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ABSTRACT

Music-Making of the Xhosa Diasporic Community: A Focus on the *Umguyo* Tradition in Zimbabwe

This dissertation is an ethnographic study that focuses on the music of one of the Xhosa ethnic groups, the Mfengu who are settled in Zimbabwe. Taking into consideration that the bulk of the Xhosa ethnic group is situated in South Africa, predominantly in the Eastern Cape Province, I consider the small group of Xhosas in Zimbabwe as a diasporic community. While much has been written on the music of South African Xhosas, ethnomusicological scholars have paid insufficient attention to this group. When this group left the homeland, South Africa, it did not leave its musical traditions behind. One such tradition is the *umguyo*, the boys' circumcision ceremony. My major intention therefore was to find out how this diasporic group makes music for the *umguyo* tradition. By closely analysing the lyrics of the *umguyo* musical repertoire, I discovered that the Xhosas in Zimbabwe archived their history in the song lyrics. Even though the majority of creators of this music have lived and departed, the constant performance and general continuity of this musical tradition assures both the present and future generations of a firmly established source for their identity. Looking at the lyrics once more, I found out that the Zimbabwean Xhosa music-making reflects on gender issues. I state that while Zimbabwean Xhosa men enjoy their patriarchal benefits, through music, women are socially taught to conform to stereotypical gender roles in their society. Thus, Zimbabwean Xhosa women, through their song performance, declare themselves as commodities for Xhosa patriarchy. In addition, this enquiry demonstrates how this diaspora community has deviated from the common way most diaspora communities make music. I mainly attribute this divergence to the 'dominant/subject' or 'master/subordinate' relationship that existed during the colonial period.