in order to facilitate discussion in as much as they refer to broadly similar Zulu concepts. The extent to which the Zulu concepts fit Western preconceptions as to what constitutes music, song and dance will be discussed at a later stage. It is the traditional music performed by Zulu women which is the subject of this paper. The term 'women' is here extended to include girls, but raises no further problems.² By 'traditional' music, I mean the indigenous music of the Zulu people as it continues to be performed in a primarily Zulu cultural setting. I do not include in this definition music and musical practices which have emerged specifically under the domination of Western culture, although I do not suggest that the music under discussion has remained entirely unaffected by outside influences.³ The question of what is understood by the appellation of 'Zulu' requires immediate clarification.

The 'Zulu'

Culturally, the people who are today termed the Zulu, are generally held to be broadly homogeneous. Sporadic evidence nevertheless suggests that considerable variation may occur in the details of customs and practices from one area to another. The presence of such variation would seem to be largely explained in terms of the composition of the present-day Zulu people. The original Zulu nation (fragmented after the so-called Zulu war of 1879), from whom the present-day Zulu are descended, was forged by Shaka in the period following his accession to the Zulu

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2. Where a particular section of 'women' are responsible for the performance of individual categories of music, this is stated. The principal division of the musical repertory performed by women as a whole is between married women and unmarried girls.

3. In defining 'traditional' music, I exclude for practical rather than purist motives, those categories of music which owe their existence to outside influence even where, from the point of view of the musical organisation, such categories may largely reflect the Zulu musical idiom. I therefore exclude, for example, the music performed at *umshado*, the marriage ceremony of the *amakhwiwa* (Christians) in the rural areas; music performed by Western-style choirs in the context of school, church or concert hall; and music performed on instruments borrowed from other cultures. I make an exception in the case of *umakhweyana* musical bow (thought to have been borrowed from the Tsonga of Mozambique at the turn of the 19th century) on the grounds that it has sufficient 'time-depth' to qualify as a traditional Zulu instrument, and moreover, is a borrowing from a related culture.

throne in 1816 till his assassination in 1828, from a considerable mixture of the diverse Nguni clans who had first migrated to Natal in the 16th century. While these clans shared a common language (with certain dialectal variations), and common social and political systems, it is generally accepted that there were differences in the details of custom between individual clans.⁴ Present-day variation in the details of cultural and musical practices may therefore be explained in two ways, both rooted in clan preferences. On the one hand, variations may result from the fact that individual clans have maintained the idiosyncratic elements of their traditions (in spite of Shaka's attempts to standardise language and custom while in power). On the other hand, variations may be the result of regional innovations and adaptations, essentially clan-based, which have taken place since the fall of the Zulu nation in 1879. While it may, therefore, be possible, at higher levels of abstraction, to take for granted the presence of cultural homogeneity, and refer to 'Zulu' culture or music, there is clearly a danger in generalizing about the details of cultural and musical practices on the basis of specific evidence. Thus it is important to indicate in any discussion of 'Zulu' culture and music the areas in which fieldwork was conducted, and the principal clans from which one's informants were drawn.

The existing documentation of Zulu traditional music provides as yet only sporadic and incomplete coverage.⁵ In this respect it shares the problem which still besets ethnographical coverage of the Zulu: no large-scale research encompassing the whole of the Zulu-speaking area has yet been undertaken. With respect to the past documentation of Zulu traditional music, Professor Eileen Krige's invaluable compilation, *The Social System of the Zulus*, includes a short chapter entitled 'Music, Dancing and Song' (1936, 336-344). This provides a useful summary of earlier findings in the field, by various investigators, however inevitably shares the handicap of the rest of the book in that it is based on sources which provide little or no indication as to the particular locality or clans under discussion.⁶ A further significant contribution to the study of Zulu music in the first half of this century is P.R. Kirby's *The Musical Instruments of the Native Races of South Africa*, an invaluable source of detailed information regarding traditional musical instruments among the

4. There is, however, very little information available as to the nature or extent of variations in custom from clan to clan prior to the establishment of the Zulu nation. Apart from a single example demonstrating the difference in receptacles used in the preparation of *amasi* (curdled milk) by the Zulu and the Mthethwa, Krige does not provide any further evidence to support her assertion that 'There were, we know, differences in language and custom between the various sections of Nguni' and shortly after this, 'These differences in custom could not, however, have been very great' (1936, 21-2). With regard to variation in the details of custom at the present time, the vast majority of women who served as my informants asserted that customs and practices differed from one clan to another. It was not however possible within the scope of the present study to establish the nature and extent of the variations.

5. The principal sources are listed in the bibliography.

6. Although Krige attempted to assess the reliability and representativeness of the published sources on which the book is based through informants in the rural areas, there is no evidence to suggest that this was undertaken in as systematic or comprehensive a fashion as would be necessary to establish the work as a definitive ethnographical account of the Zulu people. Krige's reliance on questionnaires as a substitute for direct interviewing and first-hand observation is unlikely, on the basis of my own fieldwork experience, to have produced full and accurate accounts of customs and practices. I found that the same informants, when confronted with the same questions on different occasions, would often supply quite different answers. I also found that while informants responded to direct questioning, they were not particularly forthcoming in offering unsolicited information. There were several occasions when, on seeing a rite performed for the first time, I realised that informants, in prior descriptions of the rite, had failed to mention certain aspects of it. When charged with their omission, informants would often, quite logically, assert that I had not asked about these aspects of the rite!

Zulu. Here again, however, it is not always clear whether findings are locally specific or general for the whole of the Zulu-speaking areas of Natal and KwaZulu.⁷

Latterly, the main contribution to the study of traditional Zulu music has been made by David Rycroft.⁸ Rycroft's insightful studies have been directed towards specific clans rather than to Zulu society as a whole. The perspectives presented largely reflect the personal views, experience and musical repertory of Rycroft's principal informant, Princess Constance Magogo kaDinizulu. Princess Magogo is a direct descendent of the Zulu royal lineage and, in addition, has a long and very close association with the Buthelezi clan into which she married.⁹ Hence the Princess's repertory and general knowledge of musical practices primarily reflect the musical traditions of these two clans.¹⁰ When, therefore, it is said of Princess Magogo that she is 'widely acknowledged as the greatest living authority on the subject of Zulu music' (Rycroft: 1975, 351), it must be remembered that it is principally the music of the Zulu royal clan and Buthelezi clan to which reference is made. My own informants in the rural areas were unequivocal in regarding Princess Magogo as the chief exponent of the *umakhweyana* and *ugubhu* musical bows at that time, and in regarding her generally as a ritual expert in the society. They did not, however, consider Princess Magogo to be an authority on the music of clans other than the Zulu and Buthelezi clans, and neither does the Princess lay claim to be. It is therefore necessary to use the generic term 'Zulu music' advisedly when referring to the musical practices of those peoples collectively termed the Zulu. Purists may argue that the musical practices of the Zulu royal clan represent the true Zulu music. If, however, one acknowledges that the people today termed, albeit anachronistically, the Zulu, represent a mixture of diverse Nguni clans, then the concept of a single Zulu music cannot be valid.

Having drawn attention to the differences which may exist from clan to clan, it must nevertheless be stated that there is a continuous process of rationalisation of musical and other cultural phenomena at work in Zulu society as a whole. Apart from the long-term effects of Shaka's policy of standardisation of Zulu culture during his reign, there are two principal factors to which this process can be attributed. There is firstly a built-in process of rationalisation of custom in Zulu society, stemming from the marriage laws. Marriage is both exogamous and virilocal, thus every homestead contains women from clans other than that of the head of the

7. Although the book is based, in part, on Kirby's own fieldwork, little indication is given of the areas in which his investigations were undertaken or concomitantly of the incidence of particular instruments in particular areas. Individual instruments are generally described as occurring 'among the Zulu', although occasionally an instrument may be ascribed to a broad area such as the 'north-eastern districts of Natal' (p.79), or the 'north of Zululand' (p.9), or a distinction drawn between the incidence of an instrument in Natal and Zululand. In a few instances, reference is made to individual informants.

8. See bibliography. In addition to his studies of Zulu traditional music, Rycroft has also made important contributions to the study of form and structure in Nguni music generally (1967, 1971), and to the study of Zulu 'town' music (1957, 1959, 1977).

9. As marriage among the Zulu is patrilineal, exogamous and virilocal, a woman spends by far the greater part of her life living in her husband's homestead. Consequently she comes to have a much closer relationship with her husband's family than he with hers. Princess Magogo is mother of the present Chief Executive Councillor of the KwaZulu Government, Chief Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi.

10. Many of the secular items in Princess Magogo's repertory are, however, drawn from a variety of sources. This is due to the fact that her early musical education took place largely at the hands of her grandmothers, the wives of King Cetshwayo, and her mother and mother's co-wives, all of whom, because of the Zulu law of exogamy, would be from clans other than the Zulu royal clan.

homestead, leading to the intermingling of the cultural practices of different clans. Secondly, the last century has seen a continual increase in the forces of westernisation, industrialisation and urbanisation. This has been accompanied, more recently, by the rigours of the South African government policy of *apartheid*. These developments have led to major changes in the traditional Zulu way of life. In general, there has been a decline in the interest and enthusiasm with which traditional practices are adhered to, certain customs and ceremonies having fallen into total disuse. With regard to those practices which continue to survive, this decline in interest and enthusiasm has, in its turn, contributed to the slow disappearance of many of the variations in custom which traditionally existed from clan to clan, a more uniform culture being easier to sustain. Hence the forces described play an important if indirect role in the process of rationalisation of musical and other cultural phenomena in Zulu society.

From my own field work experience, it was evident that while individual clans showed some differences in repertory, there was nevertheless considerable uniformity in musical and associated cultural practices over a surprisingly wide area of KwaZulu. I worked in the areas of Ekuthuleni and Nkwenkwe in the Mtonjaneni district, and the adjacent areas of Ondini, Nhlungwane, Ntilingwe and Dumaneni in the Mahlabatini district (see map at end). The findings presented here are based on a fifteen-month period of fieldwork in these areas between March 1976 and June 1977, and a further two-month period from August to September 1980. I worked with informants from a cross-section of different clans, principally the Zulu in Ekuthuleni, Mkhize in Ondini and Nhlungwane, Mlaba in Ntilingwe and Ngema in Dumaneni. Some of my chief informants were nevertheless, because of the law of exogamy, from other clans, including the Mncunu, Masuku, Mdlalose, Biyela, Mvubu, Shandu, Zungu and Hadebe clans. Given the degree of uniformity which exists in the musical practices of these clans, and given the distribution of these clans over a relatively wide area of KwaZulu, I feel it is justifiable to henceforth refer to the music under investigation simply as 'Zulu' music. My concern in this paper is to consider the validity of 'women's' music as a topic of investigation, to outline the theoretical and methodological orientations of such a study, and to give an account of the musical practices of Zulu women in the areas of my fieldwork.

'Women's' music - validity of topic

One might begin by examining whether or not there is both a logical and meaningful justification for dividing the corpus of Zulu music on the basis of a differentiation of the sexes. Is it possible to isolate from either an emic or etic perspective a section of the total musical repertory performed exclusively by women?¹¹ In deciding initially on what aspect or aspects of Zulu music I should base my research, the concept of women's music only gradually took shape. In order to pursue the ultimate objective of the study, an analysis of the compositional process in Zulu music, it was decided to collect a representative sample of Zulu musical practice,

11. Kenneth Pike in *Language in relation to a unified theory of the structure of human behaviour* (Glendale 1954) coined the terms 'emic' and 'etic' from the linguistic concepts 'phonemic' and 'phonetic' to designate the insider/outsider dichotomy in viewing social phenomena: "The etic viewpoint studies behaviour as from *outside* of a particular system and as an initial approach to an alien system. The emic viewpoint results from studying behaviour as from *inside* the system" (p.37).

based on the still-flourishing musical traditions at the time of fieldwork. This consisted of ritual/ceremonial music¹² such as the music of *ukwemula*, the girl's social puberty ceremony, the music of *udwendwe*, the traditional wedding ceremony, and the music of the *izangoma*, the traditional Zulu diviners, as well as an active tradition of secular music including lullabies and nursery jingles, work songs, drinking songs, dance songs and songs performed in the context of praising.¹³ I obtained, in addition, a sizeable corpus of women's self-delectative songs performed to the accompaniment of different types of musical bow. This is a largely latent tradition at the present time, but one which was temporarily revived during the period of my fieldwork in response to my enquiries.

It was clear from the outset of fieldwork that most of the music which continues to be actively performed, and to which I consequently had greatest access, was in fact performed principally if not exclusively by women. This is a direct consequence of the South African government's migrant labour policy. Men over the age of between twenty and twenty-five are no longer greatly in evidence in the rural areas, as the majority have migrated to the towns in search of work. Hence my informants were for the most part women, for whom there clearly existed a repertory of music whose performance did not depend on the presence of men, as this was traditionally music performed by women alone. It would seem reasonable to assert, therefore, that women's music continues to be a relatively intact and flourishing tradition in Zulu society, while the musical traditions associated with adult married men are now largely inactive.

The decline in the performance of music traditionally associated with adult married men in Zulu society stems initially from the disappearance of the principal contexts of performance of the music, that is hunting and warfare. The migrant labour system subsequently played its part, in giving rise to an exodus of men to the towns, thereby stifling the emergence of new performance contexts of men's music in the traditional setting. It is therefore in the towns that both old and new forms of Zulu men's music have largely found expression. The new urban forms are hybrid forms which demonstrate some continuity in style, structure and performance conventions with the old traditional forms while also reflecting Western influence in both musical idiom and performance practice.¹⁴

Having emphasized the decline in the performance of music traditionally associated with adult married men, it must nevertheless be stated that there is, in the rural areas, an active tradition of young unmarried men's drinking songs, dance-songs, faction songs, and songs performed in the context of praising which co-exists alongside a parallel tradition in the urban areas.¹⁵ This arises from the fact that young

12. It is theoretically possible to distinguish between ritual and ceremonial acts in Zulu culture. Ritual acts are those which have religious significance. Ceremonial acts are those which can be translated by the Zulu term *'isiko'*. Berglund describes *isiko* as 'a conventional and traditional action which does not of necessity involve religious engagement' (1975, 27). In practice, however, there is considerable overlapping between the two, and it is not possible to designate particular actions as being clearly ritual or ceremonial. I do not, therefore, attempt to distinguish between ritual and ceremonial music in classifying Zulu women's music.

13. I use the terms 'active' and 'inactive' in the sense in which Kenneth Goldstein applies von Sydow's concept of active and inactive tradition bearers in the study of repertory. Goldstein states, 'The actual emphasis is not on the kinds of tradition bearers but on the status of specific items of folklore in the repertoires of their bearers' ('On the application of the concepts of active and inactive traditions to the study of repertory', *Journal of American Folklore*, lxxxiv, 1971, 62).

14. See Rycroft 1957, 1959 & 1977.

15. Performance groups in the urban areas would appear to include both married and unmarried men.

men up to the age of around twenty-five are still to be found in significant numbers in the rural areas. As the movement of young men between town and country is relatively fluid, the urban and rural traditions enjoy a high measure of reciprocal borrowing and would seem to flourish in consequence. The migrant labour system is here used to advantage inasmuch as it provides an ongoing basis for a lively interchange between the two parallel traditions.

While the migrant labour system may have thrown into sharper relief the presence of distinct men's and women's traditions of music, the reasons for such a distinction lie ultimately in traditional Zulu social and economic organisation. In order, therefore, to understand the division of Zulu society into performance groups on the basis of a differentiation of the sexes, it is necessary to outline the salient features of Zulu social, political and economic organisation.¹⁶

At the centre of Zulu political and social organisation is the individual family unit which consists of a man, his wives, and children, and his married sons and their wives and children. It is the bonds of kinship which serve to bring people together as a group. The father, as head of the homestead stands very much at the centre of this unit. He is respected and feared, and his commands are obeyed. The sib or clan is similarly a kinship group, consisting of people who claim descent from a common ancestor. Within the clan are a number of lineages whose members have a common grandfather in the male line. The lineage and clan are therefore patrilineal, and are, next to the homestead, the most intimate social group, and principal ritual group within the society.

A chiefdom consisted, originally, of a body of kinsmen, all believing in descent from a common ancestor. Because, however, of the constant fission which characterizes the clan itself, what is finally known as a chiefdom consists of people belonging to many different clans. Membership of the chiefdom is determined more by allegiance to a chief than by birth. Hence chieftainship is a very important institution in the life of the people.

Whereas the clan is unilineal, there is, in addition, a classificatory system which draws together a large number of relatives on both the father's and mother's side of the family. Marriage, because it is exogamous, widens the circle of relatives and to some extent behaviour patterns and kinship terminology extend to the spouse's family. As marriage is virilocal, the bride is in much closer contact with her husband's relatives than he is with hers, and behaviour patterns and terminology differ accordingly. A women's behaviour, in the early years of marriage, is largely determined by the custom of *ukuhlonipha*, a code of respectful behaviour to which women, in particular are subject.

A further important factor in the social organisation is social division on the basis of age. Girls and boys of the same age are joined together into parallel age-sets. These age-sets, or *izintanga*, play an important part at all the principal stages in the life of an individual. On all social occasions, people group themselves automatically into units on the basis of sex and age.

With regard to Zulu economic organisation the most important economic activities are cattle-rearing and agriculture. Responsibility for these two areas is clearly

16. The principal sources on which this outline is based are Krige's *The social system of the Zulus* and Bryant's *The Zulu people*. The information presented was further corroborated by my own findings in the field.

demarcated on the basis of sex. Agriculture together with housework and handicrafts, come largely under the domain of women, while all work connected with cattle is done by men.

Perhaps the four most significant factors in the organisation of Zulu society are the importance of kinship, the central authority of the paterfamilias, the division of the society into distinct social, political and economic units on the basis of sex and age, and finally the fact that the society is patrilineal, virilocal and operates stringent laws of exogamy. Music is organised in relation to the different phases of community life, and in terms of specific events relating to the life of the individual. It plays both an important utilitarian role and an important functional role in Zulu society.¹⁷ The factors listed above are not only important, therefore, as determining criteria in the broad social, political and economic organisation, but also in the division of the society into music performance groups. The consequence of this is that men and women only rarely form part of the same performance group.

My informants themselves did not consciously acknowledge a division of the total corpus of music into men's and women's music. Apart from the *ukubhina* songs, a category of girls' puberty song, and the *isimekezo* bridal laments, which may under no circumstances be performed by men, or in the case of the *ukubhina* songs, in the presence of men, no explicit restrictions appear to be placed on who may or may not perform particular genres of music.¹⁸ In practice, however, performance conventions are strictly maintained. While all members of the society are potentially performers of music, those members who actually constitute the performing group in any given situation depend on the particular category of music which is to be performed, which in turn, is dictated by the context of performance. On those occasions when men or women do perform categories of music not traditionally their own, there is a marked difference in the manner of performance. It is usual for various aspects of performance such as arm gestures, body postures, dance steps, vocal quality, and even the melodic and rhythmic configurations themselves, to be executed in so exaggerated a manner as to almost constitute a parody. This would appear to be similarly the way in which such performances are perceived by an audience present. Thus, although there is no explicit emic acknowledgement of a specific corpus of music which is performed exclusively by women, it is clear from an etic analysis of the conventions governing musical performance (and implicit in emic accounts), that certain categories of Zulu music are traditionally performed by women alone. It is these categories which are the subject of this paper, and my

17. I follow Alan Merriam in emphasizing a distinction between 'use' and 'function'. While acknowledging that the concepts are complementary, Merriam sums up the difference between them as "'Use"...refers to the situation in which music is employed in human action; "function" concerns the reasons for its employment and particularly the broader purpose which it serves' (1964, 210).

18. As part of the *ukuhlonipha* code of respect, however, a recently-married woman may neither perform nor hear performed the sacred *ihubo* clan anthem of her husband's clan. During the main wedding ceremony, the bride and her age-mates run quickly from the dancing ground when they hear the *iketho*, the bridegroom's party, approaching the ground, singing the *ihubo* of the bridegroom's clan (prior to the performance of wedding dances by the *iketho*). It is not clear whether it is this practice to which Princess Magogo alludes when she says of the bride's party at the wedding ceremony, '...there is a time, when a certain *ihubo* is sung, when they also disappear' (Rycroft 1975, 360). It is equally unclear from Princess Magogo's account and Rycroft's annotations which '*omakoti*' (recently-married women) run away when the bride's party arrive at the dancing ground, singing the *ihubo* of the bride's clan (ibid. 360, 389). From her description Princess Magogo would appear to be referring to women in the bridegroom's party. If this does also refer to the custom of *ukuhlonipha*, these would be women who have recently married, or who are about to be married, into the clan to which the bride belongs, and who are therefore required to respect the singing of that clan's *ihubo*.

research in general.

Classification of Music

As is the case with many non-Western cultures, there is no generic term for music in Zulu culture. The Zulu do, however, identify, according to varying criteria, individual categories of performance which may be encompassed by the Western concept of 'music' and to which the term is therefore applied in this paper.¹⁹ In classifying individual categories of music, my informants generally drew attention to the context of performance, if well-defined, and then to some further distinguishing characteristic of the genre. This may reflect varying aspects of the musical organization, rhythmic organization, textual content, accompanying dance form,²⁰ or use or function of the genre. In each particular case, the choice of label can be said to reflect the single, most important aspect of the genre. The greater part of the Zulu musical repertory is choral and is composed principally of dance-songs. It is usual for such categories of song to be named after the dances with which they are performed, as in the case of the *ingcekeza* category of puberty song or the *isigekle* or *umphendu* categories of wedding song. In the case of work songs or lullabies, it is the use of the songs which is paramount, hence this is the determining factor in naming the category. In the case of the *ukubhina* girls' puberty songs, it is the obscene nature of the song-texts which characterizes the genre, and this is consequently reflected in the folk classification.

As stated at the outset, the terms 'song' and 'dance' are used advisedly. The Zulu term *ukuhlabelela* includes not only what in Western culture is commonly accepted as singing, but also a type of vocal delivery intermediate between speech and song which I shall refer to tentatively in this paper as the 'recitatorial mode'.²¹ The latter

19. Ethnomusicologists periodically express concern over the application of the term 'music' to describe a set of performance practices in a non-Western society, where such practices cannot be fully or accurately accommodated by the Western concept of music. This, however, implies that the concept of music in Western society can be easily and rigidly defined. The Western concept of music is, however, a dynamic one, and at the present time is particularly flexible, it being questionable whether or not there exists in Western society a contemporary corporate aesthetic of music. While there are undoubtedly many people who cling nostalgically to the essentially 19th century Romantic definition of music of the Oxford English Dictionary as the 'Art of combining sounds with a view to beauty of form and expression of emotion', the parameters of what constitutes music have changed enormously through this century to include pitchless sounds, speech, gesture, mime and dance — aspects of performance which, in many non-Western societies, form an integral part of the total musical event, and which have not been considered to be adequately represented by the term 'music'. Given, therefore the flexibility in meaning of the term music in Western society, especially at the present time, I see no danger in its application to non-Western cultures if it is clearly defined for those cultures. We would, in fact, appear in some measure to have returned to the original meaning of the term 'music' (*mousikê*) in classical Greece, where as a body of practice, it covered 'all imaginative uses of language and dance' (Sparrshott, F.E.: 'Aesthetics of music', Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 6th ed., Ed. Stanley Sadie, i (1980,121).

20. I use the verb 'to accompany' throughout this paper to mean simply 'to perform with'. There is no implication of a hierarchy of importance of one part over another.

21. Rycroft originally used the term 'choral recitation' to describe this performance style (1971, 217). He subsequently rejected this term in favour of 'non-melodic song' as the earlier term made no allowance for the solo items performed in the style (1982, D14). Rycroft has since expressed dissatisfaction with the term (personal communication), on the grounds that it could be understood to infer a lack of pitch movement which is contrary to what in fact occurs. The choice of suitable terms to describe the different types of vocal delivery intermediate between ordinary speech and true song which occur in many non-Western cultures poses considerable problems. This stems from a lack of detailed analysis of such performance styles and a corresponding failure to develop an adequate classificatory terminology. The choice of 'recitatorial mode' to describe the Zulu vocal performance style under discussion is based on its resemblance to a form of 'sing-song' recitation. It is nevertheless necessary to make a distinction between the terms 'recitation' and 'recitatorial mode' as the former term has been used by past writers to describe the performance of *izibongo* praise poetry. It should however be stated that while it is possible to make an etic distinction between a 'song mode' and a 'recitatorial mode' in the Zulu concept of *ukuhlabelela*, the Zulu themselves do not acknowledge any such distinction emically.

is used principally in *imilolozelo* lullabies and children's play songs, in *umphendu* wedding dance-songs and in *ukubhina* girls' puberty songs. It is not possible within the scope of this paper to examine this vocal performance style in detail. Preliminary findings suggest that the interplay of speech and song elements is a matter of some complexity, and that there are stylistic differences between the different categories in which the recitational mode is used.²² It may nevertheless be stated that all items in the recitational mode are metric, and there is even less regard for length and stress in the setting of the words than in the 'song mode'.

While the Zulu do not differentiate terminologically between the 'song mode' and the 'recitational mode', they do classify separately the type of vocal performance used in the acclamation of praises or *ukubonga*. Rycroft draws attention to the stylistic differences between *ukuhlabelela* and *ukubonga* as the probable explanation for the emic distinction between them. He describes what I have here termed the recitational mode as having 'regular rhythm but parlando voice quality and no fixed musical notes', while *izibongo* have 'fixed musical pitches but are unmetrical' (1971, 217-8).²³ Rycroft therefore asserts that it would seem to be the presence of a regular metre which is the decisive factor in defining *ukuhlabelela*. It is noteworthy, however that my informants did not use the term *ukuhlabelela* to describe the performance of *izaga* (battle cries), which are also metric in organisation, but used instead the term *ukusho* – 'to say'.²⁴ Thus while an item may indeed have to be metrical to qualify as *ukuhlabelela*, the presence of a regular metre is not of itself sufficient to distinguish *ukuhlabelela* from other forms of vocal performance. It is not possible, at the present state of research, to state conclusively whether the Zulu classify separately the types of vocal performance used in song, praising and battle cries respectively on stylistic grounds, functional grounds, or on a combination of the two.

The distinction between *ukuhlabelela* and *ukubonga* as a criterion in defining song in Zulu culture can be paralleled by the distinction between *ukusina* and *ukugiya* as a criterion in defining dance in Zulu culture. My informants were consistent in applying the term *ukusina* generically to the rhythmical movements of the body which are performed with the vast majority of Zulu choral songs.²⁵ *Ukugiya*, a

22. In general, there appears to be a simplification of the different degrees of relative pitch which occur in spoken Zulu to between three and five pitches, organised in relation to a tonic, and in which fixed interval relationships are maintained. In certain instances this may result in an exaggeration of the normal pitch contrasts of spoken Zulu, however the imposition of an independently-determined intonational contour may also result in considerable distortion of the normal pitch contrasts of spoken Zulu. In choral items there is no unison of pitch in the Western sense of fixed melodic pitch. Each member of the performance group chooses a tonic within his own vocal range, or, in certain items, in a higher vocal range than in normal speech, and the rest of the pitches are fixed in relation to it. While there is no unison of pitch, there is, however, uniformity of pitch movement as each performer maintains the same order of intervallic relationships as the rest of the group between the requisite pitches. This outline is intended to be tentative rather than definitive. There has been little detailed analysis of the 'recitational mode' in the past. Rycroft has, however, described certain general features of the style including the fact that there is 'no unison of pitch', but only what he terms 'parallel rise and fall' (1975, 395).

23. By 'regular rhythm' Rycroft is in fact referring to metrical regularity. The question of whether or not there exists a qualitative difference in the types of vocal delivery used in *izibongo* praise poetry and the recitational mode of *ukuhlabelela* requires further investigation. This is however beyond the scope of the present paper.

24. Rycroft, however, treats the performance of *izaga* as part of *ukuhlabelela*. He states of *izaga*, 'These usually comprise rhythmical chanting (or 'choral recitation') without fixed musical pitches' (1982, D11). Rycroft would appear to treat *izaga* as song because of its similarities to the recitational mode of *ukuhlabelela*. He does not indicate whether or not there is an emic justification for so doing. My informants were nevertheless agreed that one did not use the verb *ukuhlabelela* to describe the performance of *izaga*, but the verb *ukusho*, or the verb *ukukhuza*.

25. Older informants also used the term '*ukugida*' as something of a generic term meaning 'to dance'. They drew

virtuosic solo display of engaging an imaginary enemy in battle, performed against the background of the acclamation of the individual's praises, was, however, treated as conceptually distinct, and could not be subsumed under the generic term *ukusina*. It would seem therefore that rhythmical movement of the body in performance does not of itself constitute dance. In order to qualify as dance, such physical activity must be joined with musical activity in a state of mutual interdependence.²⁶

There is no evidence to suggest that past writers were aware of the importance of this criterion in defining dance, as they have consistently described *ukugiya* as a dance.²⁷

In attempting an analytic classification of Zulu women's music, it is possible to class together sets of pieces which share one or more of the following criteria: a common performance context, a common textual form or reference, common performance practices, a parallel musical structure or style, or a parallel use or function. For the purposes of this paper, I propose the following analytical scheme in which the individual categories identified by my informants themselves are grouped together on the basis of a common social use or role. This attempts a fusion of the emic and etic perspectives in that it embraces the folk classification in a broader methodological perspective but remains a classification with which the folk have no trouble in identifying.

I have not included separately in the classification songs sung at ceremonies in honour of the Zulu goddess, uNomkhubulwana, or songs sung at the pre-nuptial ceremonies of *umbongo* and *ukukhehla*. Apart from a small corpus of songs which are particular to the *umbongo* ceremony, the other ceremonies mentioned do not occasion a distinct corpus of songs. *Ukubhina* songs are performed at uNomkhubulwana ceremonies, and the *inkondlo*, *isigekle* and *ingoma* categories of song at the pre-nuptial ceremonies. As the classification is intended to demonstrate those categories of music performed by women alone, I have not included in it what would seem to be the only category of song which is traditionally performed by both men and women, the clan anthem or *ihubo*.²⁸ In the case of those categories listed under 'Wedding Songs', I refer to their performance by the *umthimba* or bridal party.

a distinction between the terms *ukusina* and *ukugida* on the grounds that the former applied to dancing in which the legs are lifted and in which there is hand-clapping while the latter applied to dancing in which there is restrained leg movement and no hand-clapping. Doke and Vilakazi make a similar distinction between *ukusina* and *ukugida*. They state, '*gida* applies more to movements of upper limbs, *sina* to vigorous war-dancing with foot movement' (1948, 245). The majority of my informants, however, used the term *ukugida* to refer specifically to the dancing of the *amakholwa* (Christians), while the term *ukusina* was used to refer generically to all categories of dance regardless of the types of movement involved.

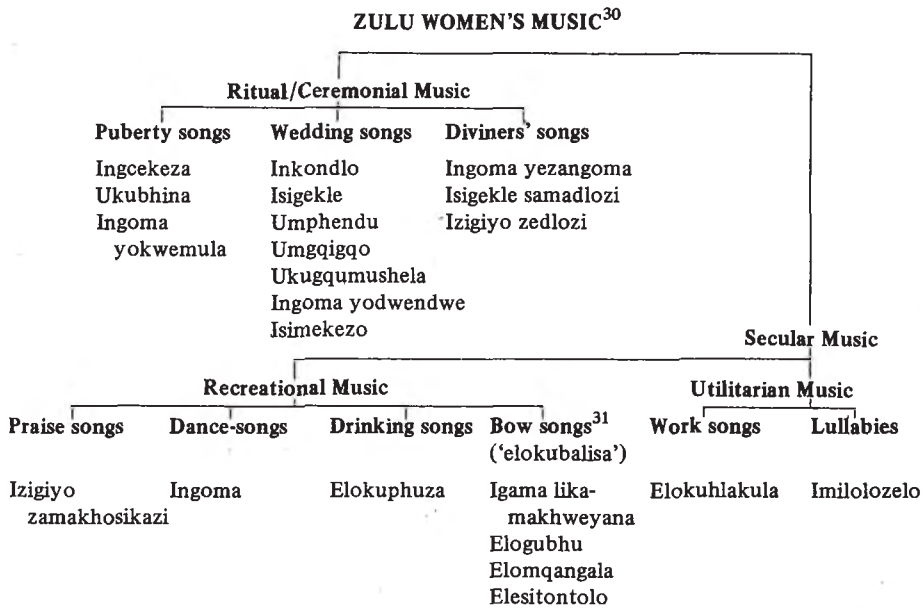
26. The rhythmical movement of the body in the performance of work songs would, however, constitute an exception. It may nevertheless be argued that the physical movements involved in executing a particular task become conceptually closer to dance when rhythmically ordered against a fixed metrical background. Women, when performing work songs in an interview situation, would generally simulate the movements involved in executing the labour in the manner of a dance.

27. In all the principal discussion of *ukugiya* it is referred to as a dance. This includes Krige (1936, 97); Bryant (1949, 230); Cope (1968, 21) who, having described *ukugiya* as a dance, nevertheless states that it is 'hardly to dance but to give a bombastic exhibition of oneself'; Rycroft (1975, 358, 361); Berglund (1976, 235f); Gunner (1979, 246).

28. The original *Ingoma* royal dance-song which is described by Krige as having been 'sung by the assembled nation at the Feast of the First fruits every year' (1936, 33) would have constituted, in the past, a further category of traditional music performed by both men and women. Because, in the majority of cases, no absolute restrictions are placed on who may or may not perform particular genres of music, it is not unusual, especially in interview situations, to find everyone present, men, women and children, participating to some degree in whatever is being performed. This should not, however, be taken to indicate the absence of conventions governing the constitution of the performing group in individual categories of song.

Although male members of the *umthimba* may join in the singing of particularly the *inkondlo*, *umphendu* and *ukugqumushela* categories of song, the sentiments being expressed are essentially those of the bride and her age-mates who form the core of the bridal party.²⁹

Individual categories are assigned to the particular section of the classification to which they first and foremost belong; for example, although the *inkondlo* category of song may be performed at the *ukwemula* girls' puberty ceremony, it is not included under 'Puberty Songs' as it is strictly speaking a wedding song. Its performance at the *ukwemula* ceremony may be interpreted as a ritual anticipation of the occasion when the girl, for whom the ceremony is being held, will marry. There is finally some overlap between items appearing in individual sections of the classification. The *ingoma* dance-songs performed at puberty and wedding ceremonies, with a few exceptions, draw on the general repertory of *ingoma* dance-songs. It is also common for drinking songs and work songs to be used interchangeably.



29. See later description of wedding ceremony.

30. I have not included in the classification songs performed by women as part of the narration of folktales. The songs cannot be meaningfully studied outside of the folktales themselves, and the study of the folktales as a whole would not only be impractical within the framework of the present research, but would also fall largely outside its scope.

I have listed in the classification the most widely-used term for each category. The following alternatives are, however, quite often encountered in the area of fieldwork as a whole: *isigekle* - *isigerre*; *umphendu* - *amahele/isiwiliwili*; *umgqigqo* - *umchobanswani*; *umlolozelo* - *umdunduzelo*. For details of past references to these terms in the existing literature see later description of individual categories.

31. A song performed to the accompaniment of one or other musical bow is often described as *'elokubalisa'* - (a song) of brooding. Among the meanings which Doke and Vilakazi (1949) list for *ukubalisa* are 'Recount the details of one's personal affairs' and 'Ponder over one's troubles, brood over misfortune'. While both meanings can be said to apply to the texts of bow songs, the latter more accurately reflects the mood of the songs. Women brood over matters related to love. A woman, when describing the feelings expressed in a bow song, may also state *'Ngikhumbula insizwajisoka'* 'I am yearning for the one I love'.

I will now continue with a brief description of the individual genres, drawing attention to their salient features, relevance to their performance contexts, and any points of more general theoretical and methodological interest to which they give rise.³²

Categories of music and their performance contexts

i) Puberty songs.

The first occasion at which members of each sex have a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed for them, with corresponding differences in the genres of music performed, is that of the first principal rite of passage, puberty. The *ukuthomba* ceremony takes place at the onset of the menarche and marks the attainment of physiological puberty. This is an essentially private ceremony involving the girl's family and age-mates.³³ The *ukubhina* songs may be performed at night when the girl is joined in seclusion by her age-mates, however, this practice would not seem to be widespread at the present time. The *ukuthomba* ceremony does not occasion any other form of music-making. The *ukwemula* ceremony may take place from two or three months to several years after the physiological onset of puberty. It is the occasion at which a girl's marriageable status is publicly acclaimed therefore it is more apt to apply Van Gennep's distinction and term *ukwemula* a 'social puberty ceremony' (1960, 65-71). The tradition of holding *ukwemula* survives in all the areas in which I worked, and indeed flourishes in the adjacent districts of Ondini, Nhlungwane, Ntlingwe and Dumaneni.

There are two main categories of social puberty song, the *ingcekeza* songs and the *ukubhina* songs. The *ingcekeza* songs are dance-songs to which the *ingcekeza* dance is performed, hence the folk classification.³⁴ The songs are performed principally on the two days of public celebration with which the *ukwemula* rites culminate.³⁵ The public celebration is commonly referred to as *icece* or *umdlalo*,

32. It is not possible within the scope of this paper to deal with every aspect of the composition and performance of each category of song. I have therefore concentrated on those aspects of composition and performance which highlight the fact that the categories of song under discussion are traditionally women's music. The practices described are, unless otherwise stated, representative of the whole area of my fieldwork. This is also the case where extracts from song texts are quoted: unless otherwise stated, the songs in question are performed across the whole fieldwork area. No musical transcription or analysis is presented in the paper, partly because this would trespass on the main substance of my doctoral thesis (which is in the process of completion), and partly because this would necessitate a detailed discussion of my own position in relation to current techniques of transcription and analysis in Ethnomusicology which is not strictly within the scope of the paper.

33. *Ukuthomba* refers to the occasion of first menstruation and derives from the verb stem *-thomba* which Duke and Vilakazi list as 'pass the first genital discharge signifying puberty' (1948). There is some confusion in the existing documentation of Zulu girls' puberty ceremonies, as to those rites which pertain to *ukuthomba*, and those rites which pertain to *ukwemula*, the public acknowledgement of a girl's marriageability (Krige, 1936, 100-4: 1968, 173-84; Bryant, 1949, 647-50; Msimang, 1975, 215-218, 245-49). Zulu girls' puberty ceremonies is the subject of a paper by the present author which it is hoped to have published in the very near future. It must suffice to state here that, in the areas of my fieldwork, the two ceremonies were quite separate - the one, an essentially private ceremony relating to the onset of physiological puberty; the other, marked by the public celebration accompanying the formal recognition of the girl's marriageable status.

34. In deciding whether or not a category of song is named after the dance with which it is performed, a useful guide is to ascertain whether or not the verb *ukushaya* is used to describe the performance of the category. If the verb *ukushaya* is used, as in *ukushaya ingcekeza/isigekle/umphendu/ingoma*, this is a firm indication that the term for the category of song is derived from the term for the dance which it accompanies.

35. Apart from brief mention in Bryant (1969, 213, 650), Raum (1973, 283) and Rycroft (1975, 385), there has been no previous scholarly attention paid to *ingcekeza* songs. Krige (1968, 179) does present fragments of the texts of two songs which, on the basis of my own fieldwork experience, are undoubtedly *ingcekeza* songs, however, she refers to them as *amahubo*, using the term loosely to describe 'tribal songs'. Krige states of these songs, 'They do not figure prominently and are sung mostly at the public dancing' (1968, 179). In my

both terms denoting occasions at which young people gather together to sing, dance and make merry.³⁶ The performing group consists of the girl for whom the ceremony is being held and her principal attendants (generally two of her age-mates), together with other *izintombi* (girls of marriageable age), consisting of *amatshitshi*, girls in early adolescence; *amaqhikiza*, senior girls in charge of the age group; and *izinkehli*, girls who have been through the *ukukhehla* ceremony at which the married women's headdress is formally adopted but who are not yet married.³⁷ Also forming part of the performing group are *omakoti*, recently-married women, and perhaps one or two older women. All members of the performing group are drawn from among the family and neighbours of the girl for whom the ceremony is being held.

During the singing of the *ingcekeza* songs at the dancing ground (*esigcawini*), the girl and her principal attendants (generally two) leave the dancing line and advance towards the seated male spectators on the opposite side of the ground. Each girl carries an *umkhonto* (long-handled spear) which she plants in front of one of the male spectators before returning to her place in the dancing file. The men, in front of whom the spears have been planted, are required to return the spears to the girls, and to pin money in the hair of the girl for whom the ceremony is being held. The girls then set off once again to plant the spears in front of another three men. The performance of the *ingcekeza* songs thus provides a background against which the girls assisted by her age-mates, levies a toll on the assembled spectators (see Fig. 1 at end). On his way to and from pinning money in the girl's hair, a man will lead the singing of his *izigiyo* whereupon he will *giya* while the other men present shout his praises (*izibongo*).³⁸

The texts of the songs deal with the general circumstances of puberty such as the appearance of the first menstrual blood, the emotional and psychological transition from childhood to adulthood, and the availability of the requisite beasts to be slaughtered in order that the ceremony may be performed. The respect and fear commanded by the father is also a central theme in these songs. The awe in which he is held is evident from the praise names by which he is addressed in the songs. Epithets such as '*Wena, weNdlovu*' (You of the elephant), or '*Nans'imbube*' (Here

experience the *ingcekeza* songs figured prominently at various stages in the *ukwemula* ceremony and particularly at the public celebration with which the ceremony as a whole culminates. Bryant refers to *ingcekeza* as the 'menstruation dance' (1969, 213) and refers to the fact that it is accompanied by *ukunqukuza* hand-clapping. Raum refers to the performance of the '*ingcekezi*' dance during Zulu girls' puberty rites (1973, 280). He describes it as 'otherwise only danced by diviners'. Raum's description of the '*ingcekezi*' dance bears no relation to the dance as I witnessed it being performed, however, his description does recall the type of dancing performed by diviners. Rycroft equates *ingcekeza* with '*isithombiso*' (1975, 385). *Isithombiso* (only used in the plural) was, however, used by my informants as an alternative term for *ukubhina*. On the basis of the texts of two *ingcekeza* songs performed by Princess Magogo, Rycroft states, 'The song texts contain very few recognizable words though it is possible that they may have deeper significance that was not divulged' (1975, 385). The texts presented to Rycroft would seem to be fragments, fuller versions of which I collected during my fieldwork. The texts, are, in fact, composed of standard Zulu words and the surface meaning is very clear although the deeper relevance of the texts can generally only be elicited through questioning informants.

36. Doke and Vilakazi list *icece* as '1. Wedding, wedding dance. (cf *umgcagco*) 2. Engagement party. 3. Valued, prized article;...' and *umdalo* as 'Game, sport, amusement, entertainment, concert' (1948).

37. These terms would seem to have a more straightforward application at the present time. The term *izintombi* continues to be used to designate all categories of girl of marriageable age i.e. *amatshitshi*, *amaqhikiza* and *izinkehli*. The terms *amatshitshi* and *amaqhikiza* are however used primarily to distinguish between girls who have not chosen and girls who have chosen respectively.

38. The *izigiyo* is a short song or chant which is sung as part of a total performance in which an individual's praises are acclaimed. After leading the singing of his *izigiyo*, a man will *giya* (i.e. feign the movements by engaging a foe in battle), while his praises are shouted by his peers. See more detailed description in Section iv of the main text.

is the lion), or 'Ubaba isiyo' (Father is a leopard)³⁹ are characteristic. The father plays a central role in the holding of the ceremony in that it is his decision as to when it should take place, and he is responsible for providing the necessary beasts to be slaughtered. A father is generally keen to make public his daughter's marriageability in that it hastens the moment when he will acquire her marriage settlement of *lobola* cattle. For the girl, however, the holding of the ceremony precipitates the moment when she will marry and be forced to leave her home and live in an alien homestead. The girl consequently uses the *ingcekeza* songs as a vehicle to express her sorrow at the holding of the ceremony, and to reproach her father for doing so. She asks him in what way has she done wrong ('*We baba, sone ngani*') that he is driving her from her home, or refers to herself as an orphan ('*We ntandane*'), or a creature to be pitied ('*We ntongoyana*').

The *ingcekeza* songs are in antiphonal form (the characteristic musical organization of choral dance-songs), with overlapping phrases between solo and chorus giving rise to some incidental polyphony.⁴⁰ The songs are in duple time, the metric organization being externalized by means of hand-clapping and beating on the *isigubhu* double-headed frame drum.

The performance of *ingcekeza* dance-songs at the dancing ground is followed by the performance of a category of dance-song which is not designated by a term of its own, but to which the term *ingoma* is sometimes loosely applied, *ingoma* functioning as something of a generic term for recreational dance-song in Zulu culture.⁴¹ This category of dance-song is associated particularly with puberty and wedding ceremonies where it plays a significant role in the public displays of dancing which are central to these ceremonies. The absence of a term to designate this category arises from the fact that it is a relatively new category of dance-song which my informants described as having been introduced by the young people who have been influenced by Western ideas ('*Sekwagcwalisa ngabasha abaphuma esilungwini*'). The texts of the songs may relate to the circumstances of puberty, or in the case of their performance at weddings, to the circumstances of marriage, but more usually concern matters of general topical interest.

While the term *ingoma* may be used generically to refer to recreational dance-songs, it is used, synonymously with the term *indlamu*, to refer specifically to the most common type of recreational dance-song performed by young men and unmarried girls, both on informal occasions and in the context of major ceremonies. The *ingoma* dance is characterized by high-kicking of the legs and stamping of the feet. It is with the performance of this category of dance-song that the public display of song and dance at the *ukwemula* ceremony concludes. The girl for whom the ceremony is being held and her age-mates form a circle in the courtyard of the homestead and sing and clap while one of their number dances in the middle. After a short period of time, the girls adjourn to the hut set aside for them where they continue singing and dancing *ingoma* well into the night. They are generally joined in the course of the evening by young men of the district.

39. *Isiyo* is *ukuthifula* for the standard Zulu form *izilo*. In the *ukuthifula* dialect, *y* is substituted for *l*.

40. For detailed discussion of vocal polyphony in Nguni choral music (including Zulu choral music) see Rycroft, 1967.

41. The term *ingoma* originally referred to the Zulu royal dance-song, led by the king, and performed together with the assembled nation at the First-fruits ceremony. Previous references to the *ingoma* royal dance-song include Krige (1936, 339), Rycroft (1967, 93-6) and Webb and Wright, ed. (1979, 53, 64).

The second category of puberty song, the *ukubhina* songs, is characterized, as indicated by the folk label, by the obscene sexual references in the texts.⁴² The songs are performed by the girl and her age-mates, at night, during the period of seclusion which forms a part of the transition rites. The two most consistent reasons given by informants for the use of such terminology in these songs were that firstly, the songs serve as a form of sex education, in preparing the girl for what is expected of her in marriage; and secondly, that by presenting a fearsome picture of the act of sex, the songs serve to deter the girl from indulging in pre-marital sex, beyond the socially-accepted *ukusoma* intercrural intercourse.⁴³ It should nevertheless be stated that a significant number of my informants refused to attribute any such specific reasons to the singing of *ukubhina* songs, but insisted that it was simply the custom ('*kuyisiko nje*').

The *ukubhina* songs are traditionally accompanied by *ukunqukuza* hand-clapping (in which the hands are cupped to produce a hollow sound), and by the playing of the *ingungu* friction drum, although the *isigubhu* double-headed frame drum is frequently used as a substitute in modern times.⁴⁴ The use of the friction drum is highly symbolic and its use of fertility rites and secret ceremonies is documented for other parts of Africa. Krige states of the playing of the drum as an accompaniment to the *ukubhina* songs that the playing technique, which constitutes placing a stick on the skin and passing the wetted hands alternately down it 'represents the 'milking' of the penis during sex intercourse; the pot-drum (the trunk of an *umsenge* tree which is associated with rain and fertility was used in the old days) represents the vagina or even the womb' (1968,177).

Many of the *ukubhina* songs are delivered in the recitational mode previously described. The choice of the recitational mode for certain genres would not seem to be completely fortuitous. In the case of both the *ukubhina* songs and the *umphendu* wedding dance-songs, the texts are primarily concerned with expressions of astonishment, incredulity or a sense of shock, and the recitational mode appears to be particularly effective as a means of articulating such emotions and conveying them to an audience. The *ukubhina* songs represent one of the few categories of traditional choral music performed without dance.⁴⁵

42. Doke and Vilakazi (1948) list *ukubhina* as 'to use language which modesty would ordinarily forbid, use obscene language, sing lewd songs (as at weddings)'. For a detailed discussion of *ukubhina* songs, see Krige, 1968. *Ukubhina* songs are also performed at ceremonies in honour of the Zulu goddess, *uNomkhubulwana*. The principal significance of the singing of *ukubhina* songs at girls' puberty ceremonies is as a fertility rite. It would seem to be this particular symbolism which is carried across to ceremonies in honour of *uNomkhubulwana*, where fertility of the soil and good crops are invoked. Krige states of the rite in which girls hoe a field for *uNomkhubulwana* (also referred to as '*Inkosazane*' - 'princess'), 'When I heard the songs that were being sung in this ceremony it was suddenly brought home to me that this rite to secure good crops was conceived of in terms of a girl's puberty ceremony, *Inkosazana*, personification of nature, was symbolized as standing on the threshold of summer like a girl at her puberty ceremony, ready for marriage and procreation' (1968, 173).

43. These emic statements pointing to the function of the *ukubhina* songs largely mirror the etic categories identified by Krige on the basis of the content of the songs i.e. 'Songs in which the meaning and purpose of menstruation is made clear'; songs concerned with 'sex intercourse and procreation'; and 'Songs concerned with premarital morality' (1968, 177-79).

44. Previous references to *ukunqukuza* hand-clapping include Krige (1936, 102); Bryant (1949, 546, 554, 650); and Rycroft (1975, 353, 385). Detailed descriptions of the *ingungu* friction drum can be found in Kirby 1934, 26-7) and Krige (1968, 177); and of the *isigubhu* in Kirby (1934, 44-6).

45. Even though I did not witness the *ukubhina* songs being accompanied by dance, I do not rule out the possibility of the songs being accompanied by rhythmic movements which may have been considered too lewd or suggestive for performance in my presence. Krige in fact states, 'Many of the songs are accompanied by dancing or gestures in imitation of the sex act' (1968, 177). My informants, when questioned on the subject, did however state categorically that the songs were unaccompanied by dance. *Ukubhina* songs, unlike other cate-

ii) Wedding songs

The second of the principal rites of passage is that of marriage. In order to understand the inclusion of particular categories of wedding music in a paper devoted exclusively to music performed by women, it is necessary to examine briefly the nature of the marriage ceremony.⁴⁶ The marriage ceremony, *udwendwe*,⁴⁷ culminates with the public celebration on the afternoon of the first of three days of rites. Prior to this, the ceremonies of *umbongo*, the official occasion at which the young man and his age-mates thank the girl for having chosen him, and *ukukhehla*, at which the girl assumes the married woman's headdress, mark significant points in the transition from unmarried to married state.⁴⁸ As mentioned earlier, apart from a small corpus of songs which are specifically associated with the *umbongo* ceremony, these pre-nuptial ceremonies do not occasion the performance of a corpus of songs distinct from that performed at the wedding ceremony proper and will not therefore be dealt with in this paper. The *umbongo* songs generally deal with the subject of *ukuqoma*, the choosing of a husband.

gories of dance-song are metrically heterogenous, which suggests that there is no set pattern of dance-steps performed to them.

46. Krige provides a useful synthesis of early accounts of Zulu marriage customs in Chapter Six of *The Social System of the Zulus* (1936, 120-58). Other significant sources are Bryant (1949, 533-609); Binns (1974, 188-218); Msimang (1975, 250-304); and Rycroft (1975, 358-64); and with regard to related peoples in Southern Natal, Kohler (1933) and Reader (1966, 174-212).

47. The term *udwendwe* is in fact synonymous with *umthimba* in referring literally to the bridal party. Among the meanings listed by Doke and Vilakazi (1948) are 'File or row of people, animals or trees, one behind the other;' and 'Bridal party, company conveying the bride to her wedding'. Braatvedt also refers to the bridal party as '*udwendwe*' or '*umthimba*' (1927, 556). The term is however commonly applied to the holding of the marriage ceremony itself.

48. Past descriptions of the *umbongo* and *ukukhehla* ceremonies are, for the most part, very sketchy. They are included in general discussions of Zulu marriage customs in the sources cited in Footnote 46. The *umbongo* ceremony is not in fact referred to by this name. There is no doubt however that the *umbongo* ceremony described here is the same ceremony as that described by Krige 'by means of which the boys *bonga* or thank the girls' (1936, 123) or the ceremony of '*Ukubonga*' (to return thanks), described by Braatvedt, where 'the young men address the girls and the prospective bride, and thank them for having "chosen" one of them' (1927, 554). Msimang refers to the ceremony as '*Ukubonga intombi*' and provides a particularly detailed account of the ceremony (1975, 239-40). I did not witness the ceremony being performed but informants described the ceremony as one in which the prospective bridegroom and his age-mates meet the girl who has chosen him and members of her age-group at an appointed spot close to the girl's homestead ('*esihlaheni*', '*ehlathini*' or '*entabeni*') in order to officially thank the girls for having chosen him. The prospective bridegroom makes a formal speech of thanks and presents the girls with gifts after which beer provided by both parties is drunk. At the present time, the ceremony is more usually held at the girl's homestead. This is also stated by Msimang '*Namuhla sekubongelwa emakhaya, kanti kuqala izintombi zazihlangana entabeni kubongwe khona*' (1975, 239). I should nevertheless state that informants in the Ntlingwe area provided a very different account of the *umbongo* ceremony. They used the term *umbongo* to refer to a ceremony in which the bride-to-be and her age-mates bring gifts of candles, matches, sweets, blankets and clothing for the bridegroom and his family. The ceremony, which takes place at the homestead of the prospective bridegroom, resembles, in part, previous accounts of the *umbondo* ceremony (see also sources cited in Footnote 43), although no gifts of beer are brought in this instance. My informants, however, when questioned on the matter, stated categorically that the *umbongo* and *umbondo* ceremonies were quite different events. It is not clear therefore whether the *umbongo* ceremony exists in two distinct forms or whether informants in the Ntlingwe area were in fact describing a different ceremony to that known elsewhere as *umbongo*.

The existing documentation of the *ukukhehla* ceremony is particularly scanty, there being little in the way of description of the ceremony. It is only possible here to give a brief account of the ceremony as I witnessed it being performed. On the first day of the ceremony, the mother of the prospective bride sews her daughter's hair into the cone shape, coloured with red ochre, which signifies that she is about to be married, this being the headdress (*isichoto/uhloko*) of married women. Towards sunset on the first day, the bridegroom-to-be and his age-mates (referred to collectively throughout the ceremony as '*abakhwenyana*' - bridegrooms) arrive at the girl's homestead. The young men and women gather together in the hut set aside for them, and sing and dance *ingoma* well into the night. At noon on the second day of *ukukhehla*, both parties (the *abakhwenyana*, and the *inkehli* - the girl who has adopted the married women's headdress - and her age-mates) make their way to the cattle byre for the principal part of the ceremony. The *abakhwenyana* sit at one end of the cattle byre while the *inkehli* and her age-mates perform *inkondlo* and *isigekle* wedding dance-songs at the opposite end. During the singing of the first *isigekle*, the prospective bridegroom, in a moment of great tension and excitement, rushes across to his

The public celebration at the core of the wedding ceremony is conceived of in terms of an elaborate competition of music and dance between the *umthimba* (bridal party) and *ikhetho* (bridegroom's party), in an attempt to assert their solidarity and status as a group, and to gain ascendancy over each other.⁴⁹ Each group performs a set sequence of wedding dances, which provides the internal order in the organisation of the ceremony. In the case of the bridal party, the performance group consists principally of the bride and members of her age-group, together with *amatshitshi*, *amaqhikiza*, *izinkehli* and *omakoti* from among her family and friends.⁵⁰ Male members of the *umthimba* play an active role at the outset of the ceremony when they lead the singing of the *ihubo*, the solemn clan anthem performed as the bridal party begins to advance slowly from the spot where they have been seated (*esihlahleni*) to the dancing ground. The men also sing regimental songs, and pause to chant *izaga* (war-cries) or acclaim each other's praises in the course of proceeding to the dancing ground. While the men do not, for the most part, participate in the programme of wedding songs performed by the bridal party at the dancing ground, they nevertheless intersperse the programme of wedding songs with the shouting of *izaga* and the performance of one another's praises. The wedding songs act largely as a vehicle for the expression of the sentiments of the bride and her age-mates. A survey of the main categories of wedding song performed by the bridal party will illustrate this.

The sequence of wedding songs performed by the *umthimba* consists of the *umgqigqo*, *isigekle*, *inkondlo* and *umphendu* dance-songs, followed by the performance of *ingoma* dance-songs. The term *ukugcagca* is used generically to refer to the performance of the wedding dance-songs by the *umthimba*.⁵¹ The *umgqigqo* is performed as the bridal party approach the dancing ground where they range themselves on the opposite side of the ground⁵² where the *ikhetho* are already seated, with the *amatshitshi*, *amaqhikiza* and close male relatives of the bride in front, *izinkehli* and *omakoti* in a row behind them, and older women at the back.⁵³ During

future bride and removes the white cloth which until that moment has concealed her newly-made headdress, and then pins a R10 note into the headdress. During the ensuing singing and dancing, other *abakhwenyana* and spectators likewise pin money onto the girl's *isicholo*. The ceremony concludes with all the participants partaking of meat and beer. Three beasts are slaughtered in the course of the ceremony. On the first day of the ceremony, the *inkomo yokukhehla* (also *inkomo yenhloko*) is slaughtered, and, on the second day, a further cow, the *inkomo yabakhwenyana*. A goat is also killed on the second day. This is referred to as the *imbuzi yesijingi*, which signifies that *lobola* has been paid, and that the beer for the wedding (*isijingi*) is now ready at the bridegroom's homestead (Krige also refers to the preparation of the *isijingi* once the *lobola* cattle have been fully paid - 1936, 135).

49. There are frequent references in the existing literature to the rivalry between the two parties. Krige states of the marriage celebrations, 'In these the most noticeable fact is the rivalry between the two parties, which culminates in the wedding dances the following day' (1936, 138). Reader explains the rivalry as 'What the dancers of the respective descent groups are asserting in their competitive dancing and songs at the wedding celebration is their coming face to face in the conclusion of an important group contract, each party claiming to be socially more significant than the other' (1966, 200).

50. See earlier explanation of these terms.

51. Rycroft states that the performance of the first sequence of dances by the bride and her attendants is termed '*umgcagco*' or '*umchanguzo*', and that 'Associated verbs *gcagca* or *changuzo* denote the executing of these bridal dances' (1975, 389). Bryant refers to *umgcagco* as the 'wedding dance proper' (1949, 548) and Binns refers to the '*umgcagco*' (wedding dance) 'as the most sacred part of the whole ceremony' (1975, 207).

52. Rycroft records Princess Magogo as stating that the first stages of the marriage ceremony begin with the appearance of the *amatshitshi* who 'start off with an *umgqigqo* dance' (1975, 360).

53. The bridal party remain arranged in this way in the early stages of their performance of the wedding dance-songs. They regroup when the bride and her attendants take their place at the centre of the front row during the latter part of the singing of the *inkondlo kamakoti*. The front row of the *umthimba* then consists essentially of the bride and her age-mates who are chiefly responsible for the remaining programme of dance-songs. Reader also draws attention to the regrouping of the bridal party which he describes as taking place after the speech of

the singing of the *umgqigqo* and one or two *isigekle* which generally follow, the bride and her attendants (members of her age-group) remain concealed in the midst of the bridal party. It is only with the singing of the *inkondlo kamakoti* that the bride and her attendants come into view,⁵⁴ although the bride remains partially concealed behind a large black umbrella through its performance. During this time the rite of *ukwaba* (the giving of gifts of sleeping mats, blankets and pillows) is performed by the bride and her age-mates for the bridegroom's father, mother and mother's co-wives.⁵⁵

The *inkondlo kamakoti* is the principal wedding dance and its performance represents an important moment in a woman's life.⁵⁶ Women treasure all their lives the *inkondlo* with which they were married. Old women, when asked to perform an item of traditional music, generally insist on performing their *inkondlo*, with a vibrato which is no longer a purely stylistic consideration, that is, the *inkondlo* is traditionally sung with considerable vibrato, although this practice is adhered to less by the younger generation.⁵⁷ The text of the *inkondlo kamakoti*, like the *ihubo* clan anthem, is concerned with identifying the lineage in question, generally dealing with some historical incident or important figure in the life of the clan. The *inkondlo kamakoti* is, after the *ihubo*, the most solemn item in the repertory of a clan. A second *inkondlo*, the *inkondlo yomthimba*, is also performed.⁵⁸ The texts generally express the girl's sorrow at having to leave her own homestead, and her

the bride's father, 'the change of formation being occasioned by the fact that the *makoti* must now exhibit herself and dance before the people' (1966, 201).

54. In all the detailed accounts of Zulu marriage customs in the existing documentation, some mention is made of the fact that the bride remains concealed during the initial stages of the performance of the wedding dances by the bridal party. These include Braatvedt (1927, 558-9); Krige (1936, 141-4); Bryant (1949, 548); Reader (1966, 199) and Msimang (1975, 284).

55. Krige refers to the giving of presents on the third day of the wedding ceremony (1936, 151-2), while Reader describes the distributing of gifts on the second day of the ceremony (1966, 207). At the wedding ceremonies which I witnessed, *ukwaba* was performed on all three days of the ceremony, for different members of the bridegroom's family and for his representatives in the marriage negotiations - this is more fully discussed in the main text. Informants also used the terms *ukuhlambisa*, *ukugezisa* and *ukwembesa* or *ukwembatha* interchangeably to describe the giving of presents. Both *ukuhlambisa* and *ukugezisa* refer to the holding of purification ceremonies - Doke and Vilakazi (1948) list as one of the meanings of *ukuhlamba*, 'Observe purification ceremonies, at time of mourning, fighting, etc.', and as one of the meanings of *ukugeza*, 'Purify (ceremoniously after a death)'. Krige states of the rite of *ukuhlambisa* that every gift which the bride gives to members of the bridegroom's family is supposed to have a drop of water spilled on it, and the water is a sign that the bride will 'wash and keep clean all the people of the kraal and their belongings' (1936, 152). Doke and Vilakazi (1948) list *ukwembesa* as 'clothe or cover another with blanket, cloak, etc.', and *ukwembatha* as 'Be covered over (as with a cloak), wear (as cloak, robe, blanket thrown over one)'. The application of these terms as alternatives for *ukwaba* refers to the practice of not simply handing over the presents to the recipients, but of covering them with the gifts of blankets and cloth while the recipients recline on the ground.

56. There are several references to the singing of *inkondlo* in the existing literature (see Plant, 1905, 39; Mayr, 1980, 262; Braatvedt, 1927, 588; Samuelson, 1929, 299, 320, 364; Bryant, 1949, 227; Weman, 1960, 84; and Rycroft, 1975, 360, 389, 399). The information supplied, in the majority of cases, is both brief and fragmentary. Scholars, in the majority of cases, would seem to agree that the *inkondlo* is the principal wedding dance-song. In a few instances, the information presented concurs with my own findings. This includes Samuelson (1929, 164) and Mayr's (1908, 262) description of the style of singing as 'tremulous' and Samuelson (1929, 207) and Binn's (1975, 364) statements that there is no accompanying hand-clapping; also the part of the description of *inkondlo* presented to Rycroft by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi where he states that 'The tempo of the dancing is slower for the *inkondlo* than in the more vigorous *umgqigqo* dances by young girls ...' (1975, 299) and furthermore that 'The gesture of pointing, *ukukhomba*, made first in one direction and then another, is the most important' (1975, 399).

57. See previous footnote.

58. There is some confusion in the past documentation as to the number of *inkondlo* which are performed. Samuelson states that the *inkondlo* (presumably the same *inkondlo*) is repeated three times (1929, 299), while Weman suggests that three successive *inkondlo* dances (it would seem different *inkondlo* dances) are performed (1960, 84). Rycroft on the other hand, records Chief Gatsha Buthelezi as stating, 'A bride has only one *inkondlo*, which is the most important wedding dance-song' (1975, 399). This last statement is true of my own findings

apprehension at what lies ahead. With regard to the musical organization, the *inkondlo kamakoti* and the *inkondlo yomthimba* are characterized by dotted rhythms to which a slow and stately dance is performed. The dance includes a stamping movement which, with the added effect of the ankle rattles worn by members of the *umthimba*, emphasizes the underlying metrical structure of the songs. The dancing of the *inkondlo* is characterized above all by the gesture of pointing, *ukukhomba*, in which the bride points ahead of her with the *isinqindi* (short stabbing spear) which she carried in her right hand. The rest of the *umthimba* likewise point ahead, generally with their dancing sticks which are also held in the right hand. The bride is said to be pointing at the bridegroom (although this is only covertly done) indicating provocatively that it is he whom she has chosen. The gesture of *ukukhomba* also forms part of other dances including the *isigekle* and *umgqigqo* dances. In the *isigekle* dance, members of the performing group point upwards, while in the *umgqigqo* dance, they point from side to side. No particular significance is attributed to the gesture in these contexts⁵⁹ (see Fig. 2).

The *umgqigqo*, *isigekle* and *umphendu*, in contrast to the *inkondlo*, are lively and cheerful dances, accompanied by hand-clapping, stamping and the sound of ankle-rattles. The texts constitute lighthearted teasing of the bridegroom and his family by the bridal party, and the bridegroom's party retaliate in similar vein when it comes to their turn to perform.⁶⁰ Traditionally relations between the two families are difficult and restrained, and there are general forms of avoidance between them. These songs provide a vehicle whereby these traditional barriers are temporarily removed, in a ritualised expression of hostility. Much of the teasing centres around the payment of the *lobola* cattle by the bridegroom's family as is illustrated in the following lines from different *isigekle*. In the first two examples, the bridal party accuse the bridegroom's family of making the marriage payment with cattle which they do not rightfully own, cattle which are the subject of a dispute, while in the third example, the bridal party ask the official representative of the bridegroom's family what has become of the *lobola* cattle, because they have not yet received them.

inasmuch as there is only one *inkondlo kamakoti* which is indeed the principal wedding dance-song. Informants nevertheless made a terminological distinction between the *inkondlo kamakoti* and three other types of *inkondlo*, the *inkondlo yokwaba*, *inkondlo yomthimba* and the *inkondlo yokusina*. In my experience, however, only one other *inkondlo* besides the *inkondlo kamakoti* is performed by the *umthimba* in the course of the wedding ceremony. Hence the presence of a terminological distinction between four types of *inkondlo* was not matched by the actual performance of four separate categories of *inkondlo*. Attempts to clarify the matter with informants proved largely unsuccessful. As the rite of *ukwaba* is performed against the background of the singing of the *inkondlo kamakoti*, one might infer that the term *inkondlo yokwaba* is in fact an alternative term for this category. Similarly, it is likely that the terms *inkondlo yomthimba* and *inkondlo yokusina* both refer to the second *inkondlo* which I witnessed being performed. The second *inkondlo*, most often referred to as the *inkondlo yomthimba*, unlike the *inkondlo kamakoti*, is not particular to individual clans. The texts express matters of general concern to the bride (see description in main text). Both the *inkondlo kamakoti* and the *inkondlo yomthimba* do, however, share the same musical structure and style, and the same sequence of dance-steps is performed in both cases.

59. There are several references to the gesture of *ukukhomba* in the context of the wedding ceremony to be found in past accounts of the ceremony. These include Braatvedt, 1927, 588; Samuelson, 1929, 319; and Rycroft, 1971, 215 and 1975, 399.

60. The singing of insulting songs by both the bride's party and the bridegroom's party has been previously pointed out only with regard to the *ukugqumushela* songs (see Footnote 63). The texts of the wedding songs presented to Rycroft by Princess Magogo (1975, 360-62) do however demonstrate the light-hearted teasing of one party by the other.

<i>Balobola ngazo ziyakhala</i>	They paid <i>lobola</i> with them, they are crying
<i>We nkomo zombango</i>	Hey, cattle of the dispute
<i>Wongilobola ngezinkomo zamandla</i>	You should pay <i>lobola</i> for me with cattle earned through your own labour
<i>Ungangilobola ngezamacala</i>	You should not pay <i>lobola</i> for me with cattle which are the subject of a dispute
<i>Sibuza kuwe mkhongi</i>	We ask you, representative of the bridegroom
<i>Ukuthi inkomo wayibekaphi</i>	Where have you put our cow?
The bridal party may also teasingly hold the bridegroom up to scorn by accusing him of being ugly, or a coward as the following two examples.	
<i>Ubani obengagana lento enjena?</i>	Who can marry a thing like this?
<i>We soka lami</i>	Hey, my fine fellow
<i>Bathi uyinja</i>	It is said he is a dog
<i>Uyinja ngempela</i>	He is indeed a dog
<i>Umkhwenyana wangibheka ekhoneni</i>	The bridegroom is looking at me from a corner
<i>We mkhwenyana ngenzeni?</i>	Hey, bridegroom, what have I done?
<i>Uyatatazela</i>	He is shivering.

The *umphendu* is performed in the recitational mode of *ukuhlabelela*.⁶¹ The song accompanies a particularly lively dance which is always much enjoyed by performers and spectators alike. The dancing file divides into two halves, facing in opposite directions, and, with a stamping dance-step, moves round to form a circle, the leaders of each half eventually coming to confront each other in a moment of great tension and excitement. The term *umphendu*, reflects the revolving movement of the dancing file.⁶² As with the *isigekle*, much of the light-hearted teasing of the

61. There is some conflict here with past documentation as to the folk label for this genre. On the strength of information received from Princess Magogo, Rycroft refers to the dance-song which my informants termed *umphendu* as *isigekle* (1971, 217). My informants however applied the term *isigekle* to a quite different wedding dance-song. I was able to question Princess Magogo about this when I interviewed her during my own fieldwork. She was adamant that the category of song in question was in fact termed *isigekle*. Princess Magogo does however recognise an *umphendu* category of wedding dance-song the performance of which follows on immediately the performance of the *isigekle*, and which appears to be, from the musical point of view, structurally and stylistically similar to the *isigekle* as described by Princess Magogo. Hence both Princess Magogo and my informants apply the term *umphendu* to the same category of song, but use the term *isigekle* to designate two quite distinct genres. Information provided by other scholars on these two categories of wedding dance-song is predictably sketchy. There is some agreement on the general character of the *isigekle* dance. Bryant describes it as a 'lively performance, accompanied by continuous rhythmic and inspiring clapping' (1949, 228), while Krige (using an alternative term for the dance, *isigerre*) describes it as being 'of a quick, spirited nature and accompanied by clapping of hands' (1936, 341). Bryant does however, provide a detailed account of the *umphendu* dance which by and large accords with my own experience of the dance. Bryant describes the *umphendu* as 'a rather pretty and captivating performance' in which the dancers, two abreast, arranged themselves into two columns (sometimes only one), which moved dancing about the field to the tune of a spirited song, intercircling the one with the other, or sometimes approaching each other head-on as though about to clash, when the excitement and amusement would become quite thrilling; but only, at the last moment, turning gracefully about and retracing its steps, or peacefully passing the other by, each continuing in opposite directions' (1949, 288).

62. Doke and Vilakazi (1948) list as one of the meanings of *ukuphenduka* 'Turn, turn over, turn back, turn round, revolve'; and, as one of the meanings of *ukuphendula*, 'Turn round, turn over; cause to revolve'.

bridegroom and his family centres on the payment of the *lobola* cattle, astonishment being expressed by the bridal party at the devious attempts of the bridegroom's family to avoid making the full marriage payment. The light-hearted teasing which characterizes the *isigekle* and *umphendu* song-texts is also a feature of the *ukugqumushela* wedding songs, performed in the very early hours of the morning on the first day of the wedding ceremony, from shortly after the arrival of the bridal party at the bridegroom's homestead (generally shortly after midnight), till dawn.⁶³ The *umthimba* and the *ikhetho* each form a circle in the courtyard of the homestead and simultaneously sing different *ukugqumushela* songs, vying with each other in the loudness of the singing and the vigour of the dancing.

The performance by the *umthimba* at the public celebration of the first day of the wedding concludes with the singing and dancing of *ingoma*, after which it is the turn of the *ikhetho* to perform. While the *ikhetho* only perform on the first day of the wedding, the *umthimba* perform on all three days. At noon, on the second day of the marriage rites, the day on which the *umqholiso* cow is slaughtered, the *umthimba* (principally the bride and her age-mates) advance in single file to the cattle pen (*esibayeni*) where they perform a programme of *inkondlo*, *isigekle* and *ingoma* dance-songs. During the performance of these songs, the bride and her age-mates perform the rite of *ukwaba* for members of the bridegroom's family including the eldest daughter of each of the bridegroom's father's wives, as well as a child of the bridegroom's homestead. The rites performed in the cattle pen conclude with the bride approaching the mother of the bridegroom and asking to be accepted as her daughter-in-law. The bridegroom's mother signals her assent by touching the leather skirt of the bride. The bride and her age-mates then proceed to the courtyard of the homestead where the bride removes her ceremonial attire and gives it to the bridegroom's mother to wear. The bridegroom's mother, accompanied by her co-wives, then performs for the bride the wedding dances with which she herself was married, to demonstrate to the bride that she too is now a married woman of this homestead.⁶⁴

On the final day of *udwendwe*, the day on which the *umeke* goat is slaughtered, the bride and her age-mates once again repair at noon to the cattle pen where they sing *isimekezo* bridal laments. *Isimekezo* are performed with great solemnity and, together with the *ukubhina* songs, are the only categories of women's choral music which are not performed with dance.⁶⁵ During the singing of the laments, the bride

63. Krige uses the spelling, '*qhubushela*' in referring to this category of song (1936, 122), while Braatvedt variously used the spellings '*qubutshela*', '*qubushela*' and '*qumushela*' (1927, 557). My informants, like Princess Magogo (see Rycroft, 1975, 388), were consistent in using only the form *ukugqumushela*. Braatvedt states of this genre, 'The singing known as '*qubushela*' is remarkable on account of its obscene and insulting references to the other party' (1927, 557), while Krige states that in the '*qhubushela*' songs, 'each party grossly insults the other, accusing them of unchastity, witchcraft, and in fact, all the worst things they can think of' (1936, 122). In Princess Magogo's description of the songs (Rycroft, 1975, 359), no mention is made of the presence of obscenities, however, she does state that the two parties 'taunt' and 'poke fun at' each other in the *ukugqumushela* songs. This agrees with my own findings concerning this category, however, some of my older informants did state that, in the past, '*bhina*' (obscene) words were used in the songs, but that this practice had been discontinued latterly.

64. I have been unable to find any previous references to this rite in the existing literature. The rite was nevertheless performed across the whole of the my fieldwork area, and older women (over the age of fifty to sixty) stated that the rite had been performed at their wedding ceremonies too.

65. The *ihubo* clan anthem, performed by both men and women, as is well documented, is also unaccompanied by dance (see Bryant, 1949, 231; Rycroft, 1971, 215; Berglund, 1975, 199). It is notable that the *isimekezo*, *ukubhina* and *ihubo* categories of song are also only performed out of context (e.g. in interview situations) with

and her age-mates perform the *ukwaba* rite for the bridegroom and the bridegroom's representatives in the marriage negotiations (*abakhongi*). A series of aggregation rites are also performed against the background of the singing.⁶⁶ A theme which is continued from the *ingcekeza* songs into particular genres of wedding song, notably the *inkondlo yomthimba* and *isigekle*, and above all the *isimekezo* bridal lament is the girl's desolation at having to leave her home. The texts express her sense of having been abandoned by her father and members of her home as in the lines from the following *isigekle* and *isimekezo* respectively.

Ngona ngani?

Abasangithandi

Ngona ngani kwabendlu yakwethu

What have I done wrong?

They no longer love me

What have I done wrong to those of my home?

Lokhu ubaba kamfokazane

Heya hey

Aniboyilondozo

Heya hey

Here is the father of a poor creature

Alas, alas

Have pity on her

Alas, alas

Neither should one underestimate the girl's sorrow at leaving her home, even though she anticipates this event all her life, and would not choose to do otherwise. In the early years of marriage, a young woman has an unenviable role in her husband's homestead. Subject to the *ukuhlonipha* code of behaviour mentioned

the utmost reluctance, if, indeed, at all.

66. The aggregation rites performed include the rite in which the bride approaches the bridegroom (who is seated in the middle of the cattle pen) and extends towards him her hand in which she holds a number of white beads (generally three). The white beads have previously been removed from the bride's *inhloko* (headdress) by the bridegroom. The bridegroom strikes the bride's hand with his open palm causing the beads to scatter in the cattle pen. The purpose of the rite was described variously as to drive away evil spirits, to bring happiness and success to the marriage and to ensure the fertility of the bride. The colour of the beads symbolizes all that is good. Varying accounts of this rite are provided by Krige (1936, 152), Bryant (1949, 555) and Msimang (1975, 294). The main discrepancy between the different accounts concerns the purpose of the rite and correspondingly the number and colour of the beads proffered by the bride to the bridegroom. According to Krige, the bride holds in her hand three beads, one red, one black and one white. The bridegroom is required to choose (without looking) the white bead indicating that he found the bride a virgin on their first night of sexual intercourse. It is possible that Krige's account represents an earlier form of the rite. My informants were categorical in stating that, in their experience, only white beads were used. Msimang too only refers to the presence of white beads. Linked to this rite is the rite in which the bride approaches the bridegroom with a basin containing water (and, according to some informants, beads). The bride pours the water on, or in front of, the bridegroom, whereupon he jumps up and hits the bride, and a general commotion ensues. According to my informants, the rite is intended to show that the bride is now a married woman of the homestead. Msimang describes a similar rite which he explains as a ritual of purification of the bridegroom - '*usehlambisiwe njalo*' (1975, 294) while according to Krige, the water is a sign that the bride will 'wash and keep clean all the people of the kraal and their belongings' (1936, 152).

A further rite performed against the background of the singing of the *isimekezo* lament centres on a baby boy of the bridegroom's homestead. The baby is first anointed with fat by the bride. He is then pinched by members of the bride's age-group till he cries whereupon he is passed among the women present in the cattle pen to be kissed. The rite concludes with the baby being tied onto the bride's back to be carried by her. The purpose of the rite is to ensure the bride will conceive quickly and that her first-born will be a son (see also Krige, 1936, 152; Bryant, 1949, 556; and Msimang, 1975, 295). The final rite performed in the cattle pen is where the bridegroom's mother smears fat or vaseline onto the bride's back. They then proceed to the entrance of the cattle pen where the bridegroom's mother scrapes off the fat using the short-handled spear that the bride has been carrying during the wedding ceremony, and buries the fat at the entrance to the cattle pen. The purpose of the rite is to inform the ancestral spirits that there is a new member of the homestead in place of the *lobola* cattle which passed through the entrance of the cattle pen, over the very spot where the fat has been buried, on their way to the bride's father (see also Krige, 1936, 153-4; Bryant, 1949, 566; and Msimang, 1975, 295). There are slight variations in the rites as I witnessed them being performed and as described by past writers in the sources cited for comparison. Accounts of the rites in the existing literature are, however, generally far from exhaustive.

previously she is the victim of stringent restrictions on her freedom, in contrast to the carefree days in her father's homestead.

It has only been possible to describe here the principal occurrences of song and dance in the three days of the wedding ceremony.⁶⁷ Nevertheless it is clear that song and dance are the major ingredients of the ceremony as a whole, and consequently must form the focal point of any meaningful study of the ceremony. Attention might also be drawn here to the fundamental importance of the age-group throughout both the puberty and wedding ceremonies. Complete unity of thought and feeling is expressed by the girl and her age-mates in the carrying out of the rites, and in the performance of song and dance. It is the collective expression of the group and not the solitary expression of the individual which is the preferred mode of expression at such rites of passage.⁶⁸

iii) Diviners' songs

Ritual/ceremonial music is also performed by traditional Zulu diviners, the vast majority of whom are women. As Berglund states, 'In theory anybody can become a diviner, but in practice, the overwhelming majority are women' (1976, 136). Zulu traditional religious beliefs are an extension of ideas of kinship. The ancestral spirit cult is based on the belief that a man's spirit continues to live after his death. The 'living dead' as they are described by Mbiti (*ibid.*, 29), or the 'shades' as described by Berglund (*ibid.*, 29) are felt to be as real as the living senior relatives. They continue to be participating members of a particular lineage and to influence the lives of their relatives on earth. The diviners are the temporal agents of the ancestral spirits. Through them, the spirits make known their will to members of their lineage.

The corpus of *izangoma* songs can be divided into sets of songs belonging to particular schools of diviners. Whereas people are vague as to who was responsible for the composition of individual items in the traditional repertory, attributing them

67. There are, in particular, many short chants performed in the course of the ceremony. The best-documented of these chants are the ones which are performed by the two parties during the slaughter of the *umqholiso* cow on the second day of the wedding. The bridal party urges the animal to stay alive as long as possible in order to extract as many forfeits of money from the bridegroom's party, while the latter urges the animal to die as quickly as possible. Hence the bridal party chant '*Inkomo yomntwana/kadade, Ayivuke ayivuke, Ayize ingala phansi*' (Cow of the child/our sister, May it get up, may it never lie down); while the bridegroom's party chant, '*Ayilale inkomo, Ayilale, ayilale*' (May the cow lie down, may it lie down, may it lie down). For a summary of the different references to this chant in the existing literature, see Rycroft, 1975, 399. In addition to these chants, are the chants which mark the beginning and end of the marriage ceremony as a whole. On the arrival of the bridal party at the bridegroom's homestead, several *isaga sabesifazane isaga sabesilisa, isaga somthimba* and *isaga sekhethe* are performed. The *isaga sabesifazane* and *isaga sabesilisa* generally express the joy of the bridegroom's family at the arrival of the bridal party, while the *isaga somthimba* and *isaga sekhethe* initiate at once the teasing of one party by the other, and give early expression to the rivalry which will characterize their interactions over the coming days. The wedding ceremony concludes on the evening of the third day when the bridegroom's mother, or one of her co-wives, throws herself down at the entrance to the bride's hut and feigns death, while those around her chant '*Waf'ugogo, waf'ugogo*' (The old woman is dead). The purpose of this rite is to impress on the bride that she is now a member of this homestead, and will remain there until she is an old woman and dies. On receiving a small sum of money from the bridal party, the old woman gets up to chants of '*Wavuk'ugogo, wavuk'ugogo*' (The old woman has got up). The process is then repeated with a young girl of the bridal party feigning death in the same way to chants of '*Yaf'ingane, yaf'ingane*' (The child is dead).

68. The importance of the age-group in Zulu society has been generally acknowledged by past writers. It would seem fair to say that, if anything, undue emphasis has been placed on the importance of group identity at the expense of that of the individual as in Krige's assertion, 'In Bantu society, it is always the group, seldom the individual, that is important, and it is easy to understand how these age-groups are formed' (1936, 36). The importance of the role and status of the individual, and the existence of a dynamic tension between the individual and the group has received only fleeting attention in the context of praising (see Footnote 85). This is, however, an area which clearly requires further investigation.

in a general way to previous generations ('*obabamkhulu*'), diviners are in no doubt as to the exact source of their compositions and their manner of transmission. The composition of individual *izangoma* songs is attributed to specific *amadlozi* (ancestral spirits), who make the songs known to the particular *izangoma* with whom they are associated through dreams.⁶⁹ Dreams are an important source of revelation in Zulu life and are particularly important as an instrument of communication between the ancestral spirits and diviners.

Music does not constitute an integral part of the act of divination, but music performed by diviners is essentially dance music, performed for their own entertainment, and more importantly, during which the diviners become possessed by the ancestral spirits.⁷⁰ It is in the course of singing and dancing together that diviners come into perhaps the closest communion with the ancestral spirits and this consequently is a central aspect of their activity. Members of the same school of diviners meet as often as possible at one of their homesteads to sing and dance together. The family and neighbours of the particular diviner act as a participatory audience. The singing is led by one or other *isangoma*, who breaks off intermittently to invoke and praise the ancestral spirits, or to recite her own praises. Possession is indicated by the emission of short sharp cries at the back of the throat, a form of vocalisation termed *ukukliwula* or *ukuheyiza*.⁷¹ Berglund also describes a dance performed periodically

69. It is possible to attribute the composition of particular songs to particular spirits because as Berglund states, 'Once it has become clear that a person has been called to divination, it is important to gain clarity on which shades are responsible for the calling' (1975, 138). Thus, if the responsible shades have been identified, it will be automatically known which spirits are responsible for the composition of songs received by particular diviners through dreams. I am aware of only one other source where mention is made of the receiving of songs by diviners in dreams, which is Callaway, H.: *The Religious System of the Amazulu* (Pietermaritzburg, 1870), 273. Krige draws on the same source when she states of the diviner, 'In the middle of the night, when people are asleep, he wakes them up by singing, for the spirits are causing him to compose songs of initiation, and the people of his home have to assemble and beat time to them' (1936, 303). Krige would seem to have been unaware that most diviners are in fact women in that she refers to them throughout the discussion (1936, 299-310) as though they are principally men.

70. Music is not, however, essential to possession taking place. I witnessed on several occasions novitiate diviners become possessed while seated talking in the hut. The music does nevertheless create the right ambiance for possession to occur, and in my experience was the most common occasion on which possession took place. The question of what is understood by 'possession' in the context of Zulu diviners is not clear from the existing documentation. Berglund does not use the term possession but speaks of 'communion with the shades' and of the 'brooding of the shades' (1976) to refer to everyday communication between diviners and shades in the first instance and the presence of the shades at periods of crisis in the second instance. Berglund would not seem to acknowledge a more heightened state akin to trance in which the diviner becomes temporarily possessed by the relevant spirits. It is this specific state to which I refer when I use the term 'possession' when, as one informant described, '*Kukhona into oyizwayo ekuthinta amahlombe*' (There is something which you feel touching you on the shoulders). *Sibisi's* findings would seem to endorse this. She states, 'During possession the spirits are believed to 'ride' on the shoulders of the possessed and to speak or whisper to her. She hears voices and in this way receives her clairvoyant powers' ('Spirit possession in Zulu cosmology' in *Religion and Social Change in Southern Africa*, ed. Whisson, M.G. and West, M., Cape Town, 1975, 50). Krige too does not distinguish between a general state of being possessed, arising out of having received and accepted the call to become a diviner, which she describes at one point as to 'show unmistakable signs of being possessed by a spirit' (1936, 303), and the more specific moments of possession such as described above, the existence of which Krige would appear to acknowledge when, for example, she says of the initiated who has just received a song in a dream 'The initiate therefore sings and dances while the people clap for him, and this noise is beneficial to him for the spirits come down when there is noise' (1936, 306).

71. Doke and Vilakazi (1948) list as the meaning of *ukukliwula*, 'Scream, shriek, shout loudly'. They do not list *ukuheyiza*, but do list *ukuhayiza* as 'Have the Native crying hysteria; rave (as girls who are believed to be affected by charms); be hysterical'. Krige uses the terms *hhayisa'ing* and *ukuhayiza*' (1936, 307) to describe what would seem to be the same form of vocalisation as described here. My informants generally distinguished between *ukukliwula* and *ukuheyiza* on the grounds that, while both terms are used to describe the sound made by *izangoma* when in a state of possession, the term *ukukliwula* could only be used in connection with *izangoma* and signifies a state of intense joy ('*amadlingozi*'), while term *ukuhayiza/ukuheyiza* refers to any form of hysterical crying.

by the novice diviner during the training period leading to her initiation as a diviner. The *'ingoma yokuvumisa'* (confessional dance) is intended to help restore the novice to full health (1975, 151-4).⁷²

The generic term for recreational dance-song, *ingoma*, with the additional qualification *'yezangoma'* (of diviners), is generally used to describe the principal category of *izangoma* dance-song. The *ingoma yezangoma* is performed with a distinctive 'stamping' dance sequence which is the hallmark of diviner dancing. The *isigekle* dance is also performed in the context of divining. The *isigekle samadlozi*, as it is termed in this context, entails the same sequence of dance steps as the *isigekle* performed in the context of the wedding ceremony. This occasions the same metric organisation and rhythmic patterning of the song form, however the texts are quite different in content, and the tempo of the dance markedly slower. The texts of diviners' songs relate to the traditional symbols of their art, including snakes, the ocean, dreams, the state of trance and cattle, and to aspects of the diviners' dress such as gall-bladders and buffalo tails.

A similar theme to that found in the *ingcekeza* songs at puberty ceremonies, and the *isigekle*, *inkondlo yomthimba* and *isimekezo* categories of song at wedding ceremonies, is the diviner's repudiation of her father, in this instance for allowing her to be subject to the trials and tribulations of being a diviner. In order for a woman to become a diviner, her father has to provide the necessary cattle in order that she can be apprenticed to an experienced diviner as a novice. Hence the diviner holds her father responsible for enabling her to answer the call of an ancestor to become a diviner. *Izangoma* songs are accompanied by hand-clapping, and by the playing of the *izigubhu* double-headed frame drum and the *ingungu* friction drum (see Fig.3).

iv) The performance of praises

Attention was earlier drawn to the fact that although *izibongo* (Zulu praise poems) demonstrate the stylistic use of different pitch levels, the acclamation of praises (*ukubonga*) is seen as being distinct from singing (*ukuhlabela*). One might therefore question the validity of including a section dealing with the performance of praises in a paper on Zulu music. The justification for this will be apparent from the ensuing discussion.

The art of *izibongo* has long been acknowledged as the highest form of poetic expression in Zulu traditional society. Past documentation deals primarily with the more developed forms of *izibongo* such as occur in the case of outstanding historical figures.⁷³ As such individuals have, with very few exceptions, been men, praise poetry has been generally regarded as a male preserve.⁷⁴ It is nevertheless note-

72. I did not receive any information about this dance from my informants because I did not have occasion to witness the dance, and, out of ignorance of its performance, did not ask about it (see Footnote 6). From Berglund's description, the dance in no way resembles ordinary recreational diviner dancing, but would seem specific to the dancing of the novice back to health.

73. For a survey of the documented sources of Zulu *izibongo*, see Rycroft, D.: 'Zulu *izibongo*: a survey of documented sources', *African Language Studies*, xv (1974), 55-79.

74. The praise poems of a few royal women have, however, been documented. These include *Mnkabayi kaJama* (sister of Senzangakhona), *Mntaniya kaZingelwayo* (Sibiya clan - grandmother of Shaka), *Nandi kaBhebhe* (Langeni clan - mother of Shaka) and *Mcayi kaVuma* (Myeni clan) - for sources of documentation see survey listed in Footnote 69, p.71. Gunner also draws attention to the praise poems of a further two women, Manchozo, great wife of Phakade of the Chunu clan, and Monase, mother of Mbuyazi, the brother of Cetshwayo (1979, 239, 264).

worthy that the praises of *ordinary* men,⁷⁵ although representing an active and flourishing tradition, have received only scant attention in the literature. This would seem attributable to the fact that much of the documentation of *izibongo* belongs to a tradition in the study of oral literature in which the primary emphasis was on the text as a literary form rather than on function, context or performance, and the praises of ordinary men were deemed too ephemeral, from the literary standpoint, for scholarly concern.⁷⁶

Although little pursued, the performance of ordinary men's praises has nevertheless been generally acknowledged in the documentation as an active tradition in Zulu society. It is not until very recently however, that there has been any recognition at all of the praises of ordinary woman as a performing art in Zulu society (Gunner, 1979). There is nothing in the literature to suggest that scholars in the past were indeed aware of the existence of a tradition of ordinary women's praises.⁷⁷

I have drawn attention to ordinary men's praises as a flourishing tradition in Zulu society because there are close parallels in the composition and performance of the praises of ordinary men and women. There is nevertheless an important difference in function in each case which must be stated. While the performance of both men and women's praises functions generally as a celebration of the individual, men's praises have ritual and ceremonial connotations, while women's praises are of a more clearly secular nature.⁷⁸ The discussion of *izibongo* in a paper on music stems from the fact that, in the case of ordinary men and women, the praises are acclaimed as part of a total performance which includes song.⁷⁹ In the case of men's praises, a man initiates the acclamation of his praises by leading the singing of his *izigiyo*, the chorus of which is sung by his companions. The term *izigiyo* appeared to be used by my informants to refer to both the short chants composed specifically to be performed with *izibongo*, and the songs drawn from the existing repertory

75. By 'ordinary' men, I do not draw a distinction between kings, chiefs and commoners, but rather refer to men, regardless of their position in the social hierarchy, who have not gained any widespread distinction in their lives.

76. It is noteworthy that Cope uses the adverb 'simply' on the occasions that he describes the praises of ordinary men (1968), 'The most primitive type of praise-poem is simply a collection of praises consisting for the most part of single lines or verses' (p. 51). For this reason, the praise poems of ordinary men would seem not to have been truly thought of as poetry, and were largely ignored by scholars in the past. As Cope states (referring to the more developed forms of *izibongo*), 'The Zulu praise-poems cannot be described as simple, however, nor as lacking in linguistic artificiality. Praise composition is consciously an art; there is a conscious striving after literary effect and a conscious effort to attain a richer, a more evocative, a more emotive, and a more memorable use of language. The praise-poems exhibit all the characteristics of poetry' (p. 25).

77. A similar situation would seem to have existed with regard to clan praises which have only recently received detailed attention (Mzolo, 1978, 206-21). Attention has, furthermore, yet to be paid to the praising of the *amadlozi* in the context of the *ukukhuleka* rite during the wedding ceremony (for brief descriptions of this rite see Krige, 1936, 142 and Msimang, 1975, 285-6).

78. There are essentially two formats for the performance of praises, the formal recitation of praises as is done by professional bards in ceremonial settings, and the performance of the praises of ordinary men against the background of the performance of *ukugiya* (see ensuing discussion in main text). The ritual significance of the praises in both cases is partly evinced by frequent references to the ancestral spirits, and by extensive use of cattle imagery. Berglund also draws attention to the ritual significance of *ukugiya*, which as it is always performed with *izibongo*, may be seen as extending to it. Berglund states of *ukugiya*, that the emphasis, at the present time is 'not so much on a supposed enemy as associations with the shades, the slaughter and invocation which accompanied the dance' (1975, 236).

79. This would appear to have been first documented by Gunner (1979, 248) with reference to Zulu women's praises where she states that 'the *izibongo* occur as an element, albeit the focal element in an integrated whole consisting of a background song (*ingoma*) or a short repetitive chant (*izigiyo*) and the dancing of the performer'.

which individuals choose to perform with their *izibongo*.⁸⁰ In performance a man generally begins by leading the singing of the song with which his praises are associated. He brings this to an abrupt end by holding up his hands, and then leads a brisk rendering of the chant with which his praises are associated. This acts as a springboard for the man to launch into a performance of *ukugiya* while his companions acclaim his *izibongo*. The man may then perform a final chant or song, or the pattern may be repeated immediately by another man.⁸¹

Women's praises are performed in a similar manner. A woman, in the company of her peers, begins by leading the singing of her *izigiyo*. In the case of women I found less often both a song and a chant being performed as *izigiyo*. More usually, the acclamation of a woman's praises was preceded by the performance of either song or a chant, again either drawn from the existing repertory, or specially composed for the purpose. The refrain of the *izigiyo* is taken up by the other women present who also supply the accompanying hand-clapping. After a short rendition of her *izigiyo*, the woman concerned suddenly enters into a vigorous display of staccato physical movements, punctuated with expressive and dramatic postures, while her *izibongo* are acclaimed by her peers.⁸² This solo display represents the married women's equivalent of the men's *ukugiya*, a term which my informants often used analogously to refer to the women's display. Sometimes the term *ukugqashula* would be used jokingly to describe particularly energetic and athletic performances. *Ukugqashula* in fact refers to the young unmarried girls' equivalent of *ukugiya* which constitutes a highly virtuosic display of physical prowess.⁸³ There are two basic movements: the first consisting of two hops followed by two quicker jumps landing heavily on both feet; and the second in which the girl leaps into the air, kicking her feet together at one side as she does so. These movements are interspersed with much high kicking of the legs and stamping of the feet. The girls often wear an *imfengwane* (policeman's whistle) suspended on a piece of string around their necks, and accentuate the highly rhythmic nature of their performance with short sharp renderings of the rhythm on the *imfengwane*.

In the case of both ordinary men and women, their *izibongo* consist on average of a set of between five and ten semantically autonomous units of praise. These units may be one or two lines in length. In performance, the individual units of the

80. Gunner applies the term '*izigiyo*' only to the short chants performed in the context of praising - see Footnote 78. In her detailed description of the performance as a whole, however, Gunner makes no reference to the chanting of the *izigiyo* (pp. 243-4).

81. Although the pattern described here is generally maintained, the sequence in which the individual elements are performed may vary in particular instances.

82. Gunner applies the term 'dance' to the physical movements described here (see earlier discussion of the distinction between *ukusina* and *ukugiya* in defining dance in Zulu culture). She states that, during the performance of her praises, a woman dances 'as vigorously and expressively as she can' (1979, 244).

83. The only reference to this term in the existing documentation confirms the findings presented here. Gunner quotes an informant as stating that in her premarriage days on seeing the young men waiting at the river to court her and her age-mates and in response to the young men's performance of *ukugiya*, a girl would 'do the *gqashula* dance and say her praises, while the others (girls) would egg her on and say her praises as well' (1979, 246). Gunner does not provide the original Zulu statement, however it seems likely that the Zulu which is translated as 'do the *gqashula* dance' is simply '*iyagqashula*' (the girl (*intombi*) does *ukugqashula*), and it is Gunner who applies the term 'dance' in the translation. It is possible that Msimang is referring to the same category of performance when he states with regard to the dancing at the *ukwemula* puberty ceremony, '*Emva kokusina inkondlo sekuzosinwa isisuso nesigubho, bese intombi igqashiya ibuyela endlini*' (1975, 247) - (After the dancing of the *inkondlo*, there is dancing of the *isisuso* and *isigubho*, then the girl performs *ukugqashiya* and returns to the hut). It is noteworthy that *ukugqashula* does not exist in a nominal form used in conjunction with the verbs *ukusina* or *ukushaya*, as in, for example, *ukusina inkondlo* or *ukushaya ingoma*.

izibongo may be acclaimed in any order and may be repeated at will. The praises are performed at great speed, with different men or women acclaiming different units simultaneously. The resulting cacophony only serves to heighten the drama and excitement as the performance reaches its climax. In the case of women, the subject matter of the *izibongo* is intensely personal, referring to a woman's character, personality, and the important events in her life.⁸⁴ Thus the texts constitute an important oral testimony in that they present an emic view of a woman's role in Zulu society. References to a woman's sexuality are common in both *izibongo* and *izigiyo*. This may be seen as an attempt by women to come to terms with their sexuality, and to control it by somehow defining it. The texts also function as a release mechanism for the frustrations experienced in courting (in the case of unmarried women), and in marriage.

In a society which is highly group-oriented, the performance of *izibongo* and *izigiyo* would seem to partly redress the balance in acting as a vehicle for focus on the individual. There is nevertheless, in the context of praising, an opposition between the desire of the individual to assert his or her identity, and the dependence on the group for active support in the realisation of this end.⁸⁵ There is, however, a further context for the performance of women's praises, where the individual is responsible for acclaiming her own praises. Women, when singing and accompanying themselves on the *ugubhu* or *umakhweyana* musical bows, intersperse the lines of their songs with rapid renderings of their praises. The evidence for a close conceptual link between bow songs and praising will be discussed shortly. When girls perform expertly on the *isitotolo* (jew's harp) or *umqangala* mouth bow, their praises may be acclaimed by those present.

v) Bow songs

The songs performed by women to the accompaniment of different types of musical bow in Zulu society are significant in that they represent a very personal, individual expression, in which no audience is required, and where the reflective nature of the texts is paralleled in the musical expression. Finnegan points out with regard to solitary performance, 'It is worth remembering these solitary settings, as a counter to the frequent emphasis on the public and community functions of oral literature' (1977, 216).

I came across only one variety of bow being actively played, the *umqangala* mouth bow, an unbraced single-string bow played by girls from early adolescence up to the time of marriage. I also found in Princess Magogo an active player of the *ugubhu*, *umakhweyana* and *isithontolo*⁸⁶ (descriptions of these instruments follow shortly). It was nevertheless apparent from conversation with informants that most women over the age of around forty had played the *umakhweyana* as young unmarried women, and, in the case of older women (above the age of around sixty), the *ugubhu* as well. Having eventually persuaded one of my informants to make an *uma-*

84. For a detailed discussion of the subject matter of Zulu women's praises see Gunner, 1979.

85. Gunner provides a further perspective on the opposition between the individual and the group in the context of praising when, quoting Davidson, she describes *izibongo* as 'a poetic statement of identity, giving expression to the dynamic tension between the ethics of community solidarity and the striving egotism of the individual' (1979, 244).

86. Princess Magogo has previously only been acknowledged as a performer on the *ugubhu* and *umakhweyana* (Rycroft, 1975/6).

khweyana and an *ugubhu* for me, many of my informants were able to perform competently on the *umakhweyana* and a very few on the *ugubhu*. Hence even though the tradition of playing bows had ceased to be active, the techniques of constructing, tuning and playing the bows were clearly remembered, as was, particularly in the case of the *umakhweyana*, the repertory of songs performed to their accompaniment. The performance of the repertory of songs traditionally associated with the *umakhweyana* and *ugubhu* by middle-aged women is, however, something of a travesty, as these are the instruments of the *izintombi* (unmarried girls), and the repertory consists largely of love songs.⁸⁷ When a girl marries and goes to live in her husband's homestead she no longer plays the bows as part of her observance of the *ukuhlonipa* code of conduct. Married women who played the bows for me during fieldwork would often attempt to simulate the vocal quality characteristic of unmarried girls, a narrow, pinched timbre in contrast to that of the married women which is open and resonant. Present-day *izintombi* in the areas of my fieldwork showed little or no interest in the instruments.

The *ugubhu* is a simple bow with undivided string and hollow gourd resonator attached near the lower end of the stave.⁸⁸ The instrument is sounded by being struck with a thin stick or reed. The *ugubhu* is regarded by older women as the classical Zulu instrument for self-accompaniment. The performer makes use of two fundamentals, one produced by the open string, and one by stopping the string by pinching it between the left thumbnail and forefinger. The fundamentals are a tone or semitone apart, and their partials, usually the 3rd, 4th and 5th, are selectively resonated for melodic purposes. This is done by moving the gourd closer or further from the performer's breast, thus opening or closing the aperture in the gourd to varying degrees and thereby altering its resonance frequency.⁸⁹

The *umakhweyana* is a simple bow in which a wire loop divides the string into two sections so as to yield two fundamentals from a whole tone to a major third

87. Kirby describes the *ugubhu* as being usually played by women, and the *umakhweyana* as being played by both sexes (1934, 201, 208). While my informants generally agreed that this had been the case when the instruments were actively played, adult married men in my areas of fieldwork, unlike the women, showed no interest in the *umakhweyana* and there was no evidence to suggest that they had played the instrument as young men. It is furthermore noteworthy that the only active player of the *ugubhu* (besides Princess Magogo) whom I encountered was a man in the area of Ondini who was generally regarded by the local people as being somewhat demented! There is nevertheless, at the present time, an active tradition of young men's love songs performed to the accompaniment of the *udloko*, a single-string bowed instrument, with a tin resonator attached at the upper end of the stave. This would appear to be the same instrument as that described by Kirby as *ubhek'indhlela* (1934, 215, 217). Rycroft states that he did not find any form of single-string instrument played by means of a short friction-bow in the 1960's (1977, 243), however there is no indication given of the extent of the area in which he conducted his investigations. Rycroft does present a description of the Swazi version of this instrument, the *sikhelekehele*, having encountered a performer on the instrument in Swaziland (1977, 243-6). There is also an active tradition of young men's love songs performed to the accompaniment of the guitar and concertina which clearly reflect the principles of musical organisation inherent in traditional bow music. For a discussion of the extent to which the guitar and concertina traditions are rooted in indigenous practice see Rycroft, 1977; and Clegg, J.: 'The music of Zulu immigrant workers in Johannesburg - a focus on concertina and guitar', *Papers presented at the Symposium on Ethnomusicology* (Grahamstown, 1981, 2-9).

Past documentation on Zulu bow songs deals exclusively with the repertory of songs performed by Princess Magogo (Rycroft, 1976, and Rycroft, D.: 'The Zulu ballad of Nomagundwane', *African Language Studies*, xvi (1975, 61-92). The content of the texts of the songs performed by Princess Magogo would not seem to be typical of the repertory of Zulu bow songs as a whole. I collected over a hundred and fifty different songs from women representing a wide variety of different clans, and the vast majority of the songs deal with matters pertaining to love and courtship. Many of the songs performed by Princess Magogo are, however, historical in content.

88. For detailed descriptions of the *ugubhu* see Kirby, 1934, 196-204; and Rycroft, 1975/6, 58-63.

89. For a detailed discussion of the musical structure of bow songs see Rycroft, 1971, 219-223; 1975/6, 63-70.

apart.⁹⁰ A gourd resonator is attached towards the centre of the stave by means of the wire loop. Like the *ugubhu*, the instrument is sounded by being struck with a thin reed or stick, and there is selective amplification of harmonics for melodic purposes by opening and closing the aperture in the gourd to varying degrees against the player's breast. The *umakhweyana* is not considered to be an autochthonous Zulu instrument but is thought to have been borrowed from the Tsonga of Mozambique around the turn of the 19th century.⁹¹ It would seem, however, to have steadily displaced the *ugubhu* in popularity till, by the mid-twentieth century, the *umakhweyana* was used to the almost total exclusion of the *ugubhu* as the instrument for self-accompaniment by young unmarried women.

The *isithontolo* is a composite instrument, where the stave of the bow consists of a wooden central portion (about two inches in diameter), into each end of which thinner curved lengths of wood are inserted.⁹² The string is divided by means of a wire loop attached to the central portion of the stave, into two sections, which are plucked by the forefinger and thumb of the left hand, and forefinger of the right hand respectively. Sung passages, accompanied by the fundamentals of the bow, alternate with instrumental realisations of the vocal line, the mouth being used to selectively resonate the requisite harmonics.

With respect to the folk classification of bow songs, the different categories of songs are labelled according to the instrument of accompaniment. Hence a song performed to the accompaniment of the *umakhweyana* is termed '*igama likamakhweyana*' (song of the *umakhweyana*), or a song performed to the accompaniment of the *ugubhu* may simply be termed '*elogubhu*' (a song of the *ugubhu*). If any one word is used to describe the mood of these songs, it is '*ukubalisa*' to brood.⁹³ At the centre of a young woman's brooding are the joys and sorrows, and the trials and tribulations of love. The songs constitute a very intimate form of expression, the vocal line being performed quietly by the singer to herself so as not to drown the melody produced by the harmonics on the bow. The language used in the song-texts is highly figurative and reflects the literary potential of the Zulu language itself. Not only is there a rich vocabulary, but there is an inherent expressiveness in the way in which it is manipulated syntactically.

The texts of bow songs demonstrate many of the poetic qualities which have previously only been associated with *izibongo* (praise poetry).⁹⁴ There are frequent examples of personification, alliteration and assonance. Personification is easily achieved in the Zulu language by substituting the noun prefix *u-*, the prefix for the personal class of nouns, in place of the initial syllable of the noun prefix of impersonal nouns. A common example in bow songs is the personification of the mountain, a symbol of separation of a girl from her love, where *intaba* simply becomes *uNtaba*. The more popular technique of personification, however, is the derivation of personal nouns from verbs, by inserting the prefix *um-/uma-* before the verb stem. Thus,

90. For detailed descriptions of the *umakhweyana* see Kirby, 1934, 204-210; and Rycroft, 1971, 220.

91. Kirby maintains that the *umakhweyana* was only adopted by the Zulu 'in relatively recent times' (1934, 205). Rycroft endorses this when he states that, according to Princess Magogo, the *umakhweyana* 'is not truly a Zulu instrument, but was borrowed from the Tsonga, of Mozambique' (1975/6, 58). Both Kirby and Rycroft include some discussion of other evidence to support this view.

92. See also Kirby, 1934, 228-34.

93. See also Footnote 31.

94. For a detailed discussion of the poetic qualities of the Zulu praise-poetry, see Cope, 1968, 38-50.

in particular instances the mountain which conceals the object of a girl's affection from her is referred to as *uMasithela* ('the one who hides'); a girl who searches hither and thither for her loved one refers to herself as *uMthalaza* ('the one who peers'); and the young man who is pined for is distinguished by his gait and referred to as *uMagcizela* ('the one who treads heavily').

Alliteration and assonance arise naturally out of the syntactic requirements of the Zulu language. In the following extracts, taken from the texts of two *umakhweyana* songs, the concordial agreement between nouns, verbs, adjectives and possessive pronouns demanded by Zulu syntax gives rise to both alliteration and assonance which are exploited for stylistic purposes.

Zazinhle izindlela ezimhlophe zakhona The white roads which are there are beautiful

*Ngingeluwele lololulwandle*⁹⁵ I cannot cross that ocean
Selwawelwa zinkonjane. Yet it is even now being crossed by swallows

The second example also illustrates the compositional technique of parallelism by linking. Techniques of parallelism have received attention principally in discussions of Zulu praise poetry, and to a small extent in discussions of *imilolozelo*, lullabies and children's game songs.⁹⁶ The extract cited above is an example of initial negative-positive parallelism. Negative-positive parallelism may also be final, as in the following example:

Inhliziyo kayilali The heart does not sleep
Kulala amehlo odwaria The eyes alone sleep

This example also demonstrates the use of metaphor, a figure of speech which occurs frequently in the texts of bow songs with considerable evocative power. The use of metaphor is further exemplified in the following extracts from two different bow songs which evoke the ardour of love and despair of love respectively:

Ngivutha nezikhotha I burn with the long grass⁹⁷

Uthando lwangiphonsa eziweni Love has hurled me onto the cliffs

There is also frequent use of non-lexical syllables to express the yearnings of love which somehow defy description within the normal resources of language. Characteristic non-lexical syllables include '*iya iya iya*', or '*wo yi wo yi wo yi*', or '*iya we mayi mama*'.

95. These lines also demonstrate the adaptation of lines of praises in the texts of bow songs. Compare the following lines from Shaka's praises (Cope, 1968, 116):

'Owalokoth'ulwandle engaluweli He who attempted the ocean without crossing it,
Lwawelwa zinkonjane nabeLungu It was crossed by swallows and white people.'

also, the following lines from the praises of the Mnguni clan (Mzolo, 1978, 219-20):

'Wena wakalulwandle aluwelwa You of the uncrossable sea
Luwelwa zinkonjane It is crossed by swallows
Ezindiza phezulu Which fly above
Abantu abaluweli People never cross it'

96. For a detailed analysis of techniques of parallelism in Zulu praise poetry, see Cope, 1968, 40-45. The presence of techniques of parallelism in *imilolozelo* is mentioned by Rycroft, 1975, 383 (see also Footnote 98).

97. Neither could anyone who has witnessed a grass fire in KwaZulu doubt the strength of the passion which this image is intended to evoke.

The presence of more highly developed poetic language in the texts of bow songs would seem to result from the greater freedom and flexibility which generally accompanies the composition of solo items in the repertory. Choral songs tend to be characterized by short pithy texts which have the obvious advantage of being easily assimilated into the oral tradition. Similarities in the use of language in bow songs and praises may further be interpreted as reflecting a close conceptual link between the two categories. The more significant evidence of such a link, however, is the use of praise epithets and lines of praises as part of the texts of bow songs, and, above all, the very acclamation of praises by women as part of the performance of bow songs. Bow songs, like praises, also function as statements of identity, and as celebrations of a particular period in a woman's life. Particular songs come to be associated with particular women. In a few cases, the women themselves are the composers of the bow songs they sing, and the songs refer to people and events in their own lives.

The *umqangala* musical bow differs from the three musical bows described above in that it is not used to accompany sung performance.⁹⁸ The bow, a simple mouth-resonated bow, generally fitted with a plastic string and plucked with a plectrum, appears at first to be used for the performance of a purely instrumental music. The music, however, in fact represents instrumental realisations of short song-forms. Even though the texts of the songs are not verbalized, they are conceptualized by the performer as she plays. The music provides an interesting example of the way in which a basic theme (provided by the song form) can be developed and subjected to variation in the instrumental realisation.

vi) Lullabies

It is only possible within the scope of this paper to make brief mention of the remaining categories of women's music. The category of song termed *umlolozelo* includes both lullabies sung by women and children's play songs, both of which may be delivered in the 'song mode' as well as the 'recitational mode' of *ukuhlabelela*. The folk classification, in the case of lullabies, reflects the utilitarian role of the genre – the verb, *ukulolozela*, means 'to lull a child to sleep by singing' (Doke and Vilakazi, 1948). The inclusion of children's play songs in this category would seem to be based on formal criteria, in that children's songs share very similar structural and stylistic features, both from the point of view of the musical and textual organization, with lullabies. Both sets of texts, for example, make stylistic use of the pairing of lines using a question and answer technique, and of different techniques of parallelism.⁹⁹ The following extracts from a lullaby and children's song respectively illustrate the pairing of lines using a question and answer technique. The second extract is also an example of parallelism by both initial and final linking.

<i>Ukhalelani?</i>	Why does he/she cry?
<i>Ukhalela unina</i>	He/she is crying for his/her mother
<i>Uyengaphi?</i>	Where has she gone?

98. For a detailed description of the *umqangala*, see Kirby, 1934, 220-25.

99. Rycroft states with regard to the texts of *imilolozelo*, 'Lines are often paired, in the form of question and unexpected answer. Parallelism by linking, a technique which is common in *izibongo* praise-poetry, frequently occurs. This is either employed quite logically ... or it may be used in a facetious way, with unexpected puns and twists of meaning ...' (1975, 383).

<i>Uyogeza</i>	She has gone to wash
<i>Uyogezani?</i>	What has she gone to wash?
<i>Isidwaba</i>	The leather skirt
<i>Ubhece muni?</i>	What kind of pig melon fruit?
<i>Ubhece mkhuphe</i>	The pig melon fruit, fowl lice
<i>Mkhuphe muni?</i>	What kind of fowl lice?
<i>Mkhuphe nkuku</i>	Fowl lice, fowl
<i>Nkuku yini?</i>	What kind of fowl?
<i>Nkuku qanda</i>	Fowl, egg
<i>Qanda lini?</i>	What kind of egg?
<i>Qanda muntu</i>	Egg, person ¹⁰⁰

It is in the content of the texts that the two forms of *umlolozelo* differ. The texts of lullabies may be directed specifically at the child, but may also be concerned with matters of topical interest. In each case, the text as a whole generally makes good sense. Children's songs, however, show little overall coherent meaning, although individual lines or pairs of lines may be semantically autonomous. Skill in word-play would seem to be the more important consideration.

vii) Work songs, drinking songs and dance songs

The only category of women's work song which I encountered among my informants was weeding songs. The folk classification '*elokuhlakula*' (a song) of weeding), reflects the single most important aspect of the genre, its use. This is also true of the folk classification of drinking songs performed by married women, any single item being labelled first and foremost '*elokuphuza*' (a song) of drinking). Weeding songs and drinking songs are often used interchangeably. The texts, in each case, may deal with matters more directly related to the pursuits in hand. They also concern matters of more general topical interest. Drinking songs also function simultaneously as dance-songs in that, during the singing of drinking songs, women will, if they so desire, get up and dance. It is the *isigekle* dance which is performed to drinking songs, nevertheless a drinking song is referred to as '*elokuphuza*' and not *isigekle*. One does find older married women performing the *isigekle* wedding songs that were popular in their youth as contemporary drinking songs and where this occurs the terms *elokuphuza* and *isigekle* are used interchangeably to describe the category.

Married women also perform *ingoma* dance-songs in the context of drinking. In this case even though the dance-songs function simultaneously as drinking songs, it is their role as dance-songs which is paramount and hence they are referred to as *ingoma* and not *elokuphuza*. This would seem to be another example of the term *ingoma* being used generically to refer to a category of recreational dance-song in that there are distinct differences in the musical organisation of these songs and the *ingoma* dance-songs proper performed by young men and unmarried girls. There are nevertheless similarities in the dance performed in each case. Married women perform a more restrained version of the *ingoma* dance performed by young men and girls. The basic movement of kicking up the legs and stamping the feet are main-

100. This text is also an example of the type of *umlolozelo* text which shows little overall coherent meaning (see ensuing discussion in main text). It constitutes a play on words based on free association.

tained, however the legs are not kicked very high and the movements are interspersed with other more improvisatory dance-steps of a highly expressive and often somewhat suggestive nature.

Conclusions

Several points emerge from this paper. Firstly, there is undoubtedly a distinct corpus of music in Zulu culture performed traditionally by women. It has only been possible, within the scope of this paper, to scratch at the surface of the vast amount of fascinating data which I collected on the subject. The importance of the emic perspective in drawing up a taxonomy of Zulu music needs no further endorsement. The folk classification of the different genres of music in Zulu society clearly affords the deepest insights in the significance of music in Zulu culture. The importance of the etic perspective comes at the level of analysing the musical structures and relating them meaningfully to Zulu social organisation and the Zulu world view. It is in a fusion of the emic and etic perspectives that the potential for a true understanding of Zulu music lies.

Secondly, it is abundantly clear that music and dance are inextricably linked in Zulu culture. Apart from the *ukubhina* songs and *isimekezo* songs, all the choral music performed by women is accompanied by dance. Music and dance furthermore serve as the basis of organisation of all major ceremonies. The relationship between music and dance in Zulu culture has been pointed out but little explored. Krige states, 'The dance is in most primitive societies an important factor in maintaining the sense of group solidarity. Among the Zulus, we find dance whenever it is important to have social harmony at a high pitch - before a battle, at weddings, and at all the important transition ceremonies marking entry into a new group.' (1936, 336).

Finally a principal concern of any study of the music performed by Zulu women must be to provide an increased insight into the role of women in Zulu society - a little-explored area. The music performed by Zulu women undoubtedly serves as a principal vehicle for the expression of their aspirations and expectations, frustrations and tensions, joys and sorrows, and values and beliefs. It would, in fact, seem a sound hypothesis to suggest that the performance of music by Zulu women constitutes the single most important source of information as to a woman's role in Zulu society.

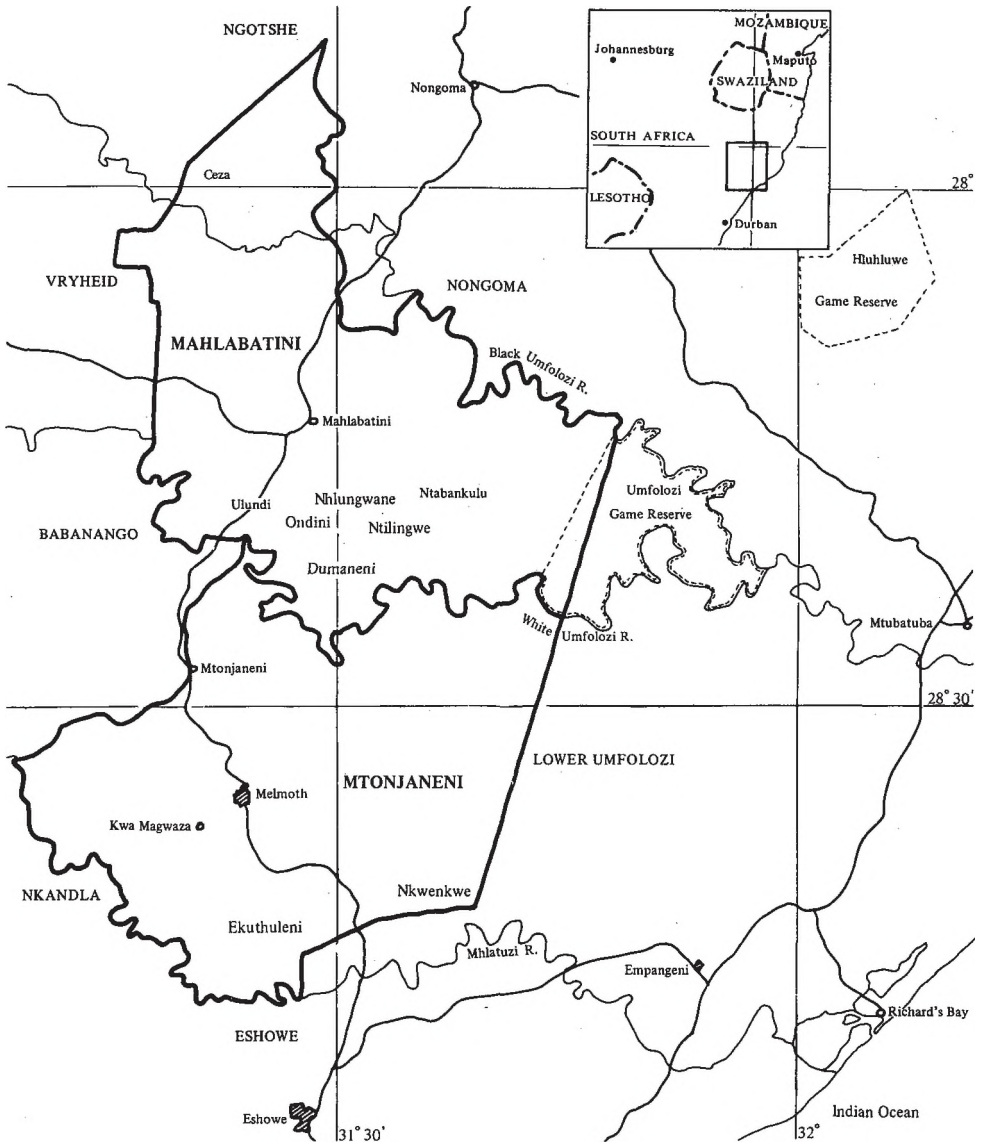
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Fig. 1. The dancing of the *ingcekeza* dance at the *ukwemula* girls' puberty ceremony. The girl for whom the ceremony is being held wears, over her shoulders, the *umhlwehlwe* (sheet of fat covering the intestines) of the beast slaughtered in her honour, and has money pinned onto her hair. The girl and her principal attendants carry *imikhonto* (long-handled spears).



The Mahlabatini and Mtonjaneni districts of KwaZulu.

Fig. 2. The gesture of *ukukhomba* during the performance of the *isigekle* dance by the *umthimba* at the wedding ceremony. The bride is dressed traditionally with a leopard skin (*isikhumba sengwe*) around her neck, a veil of beads (*imvakazi*) covering her face, feathers of the long-tailed black finch (*iminyakanya*) in her head-dress (*inhloko*), and white ox-tails (*amashoba*) around her arms and legs. In addition, the bride carries a short-handled spear (*isinqindi*) in her right hand and a shield (*uhawu*) in her left.



Fig. 3. The performance of *izangoma* dance-songs to the accompaniment of the *isigubhu* double-headed frame drum and the *ingungu* friction drum.