Mapping Cultural Policy in South Africa: Reflections from an Ethnomusicologist

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I step into the back garden of a home located in Mamelodi, a township outside of Pretoria, South Africa, where there are some two dozen women waiting for me to lead them through an entrepreneurial training workshop. The ages of the women attending range from teenage to elderly. Some mothers and grandmothers bring their children and grandchildren, who, sitting on laps or kneeling nearby, are surprisingly quiet throughout the workshop. Two mothers sit towards the back where they breastfeed their newborn babies.

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I am one of several facilitators asked to lead workshops in Mamelodi on entrepreneurism in the cultural sector. There are six workshops in total, with the expectation that at the end of the workshops the women will be prepared to enter the cultural sector, be it through self-employment or permanent work with an arts-based company or organisation. At my workshop, I am charged with the task of leading the women through a series of facts and figures regarding how civic engagement in the sector can play a crucial role in ensuring change within the sector and a stronger gender balance of power in society. During the workshop, I outline some of the typical factors that may inhibit equal civic participation by women, including limits of time due to household responsibilities and childcare. I also share examples of how women can participate in civic engagement, from joining a blog to attending public meetings organised by their civic council. Although the women listen intently, the workshop is also recorded, the taped meeting left with the local organiser of the group so that participants can re-watch the workshop when and if needed.

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Afterwards, I meet with the women individually to discuss civic engagement, prepared to offer more personal support and advice during our one-on-one meetings. I quickly learn that these women have joined the workshop out of genuine hope and need for economic empowerment. Without exception, they live in severe poverty and these workshops, as one woman put it, 'are my ticket to a better life.' The women in attendance are willing to work hard, willing to dedicate themselves to the workshops.

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My advice regarding civic participation, as becomes quickly apparent during the one-on-one meetings, falls short. To contribute to a blog, the women must have access to the Internet as well as a computer or mobile phone that connects them to the Internet. Many of the women I speak with that day, however, admit that they have never participated in internet activities and are apprehensive to start; others point out that WiFi is not accessible where they live and purchasing data for their phones, required to enable internet capability, is simply out of the question due to it being too expensive. The suggestion that they join on or create

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a blog became even more nonsensical when I learned that most of the women attending the workshop were illiterate: they were unable to read or write.

The facilitators leading the other workshops for these women faced similar challenges of relevancy. Most poignantly, the facilitators neglected to take into account the informal cultural sector, where most—if not all—of these women would most likely assume employment. The advice offered the participants on accessing government funds to establish their businesses or on filing taxes as business-owners, as was offered at the workshops, therefore emerged largely inconsequential.

The experience pushed me to reconsider the role of the cultural sector in South Africa, as well as the country's position on cultural policy. I had come into the workshops with a state-mediated definition of both. As I soon learned, however, in South Africa the cultural sector and cultural policy are actually more distributed, less easy to identify in state policy, and, certainly, less readily attached to flows of state capital. As a result, the terms 'cultural sector' and 'cultural policy' emerge complex, springing in my case from an arguably Western imagination of statecraft that deserved more careful consideration, particularly when viewed from within a post-colonial country like South Africa.

The questions follow, then, as to how to make sense of what we might want to term the 'cultural sector' and 'cultural policy' in South Africa. Or, as asked in this article, are there ways in which we can nonetheless talk about cultural sector and cultural policy that bring productive and critical narratives to bear on both the North American and European definitions and the productive outcomes of how cultural sectors and cultural policies may be mandated elsewhere? This article, in line with those questions, discusses the complexities of what might therefore problematically be termed cultural sector and cultural policy in South Africa, focusing on my role as one of the facilitators in a two-year entrepreneurial training programme (2012-2014) organised for the purpose of strengthening that country's cultural sector. This paper recounts those experiences and, in the process, introduces ethnomusicology as a more radical and connected space for conducting applied work. It also suggests new forms of engagement, and indicates ways to respond to global social, economic and political challenges. Although not a cultural policy scholar, I write this article in the hope that my experiences may resonate with discussions on cultural policy in and outside South Africa, and, as stated previously, that my experiences may serve as encouragement to other ethnomusicologists looking for ways to apply their research toward human and economic development.

A variety of approaches have been used to compile the research for this article. Published and unpublished research reports and scholarly writings with relevant information on policy-making in and outside the cultural sector were sourced. Quantitative and qualitative research was also conducted with individuals as well as organisations (NGOs and NPOs) involved in South Africa's cultural sector. Questionnaires were distributed, and key stakeholders were formally interviewed individually and as part of focus-group discussions (focus-groups ranged from three members to 26 members).

Complexities of Cultural Policy-Making

A study into the complexities of cultural policy-making in South Africa must begin with an examination into the intricacies of terminologies, which themselves convey certain imaginaries that do not necessarily fit an African context. The term 'cultural industry', for example, adopted in 1997 by the UK government, was sought as a way to discuss the different activities pursued by the then newly elected Labour administration. The following explanation was provided for the term: 'Those activities that have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the general exploitation of intellectual property'.[1] This UK definition marked a shift toward the commodification of cultural products, and established the notion that the cultural industry could prove important to the growth of an economy. 'The creative and media industries world wide are growing rapidly', the Labour Party proclaimed. 'We must grasp the opportunities presented'.[2]

The act of policy-making in the cultural sector, however, proved a complex process in the UK (and elsewhere). What criteria should be used in ascertaining which cultural forms and practices should receive public subsidy? How can 'quality' be judged in regards to culture? In answering these questions what emerged was a hierarchy of 'high' and 'low', with popularised cultures or commercially produced practices immediately relegated to 'mass or low culture'.[3] This high/low distinction came to characterise genres and audiences; was often based around classifications of age, class, gender and race; and '[has] always been a means through which certain idealised versions of national identities were actively promoted, or indeed contested'.[4]

In a country like South Africa, where notions of difference and hierarchies of high/low culture were a mainstay in the country's historical recognition of White superiority, acts of policy-making in the cultural sector proved particularly troublesome. Classifications of apartheid had systematically promoted Afrikaner culture. Black traditions were notoriously placed at the bottom of a high/low hierarchical arc, while Coloured communities were perceived as having no cultural legacy at all [5] An increased number of NGOs, NPOs and private companies were organised in South Africa during the 1980s for purposes of promoting and selling traditional products. Yet, as may be surmised, during apartheid these organisations and companies were White-owned, with 'government policy on culture [favouring] arts and culture associated with the white minority, placing great emphasis on monumental, Afrikaner or European heritage resources and using cultural difference as the political basis for ethnic separation' [6] While the venture of selling traditional items proved lucrative for these White-owned organisations and companies, Black would-be entrepreneurs continued to struggle, 'operat[ing] at bare survival levels'[7]

Modern South Africa continues to struggle with its apartheid past: it remains segregated, and race and ethnicity still are primary indicators of opportunity. The Western-based policies that extend and even reinforce definitions of high and low culture continue to problematize post-apartheid South Africa. Black artists in the country point specifically to funding schemes within the cultural sector as a point of contention, which, they argue, continue to disenfranchise artists of colour. As one visual artist from Johannesburg complained during a training workshop in 2012, 'In South Africa, if you want to be a working artist, there is a

canon you must follow. There are expectations of how to draw, what to paint'. 'Blacks are expected to follow a certain aesthetic. It goes against our artistic freedom', adds another artist who is standing nearby. 'Artistic freedom?' asks another artist. 'What's that? It doesn't exist in South Africa'.

Closer examination into South Africa's cultural sector reveals how the Department of Arts and Culture supports a national cultural policy that endorses privileged art forms and generally funds the more prominent cultural institutions and organisations across the country[8] All the while, the more marginalised communities across the country—be it in the city centre, the rural areas or the townships—are 'in a state of chaos, degeneration, decay and decline'[9] their cultural activities 'neglected by the national policy'[10] **13**

Further complicating this transference of a Western cultural policy to South Africa is the definition of culture itself, which is very different in South Africa than it is in the West. Ideas of culture infiltrate the everyday in South Africa, connecting the personal life with the community, and linking work life with recreational activities. In fact, as H.C. Roodt argues, 'societal transformation, freedom, justice, peace and development cannot avoid an encounter with 'culture' in South Africa, which distinctly separates it from the West'.[11] Adopting policies that are based on fundamental perceptions of culture that do not necessarily translate outside of the West has led to further challenges in South Africa regarding cultural policy-making.[12] **14**

There were attempts to initiate a more inclusive and African-centred cultural policy following apartheid. *The Arts and Culture White Paper*, for example, was drafted in 1996, which, among its varied goals, sought to institute better equity across the cultural sector. Despite its best intentions, it was met with little success. Larger, urban-based businesses were funded, while rural entrepreneurs— the majority of which were Black—were ignored.[13] There have since been repeated attempts to revise the policy, but as Harriett Deacon reminds us, '[p]olicies, like histories, are often used as rhetorical devices for blame or justification, charters for action and foci for expressing allegiance'.[13a] Sometimes they are 'designed to win elections, appease supporters and even opponents'.[14] Since the drafting of *The Arts and Culture White Paper*, cultural policy reform has been placed 'on the proverbial back burner'[15] leaving Black-owned businesses in the cultural sector to struggle.[16] **15**

Although the post-apartheid administration may have voiced concern about 'a national cultural policy that promotes elite art forms and supports high-profile cultural institutions and organisations'[17] there remains a lack of 'specific strategic role[s] that might put cultural resources to strategic use in community development'[18] As a result, more impoverished areas, including the city centres, townships and rural regions, where the majority of Blacks live, continue to struggle to join the cultural sector. As Deborah Stephenson writes, 'Although the "charter" of national cultural policy is to ensure the nation is able to represent itself to itself and to the world, it has never been responsible for nurturing (regulating) everyday ways of life to the same extent as local government, and it has a relatively small part to play in dealing with cultural activity as it is lived 'on the ground'.[19] **16**

When I first became involved in organising and running an entrepreneurial
training programme for women and youth in South Africa, I, along with the others
involved in the project, had assumed the official stances of the United Kingdom
regarding policy-making and policy-change. We looked to strengthen South
Africa's cultural sector by following a top-down, state-centric idea of what
constitutes both 'culture' and 'policy.' Our decisions regarding the training
content and objectives were driven by authoritative decisions 'centrally located'
by actors 'seen as the most relevant to producing the desired effects' [20] including
the European Commission, which funded our training programme. Yet, during
the two-year programme it became increasingly clear that South Africa's cultural
sector works within highly localised spaces that exist comparatively separate
from, and sometimes in conflict with, such narratives. It moved in much more
organic ways than we had previously thought—or were prepared for.

Applying Ethnomusicology to Cultural Policy

Increasingly, ethnomusicologists are becoming more involved as instruments of
change in the communities that they study [21] They are continuing to recognise
the transformative possibilities behind their role as ethnographers; and, moving
their work and subject matter away from more standard academic settings, ever
more ethnomusicologists are taking on the role of activist. A discipline called
'applied ethnomusicology' has emerged as a result. So influential and popular
has this sub-discipline become, the International Council for Traditional Music
(ICTM) established an applied ethnomusicology study group in 2007, which
came up with a definition for the sub-discipline that remains widely used:

> Applied ethnomusicology is the approach guided by principles of social
> responsibility, which extends the usual academic goal of broadening and
> deepening knowledge and understand toward solving concrete problems
> and toward working both inside and beyond typical academic contexts.[22]

My own involvement in applied ethnomusicology, like many other
ethnomusicologists, was not planned. Instead, I was drawn into it, pulled in by
the intricate complexities behind cultural policy-making in South Africa and the
genuine wish to make a difference. South Africa's approach to cultural policy,
having been shaped and reshaped by and through European mandates,
unsurprisingly exists within frames of unequal power relations. In speaking with
local community members, many of whom found it difficult to participate in the
cultural sector as it currently stands, I was provided with a rich ethnographic
investigation that disclosed the many competing local and national narratives
when it came to cultural policy-making. While examining the nature and
effectiveness of South Africa's cultural policy I became involved in the hopes and
dreams of different communities who saw the cultural sector as a sort of saviour,
a vehicle through which community members could gain employment and
assume self-empowerment.

I joined forces with a South African-based NGO and a South African- and
Zimbabwean-based consulting firm to apply for European-based funding to
develop and run a training programme in the cultural sector, targeting the poorer
areas of the Gauteng and Eastern Cape provinces (including rural areas and
townships), devising our programme around the needs of women and youths

(young men and women). I joined the programme because I felt I could offer particular expertise as an ethnomusicologist. I have been trained in empirical research and analysis. Ethnomusicology, which places the researcher at the centre of the data collection process, encourages close relationships to develop between the researcher and research participants. The information that is gleaned by the ethnomusicologist, as a result, is often deeply personal and hidden to cultural outsiders; the data collected may be difficult—if not impossible—to acquire without these qualitative research methods. It is an approach to research that enables particular insights into those communities seeking to join the cultural sector.

Strengthening the cultural sector as a strategy for supporting human development must begin with a clear assessment of community needs. Only then can there emerge a plan of action that directly addresses those needs [23] Strategies for strengthening the cultural sector too often do not link with the particulars of the community to which the sector is connected; unsuitable for the community and the cultural infrastructure of that community, the strategies in the end fail [24] Despite this important link between the sector and community, the relationship between them is rarely discussed; and is even more rarely approached by ethnomusicologists. Yet, it is ripe for an analysis, to which ethnomusicology can contribute. The research gleaned through ethnomusicology helps to expose ways to mobilise communities around goals of strengthening and diversifying the cultural sector, and it identifies some of the barriers that may prevent community members from taking an active part in the cultural sector. Ethnomusicology places the cultural considerations of a community at its forefront. By bringing these considerations to the forefront, the task of strengthening the cultural sector can be better supported.

Because the cultural sector does not exist in a vacuum—it lives in, by and for the community—it is always in motion, constantly evolving and changing, adapting and transforming to meet the fluctuating social, political, cultural and economic needs of the community. It therefore can serve as a useful framework for ethnomusicologists studying human engagement: a close reading of the cultural sector and the community reveals just how interconnected they are to general human development. The ethnomusicologist, well equipped to uncover, examine and analyse the inter-workings of these overlapping and diverging structures of the community, can offer insights into the community context within the cultural sector, as well as what follows from it (which other researchers may overlook). The research conducted through ethnomusicology can unpack how the cultural sector and community come together to encourage social inclusion, community building and civic empowerment. Because the sector has the capability of strengthening a community, while also promoting civic involvement and ownership, a study into the cultural sector and community can easily move toward activism. Researchers on such a study have the ability not only to initiate a clearer understanding of community; they can also make critical contributions to issues of equal human rights and sustainable community growth. The ethnomusicologist, already trained to examine culture beyond frames of entertainment or personal enlightenment, is equally equipped to analyse the direct and indirect impact that the cultural sector has on community; that culture can drive the economic and social development of a community. By capturing the relationships between culture and economic growth, community and sustainable development, and cultural expressions and social inclusion, the

ethnomusicologist can emerge as a vehicle for change.

The ethnomusicologist can also bring to the study her useful skills of interpreting policy documents alongside the interview data conducted with the community members themselves. The complicated links between local debates and national perspective emerge more clearly as the ethnomusicologist pulls apart cultural policy-making and unveils ways to ensure it better supports community needs. There is definitely a need to examine more closely how cultural policy-making works (and does not work) at local levels; and it is important to view the strengths and weaknesses of cultural policy in order to uncover where additional efforts could most viably benefit the community. The ethnomusicologist can offer such insights.

The rest of this essay provides an outline of the insights I gleaned from my involvement in the training programme in South Africa. I introduce an informal cultural sector that is intertwined with the everyday, with the local stakeholders from the neighbourhoods and the communities presented as the unofficial policymakers on the ground. As we shall see, South Africa's cultural sector challenges North American and European paradigms as well as the presumptions I held at the start of this training programme. The analysis points to the need to define and develop frameworks for a creative economy that better highlights and better recognises the peculiarities of post-colonial countries.

Recognising South Africa's Informal Sector

Official policies more broadly generally support authorised practices; they are distributed through government-approved sites and may be viewed as 'normal' and at least expected. Unofficial policies, in contrast, mark the unauthorised practices of a community, and are distributed through more localised and even censured sites. Given that our training programme was funded by a European organisation, it is somewhat expected that our initial activities would be organised around more official structures regarding policy, with me and my partners, to a certain extent, imagining policy invested in an orderly regulation of society. However, as was soon learned, such an emphasis failed to recognise the scope of the more unofficial sites of the sector.

Informal activities of Black South Africans were carefully controlled during apartheid. The 'Groups Areas Act, harsh licensing, strict zoning regulations and effective detection and prosecution of offenders [along with]…[b]outs of slum clearance and other periodic attacks on the illegal spaces within which informal enterprise thrived, served to rid South African cities of Black-dominated informal sector niches that were construed as hazardous to public health and stereotyped as unsightly and unsanitary' [25] With the end of apartheid, however, many such measures of control were lifted; and 'employment in the informal economy more than doubl[ed]' in Black communities.[26]

Although the informal and formal economies of the cultural sector were largely separate during apartheid, today there exists considerable overlap between the two. Formal employment, for example, is elsewhere often defined as 'long-term', and informal employment as temporary. Yet, such distinctions are not so clear-cut in South Africa. Many of the training programme participants with whom I

worked joined the informal cultural sector as a *lasting* solution both to the high unemployment rates in the country and to the difficult commutes into the city expected for formal employment. Those who lived in townships outside Johannesburg, for instance, complained that travelling just one way into the city took several hours, not to mention frequent changes of bus or taxi; they also raised concerns regarding the cost of the journey, which, for some, made the choice of seeking formal employment in the city impossible.

Distinctions between formal and informal sectors further blur in regard to registration: formal businesses are defined as those that officially register their trades, while informal businesses do not. Yet, as Ray Bromely asks, what happens 'if an enterprise is required to have six official permits, for example, but only has five, should it be considered informal even when the sixth derives from a moribund regulation that most entrepreneurs ignore?' [27] Contractual agreements (or lack thereof) also complicate differences between informal and formal. As queried by the *World Bank*, where do individuals who are employed domestically or are paid in-kind fit? Are they part of the informal or formal sector?[28]

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In South Africa, the informal sector is not only difficult to define but attempts to estimate its size also prove problematic. According to the *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*, the cultural sector is one of the fastest growing informal economies to emerge across the continent of Africa, where no less than 70-95% of creative artists work. The actual size of the informal sector in South Africa, however, varies according to statistical study[29] Yet, what seems clear is that the cultural sector dominates the country's informal economy [30] and it exists largely under the radar of statistical estimates and outside effective planning and management legislation [31] The informality of the sector is made apparent in the many street activities that have developed across South Africa's cities and rural areas such as flea markets and street traders and in the numerous home-based enterprises that have formed, which have given rise to bakeshops and seamstress shops opening in private homes. It became apparent that, if the objective of strengthening the cultural sector was to be successful, the informality of the sector must be embraced; the 'unofficiality' of the sector must not only be acknowledged but also accepted as an essential driving force in South Africa.

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In embracing this informality, views on cultural policy must shift. Earlier top-down perspectives are essentially replaced with bottom-up interpretations, which better reflect the working lives of the programme participants. This includes: the women who sell their handicrafts at busy intersections in their neighbourhoods; the men who perform dance routines outside shopping malls for tips; and the teenage buskers who regularly stand outside upscale hotels, singing to their own guitar accompaniments for small change. These are the actors of South Africa's growing cultural sector with whom I met and worked. By viewing them as active members of the cultural sector, I gain an understanding not only of the wide range of entrepreneurs that exist in South Africa, but also of the benefits that this bottom-up approach can provide general policy-making strategies.

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As discovered from the start of the training programme, to examine the informal cultural sector in South Africa is also to draw attention to women workers; it is they who comprise the majority of the sector. Many sell goods from their homes;

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others work as street vendors. Because much of the informal cultural trade and services is omitted from official records and statistics, the data on the exact number of women workers is also unknown. However, it is agreed that Sub-Saharan Africa has one of the world's highest rates of informal employment, specifically among women.[32]

This large number of women working in the informal sector is common to Africa, Anita Spring argues [33] Yet, reasons for their high number vary. Patriarchal attitudes and the prevalence of 'old boys' networks' (like male social clubs), for example, are noted as keeping many women outside formal working situations [34] The lack of home ownership (due largely to the absence of supportive homeownership subsidy programmes) also wards off women from taking formal employment:[35] with no home to offer as collateral, many women are unable to initiate the funds or credit required to start formal business ventures. The shortage of affordable and available childcare in the country stands as another reason for the large number of women in the informal sector:[36] as several women explain to me, they serve as primary caretakers of their children or grandchildren; and with few childcare opportunities existing in their neighbourhoods, they have little choice but to work from home and assume places in the informal sector. Margaret Synder suggests yet another cause: education.[37] South Africa, like many other African countries, suffers from an education divide that leaves many women in vulnerable positions. There is a higher illiteracy rate among women than men, for example, which again restricts their participation in a formal economy.

Further complicating the gender divide is the high level of poverty found among informal workers. *Statistics SA* indicates that 80 per cent of South Africa's growing informal sector lives under the poverty line.[38] Given that the majority of informal workers are women, a link between being a woman in South Africa, working in the informal cultural sector, and being poor must be considered. Informal employment emerges as vulnerable employment, and deserves more attention in official policymaking strategies.

The informal cultural sector will not disappear, nor will it stop attracting the more vulnerable of society, including women. Yet, current policymaking is not taking this growing sector into full account. Development policies and programmes must not only acknowledge the informal sector but they need to do better to target this sector, addressing specifically the issues of women. Reasons why an exceedingly large number of women join the informal sector is due largely to their life circumstances, including lack of opportunities in employment, education and income. Given that women dominate the informal cultural sector, and given that the cultural industry enables economic empowerment, needed changes to cultural policy stand as a tangible occasion for challenging the gender inequalities affecting South Africa.

Organising (or rather formalising) the informal cultural sector could contribute to economic development; it could improve the capacity of informal workers to meet their basic needs by increasing their incomes and strengthening their legal status. However, to regulate the informal sector is a complicated task.

Regulation would require prospective entrepreneurs to enter a process of licensing, including submitting license applications and acquiring business

approval. Many are not necessarily prepared for this task; therefore, licensing will likely restrict involvement. Many of the individuals involved in this training programme, for example, had neither the monies for processing a license application, nor did they have the proficiency required to read and to fill out such an application.

Regulation also would hamper the current flexibility of the informal sector. Many of the individuals I worked with entered the informal cultural sector precisely because of the flexibility it offered regarding work hours. This was particularly true among the women who had children or grandchildren to look after and required employment that enabled them to be home if needed. By obstructing flexibility, regulation would prohibit the inclusion of some workers, particularly women.

Also important to note, the informal sector, although outside official policy mandates, is not without regulation. In fact, in speaking with individuals from the rural areas and townships, it is clear that informal policies not only exist, they are successfully guiding merchant actions. As example, certain parts of the streets or areas in neighbourhoods are 'claimed' by established informal workers as the places where *they* conduct their businesses. These streets or areas, as a result, are considered locally as 'no-go' trading spots for new, incoming informal workers. Stakeholders seemed to follow this directive as 'law', and consciously chose different streets or neighbourhood areas for managing their proposed businesses. As further example, there was a collective agreement among the programme participants regarding overall prices for their goods. Also understood among these individuals was that, according to the neighbourhood or street where they proposed to conduct their businesses, that price could be lowered or increased appropriately. Far from a simple top-down process of implementation, the informal cultural sector was both relational and dynamic, where policies were being created and translated.

Further study is needed regarding regulation, including how it could impact the informal cultural sector both positively and negatively. Emphasis needs to be placed on the divergent needs of informal workers, including flexible work hours. Additionally, a better understanding is required of the unofficial policy-making that is currently going on in South Africa's informal sector; this includes the manner in which unofficial policies are being formulated and enacted, and whether or not these unofficial policies are driven by official policies.

Among the informal workers with whom I spoke, having a fixed place to trade is a key priority. Yet, this is a complicated request: the public space demanded by informal workers must have reasonable infrastructure, including water, electricity, sanitation, waste removal and shelter. And herein lays the challenge: many of the people participating in the programme live in the poorer areas of South Africa and lack these basics. Such a lack of infrastructure is a liability for enterprises in both the formal and informal sectors. However, in the rural areas and townships where I worked, where many of its participants live in squatter camps or make-shift houses, this lack of infrastructure is hugely detrimental to goals of starting a business. How can one start a business without safe water supplies or without sanitation?

The links between improving infrastructure and enterprise have not always been

apparent to policy-makers. Yet, if enterprises are to be successful, and if actors are to increase incomes, policies assuring better infrastructure are required; and the relationship between lack of infrastructure and the informal sector needs to be taken into better account.

One of the NGOs with whom I worked was *Impendulo Foundation*, which deals with women from the Mamelodi township. *Impendulo Foundation* provides an intriguing solution to the conundrum of poor infrastructure and entrepreneurialism. Many of the women working with *Impendulo Foundation* are interested in the food business, specifically making traditional cakes and biscuits for workers' tea breaks in Mamelodi. Yet, they have no fixed place to bake or sell their goods. Exploiting existing public spaces to support these informal workers, *Impedulo Foundation* coordinates with a restaurant in Mamelodi to open its doors in the late evenings to these women, who, with access to the restaurant's cooking space, will bake their goods during the night. With the guidance of the training programmes, these women then began to trade their baked goods with hotels and petrol stations in Mamelodi early in the mornings. **42**

The action taken by *Impendulo Foundation* demonstrates an effective measure for tackling problems of infrastructure in impoverished neighbourhoods while supporting new enterprises. It successfully recognises the links between poverty and lack of infrastructure, and points to successful ways for dealing with challenges of entrepreneurship in informal sectors. It is an action that can be replicated by other organisations in other neighbourhoods. **43**

Importance of Entrepreneurial Training

Small business entrepreneurship is thought to promote job creation and lower poverty.[39]. It is defined as essential for a nation's economic development, identified as an important vehicle through which people, including the poor, can use to insert themselves into the economic mainstream.[40] Mary Jesselyn Co and Bruce Mitchell write, 'it is widely held that the only way for South Africa to effectively address unemployment and revitalise the economy is through the rediscovery of the entrepreneur who takes risks, breaks new ground and innovates'.[41] Yet, the rate of successful small businesses in developing countries remains low in comparison to more developed countries.[42] A primary reason for this, taking the argument of Leo Paul Dana, is that the policies instituted to promote entrepreneurship in developing countries are too similar to those used in developed countries.[43] In fact, often the policies used in developing countries are exactly the same as those from developed countries: they are just repositioned in the hope that comparable results may emerge.[44] However, challenges regarding entrepreneurialism are very different in developing countries, and these differences arguably are not fully addressed in government. Policy-makers, instead, remain 'at times…swayed toward ethnocentric tendencies, forgetting that what applies to one society may not apply elsewhere'.[45] **44**

Apartheid repressed the development of Black-owned businesses, and stifled opportunities for Black South Africans to acquire entrepreneurial skills. More recently, the government, in an effort to shift this paradigm, began modifying its economic policies, specifically enlisting ways to encourage and support the **45**

development and growth of small business enterprises among Black South Africans. At present, however, the number of small business enterprises to emerge within Black communities remains relatively small.

The government's response is to suggest that more entrepreneurial awareness and training is needed. Training and educating people in the field of business 'will hopefully encourage them to become job-creators instead of job-seekers'.[46] To help with this goal, entrepreneurial training sat at the core of the training programme I helped to organise. As the most effective way forward, the programme linked itself to NGOs and other organisations already delivering training in the arts. These NGOs and organisations were using the arts as vehicles for helping clients to better deal with life's challenges, from domestic violence and homelessness to HIV status. Working in collaboration with these NGOs and organisations, the programme engaged with a variety of groups (primarily women and youths) by providing and equipping them with necessary entrepreneurial skills and training to transform their arts hobbies into viable businesses. It worked primarily with musicians, visual artists, actors, seamstresses, poets, artisans and traditional bakers, preparing 319 women and 356 youths to assume employment within the cultural sector (70% of these participants secured work with employers within the cultural sector or through self-employment).

Although I am not an entrepreneur, my consulting firm partner did have experience in delivering business training, and was responsible for formalising training programmes for use in the programme. Training was codified in six workshops; each designed to meet the distinct needs of its participants. The workshops were four hours each and ran for six-week durations. They helped participants crystallise the nature and objectives of their businesses through the construction of a business plan. Questionnaires were provided to help participants decide on their target market; advice was given on how to decide a production and trading site for their businesses; conversations were had on managerial skills; and the legalities of owning and registering a business were discussed. A 'how to' manual was organised and given to participants at the start of training. Because the manual detailed the primary discussion topics of the workshops, it was hoped the manual would become an important resource for participants after the workshops finished.

Participants were diverse, coming from varied backgrounds and arriving with different business goals. Building on the research of Eugenia N. Petridou and Charlambos T. Spathis[47] and of Katerina Sarri and Anna Trihopoulou,[48] pursued training in the programme was methodically planned, with the personal circumstances of the participants taken into account when delivering the training. For example, when working with the women participants, curricula were organised to respond directly to the barriers they faced in accessing and applying training in the cultural sector, including their vulnerability to risks of poverty, domestic abuse and HIV/AIDS. One-on-one mentoring was offered, and roundtable forums, identifying key dimensions of effective women leadership in business, were provided.

From this perspective, participants were viewed not as a uniform group, but rather as varied and multifaceted. Training, thence, was developed to meet their wide-ranging needs. A choice of management workshops and conferences were

also organised to provide participants with further opportunities for networking and for discussing their businesses with other would-be entrepreneurs as well as experienced business owners.

Lack of business training and experience is a chief reason why many small businesses are unsuccessful, argues Charles Tushabomwe-Kazooba. [49] Although business training is seen to play a crucial role in the success of a business, numerous challenges were encountered that hold back would-be entrepreneurs. The individuals with whom I met and worked face a host of obstacles that limit their success, among which lack of effective entrepreneurial training is only one such obstacle. A better understanding of all the challenges facing small business owners is needed before better business development can be assured. Only then can more effective policies be instituted, and can the current government incentives meant to promote entrepreneurship find success.

The challenges facing entrepreneurship in South Africa have been identified, and are listed below. Given the importance small business development can have on a nation's economic development, their inclusion in this article is outlined with a certain sense of urgency and as a crucial first-step in bringing about effective change. It is hoped that this information will better prepare the government and policy-makers in South Africa for successfully improving small business development in South Africa. The training programme necessarily had to emerge much more fluid than previously envisioned; the programme needed to change and adjust to the challenges encountered.

The first challenge has to do with registration: in order to receive municipal funds to start a business, the prospective business owner must register his or her trade. The training programme served to assist participants with the process of registering their businesses. That process, however, was not straightforward. To register a business, prospective business owners were required to show identification. Yet, not all participants had identification documents. As a result, it became important to revise the training to include, at participants' start, advice on how to file for identification cards (which, for many, included first filing for birth certificates).

A second challenge revolves around the high rates of illiteracy among the participations: most were unable to read or write. This meant that the 'how to' manual that had been organised as part of the training was largely unusable for most of the participants. To mitigate this problem, an Ambassador Programme was established, which was meant to provide specialised and extended training to high achieving participants who could read. Key leaders in each training group were identified, and, able to read, they could become ambassadors for their groups; they would become the 'go to' persons for others should any questions emerge about the workshops or the manual. Additional training was provided to these ambassadors, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to answer participants' questions. An unplanned by-product of this action was that these ambassadors were able to deliver the training on their own by using and teaching from the 'how to' manual; this has enabled the programme to become sustainable following its two-year run.

A third challenge impeding entrepreneurialism is lack of funds. Deposits are often required from participants in order to secure a production and/or trading site.

Borrowing money from banks was difficult, since most participants lacked the required collateral to participate in banking funding schemes (this is in line with Charles Mambula's research in Nigeria [50]). With money scarce among participants, alternative measures were needed.

Using monies available from government-sponsored initiatives for small business development, participants were encouraged and supported to establish and register themselves as co-operatives, with initial monies provided by these government incentives used as start-up funds. Now serving as co-operatives, the groups could offer selected participants the monies required to roll out their individual businesses. These participants were expected to repay their loans to the co-operatives within three months, which would then enable funds for another selection of participants to roll out their individual businesses. To ensure the on-going success of these co-operatives, relevant NGO leaders were provided further advice on how to successfully run the co-operatives long-term.

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A final challenge encountered revolves around current or chequing accounts. As was advised at the training workshops, such accounts enable businesses to be better organised and be more transparent regarding their finances. This follows the research of Charles Tushabomwe-Kazooba, who claims that poor accounting and recordkeeping is a major contributor to unsuccessful entrepreneurial ventures in Africa.[51] Yet, as became quickly apparent, most participants did not have such an account and did not know how to apply for one. As a result, portions of the early training were spent helping individuals apply for chequing accounts; and giving advice both on how to balance these accounts and on how to assume a routine for using those accounts to maintain accurate financial records on a daily basis.

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Involving Traditional Leaders

Traditional leaders are the kings and the chiefs. They are considered the custodians of culture, and wield considerable control across South Africa, particularly in rural areas where communities see them as crucial role players in the conception and implementation of development projects. A common argument emerging in South Africa following apartheid has been the continued suitability and relevance of traditional leadership, with questions asked specifically about how and if a hereditary institution like traditional authority should be maintained in a democratic state. Although the debate still continues, 'The central government has acknowledged the importance of traditional leaders to the social and political life of the country, and has recognised that at the level of local government, they are indispensable'.[52]

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Speaking with the people of Eastern Cape, it emerges that they originally held considerable hope for change following apartheid and that they looked to their newly elected rural and local councillors to usher in those changes, including ensuring safe water supplies, electrical capabilities and basic road upkeep within their regions. Change, however, did not come as promised or hoped. Not surprisingly, many of the people in Eastern Cape, particularly in the rural areas, where water and electricity remain amiss, turned away from their elected representatives and instead returned to their traditional leaders for support and guidance. The traditional leaders in Eastern Cape today affirm local legitimacy,

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expertise and authority, and often operate at the gaps and intersections of cultural policy. If changes to cultural policy were to occur, it became apparent that traditional leaders needed to be brought into the dialogue: a range of localised and traditional policies already exist regarding culture in regions steered by traditional leadership.

The training programme was again revised to include a series of workshops 59 delivered specifically to the Eastern Cape traditional leaders and their assistants. This training was tailored with a 'train the trainer' strategy: Workshops were used to ensure that the participating traditional leaders and their assistants not only understood the mandate and objectives behind strengthening the cultural sector, but also were prepared to pass that mandate and those objectives on within their individual kingdoms. As a direct result of integrating these traditional leaders into its programme, a movement to make changes to the cultural sector were able to take root in rural Eastern Cape. The traditional leaders adopted the 'how to' manual not only as a means to create economic opportunities for people in their kingdoms, but also as a vehicle to standardise entrepreneurial training across the participating regions.

Yet, working with the traditional leaders in Eastern Cape signals the very 60 complexities of cultural policy, and throws into relief the different ways decision-making and agency exist and take shape in South Africa. One such example has to do with traditional leaders' goal to preserve local cultural practices—a goal that has gained a particular sense of urgency of late. At the end of apartheid South Africa's cultural diversity was emphasised as a vehicle for building unity. However, as the traditional leaders explain, because South Africa is so diverse culturally and ethnically, questions emerge regarding how culture can foster unity without some traditional cultural practices being marginalised. As the traditional leaders now see it, part of their role is to ensure that the individual traditional cultural practices within their own kingdoms are maintained and that they continue with relevance. This at times leads to considerable tensions between the traditional leaders and government officials and local councillors, particularly when the cultural aims pursued by traditional authorities stand in contrast to existing cultural policy. This points to the conflicting interpretations of culture and policy-making that exist in South Africa, particularly within rural areas.

There also exists considerable ambiguity regarding the cultural sector in the rural 61 areas. For example, participation in culture across the Eastern Cape kingdoms did not necessarily imply private ownership, but rather could indicate role assignments as designated by the traditional leaders. One such example was the playing of particular musical instruments, specifically certain drums, which could only be played in emergencies or at specific rituals as defined by the traditional leader. The playing of the drums was considered a duty, and it was a role that was usually assigned by the traditional leader and was accepted on behalf of the larger community. To serve as drummer was considered both an honour and duty, though it could come with an income as decided by the community and relevant traditional leader. This threw into question whether the drummer was actively involved in the cultural sector, or whether the drummer was simply fulfilling community obligation. It was an extremely complex situation when discussed alongside cultural policy-making. Traditional leaders do not have the official authority to make, reject or change cultural policy at a national level, yet locally, these traditional leaders exercise approaches to culture that are

understood within their kingdoms as policy.

If cultural policy is to be developed in South Africa, more focused research into traditional cultural authority is required. This includes examining the diverging nature of communal rights in culture, including why they are binding and how they are enforced traditionally. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of cultural rights at the community level is essential to an appreciation of how to build an effective cultural policy in South Africa.

Rethinking Music Education

I was asked to deliver a series of bi-weekly workshops on music entrepreneurialism to a group of teenagers at Orange Farm, a township outside of Johannesburg. As a once-working musician in Chicago and New York City, I was confident I could lead discussions on how to write up contracts and how to promote music acts. During the workshops I planned to guide participants through the complexities of South Africa's music industry, including how revenues can be generated through recordings, downloading, streaming, radio and television play and gigs. I organised sessions around the country's primary copyright laws, and on preparing business plans that take into account musician rights, royalties and revenue deals.

At that first workshop, I was met with a group of some 25 students, each with a clear understanding regarding the roles they hoped to assume in the music business. Some of the teenagers were already members of bands, playing African jazz, rock or traditional music, and they sought record deals or, at the very least, regular gigs around Johannesburg. Some were rappers, producing, recording and mixing original music and beats from online music software; like their colleagues who played in the bands, they sought record deals or hoped to sell their beats to other well-known rappers around Africa. Still others sought jobs as music managers, wanting to become press agents and booking agents for different music acts in and around Johannesburg. To date, none had found employment in music. With my workshops focussed on entrepreneurialism, I hoped to change that.

These young participants, however, viewed the workshops quite differently. At our first meeting, they unanimously requested an amendment to the workshops: what they wanted was that I teach them how to read music. Most of the youths in attendance played music by ear; they did not read Western notation. It was their inability to read musical notation, they complained, that kept them from assuming employment.

In reply I explained that, given the roles they hoped to assume in the music industry, learning to read Western notation was not crucial. A variety of approaches to learning music exist around the world, I contended. Western notation was just one of many systems of learning and conveying music; and the popular or African-based musics that they sought did not necessarily rely on Western theoretical systems.[53] What was necessary was not that they learn to read Western notation, I further argued, but rather that they develop a clearer understanding of the music business, including how to secure opportunities 'to get their music out there.' Despite my advice, the students remained adamant;

and in response I shifted the focus of my workshops from business training to teaching them Western notation.

The students' demand to learn Western notation opens up a paradox, demonstrating just how far music education has disconnected from the realities on the ground. Following apartheid, South Africa's Department of Education had defined Arts and Culture as an area for 'build[ing] awareness, celebrat[ing] diversity and acknowledg[ing] cultures and music that has been marginalised for decades'.[54] A national curriculum was organised, meant to secure 'issues of social justice, human rights, a healthy environment and inclusivity' [55] Yet, in reality, that curriculum maintained 'strong voices that stereotype[d] indigenous knowledge as backward and proletarian' [56] and Western music, in response, was maintained as a dominant force in the classroom.

'We have inherited from the past a way of thinking about music that cannot do justice to the diversity of practices and experiences which that small word, "music", signifies in today's world', Nicholas Cook's words, emphasising how preconceptions about music making and learning can take root in world societies like South Africa. [57] Music is a powerful cultural symbol, communicating relationships of place, identity, history and community. These teenagers presupposing that their status as working musicians demanded that they learn Western notation, despite pursuing roles where reading music was not a prerequisite to employment, represents what Lee Bartel calls a 'hierarchy of "taste"',[58] which places Western notation at the top. Significantly, apartheid has entrenched dominant paradigms of the West in the country—and this has included music education. It suggests an engrained postcolonial anxiety, with Western notation a hangover of the imposition of European standards of music education on the nation, and the devaluation of non-notated musics. As a White woman visiting the class from the UK, I was assumed to be the 'bringer of notation', which further symbolises the continued immense power White European culture continues to hold in post-apartheid South Africa.

Elizabeth Oehrle confirms through her research that there exists an 'overwhelming bias [in South Africa] towards Western music and ideas about music education'.[59] It is, therefore, not surprising that my attempts to focus the Orange Farm workshops on business training would be challenged by the students. If my involvement in the workshops taught me anything, it is that the education system in South Africa could better consider and recognise African music making—its philosophies and processes. This is not to imply that Western music should be disregarded in education. However, students could be better supported and encouraged to learn about different approaches to creativity, including Black African music.

Entrepreneurial training remains something new in South Africa. Yet, in the music education classroom, such training is particularly rare.[60] Business training alone may not have enabled all of the youths attending my workshops to assume employment in the music industry. However, such training could have helped support many of them in creating opportunities for themselves in this competitive industry: at the time of this publication, none of the youths at the workshops had yet acquired consistent employment in music.

Conclusions

Applied ethnomusicology implies applying ethnomusicology for practical purposes. It suggests the 'use of ethnomusicological knowledge by the ethnomusicologist to increase the power of self-determination for a particular cultural group'.[61] It implies an extended role that could include resolving conflicts or promoting equality; it could involve the ethnomusicologist leading community members through grant writing strategies that target a variety of mutually decided goals. Applied ethnomusicology indicates the intimate knowledge and support an ethnomusicologist has for the community she studies. It denotes her preparedness to communicate the concerns of that community on a more formal level, and to work with the community members to initiate change or secure a shared sense of empowerment.   71

Yet, applied ethnomusicology is rarely straightforward. Ethnomusicologists are taught to question and re-question how cultural life exists on the ground, that this is where the fundamental actions of power generally occur. However, we may get so caught up with trying to describe and analyse cultural life that we neglect to examine it in accordance with the terms of the community itself. John Shotter calls this 'aboutness-thinking', and argues that it impels ethnographers to theories 'from the outside', to discuss happenings that occur 'over there'.[62]   72

As I learned from my experiences in South Africa, 'aboutness-thinking' can also sway funding bodies. Despite their organising funding schemes with the best of intentions, funding bodies may fail to construct the funding calls (their objectives, aims, guidelines) in accordance with the community or communities in question. They adopt terms or attitudes external to the community or communities; they presuppose the needs of a people who exist 'over there.' If the grant fundees do not reinterpret that call 'from within', the objectives and aims of that grant run the risk of being left unmet.   73

As I quickly learned, the interworking of a cultural sector can be best represented through 'withness-thinking',[63] particularly in a post-colonial country like South Africa, where struggles regarding culture and policy remain steeped in the complexities of colonial oppression. Certainly, a strong cultural policy can make an important contribution to the development of a nation as a whole. It can serve an 'essential' role in 'foster[ing] access to culture and creation for all, promot[ing] cultural diversity and support[ing] the sustainable development of the cultural sectors', as read in the EU guidelines for the grant that brought me to South Africa to conduct these workshops. Furthermore, it can inform and reflect a country's 'sustainable economic, social and human development'.[64] Yet, in post-colonial countries, where empowerment of the local may necessarily stand separate from—or even in opposition to—official policy-making, attempts to strengthen the sector would emerge as more effective if they allowed for the unique dynamics of localised spaces of power. Only after I acquired an understanding of South Africa's entrepreneurial culture reflected 'from within',[65] could I finally approach that country's cultural sector with the necessary awareness 'to problematize, to turn what seems familiar and understandable upside down and inside out'.[66]   74

Developing a better understanding of how the cultural sector exists 'on the ground' provides insights into the renewal properties of a community. Yet,   75

because communities do not necessarily engage with their cultural sectors in the same way, the local contexts of these communities and sectors must be observed with more clarity. There are differences in how communities generate culture on the ground; and considering those differences is crucial when attempting to initiate policy and action strategies within a cultural sector. Cultures are not uniform: they comprise the differing and complex histories and signs of its diverse members. As a result, cultural policy cannot be considered homogeneous. As I quickly learned from my work in South Africa, I had to develop both an understanding of and appreciation for a more varied bottom-up perspective in cultural policy-making if we—the community, my partners and I— were to meet our goals. I learned that a broader examination into how cultural policy works in South Africa is necessary, including how it may be modified in some communities, and how it may intersect with other policies in other communities. Only by addressing the gaps and disparities in the cultural sector could the community and I suggest recommendations for effective change.

The absence of a structured policy across South Africa does not equate to a non-existence of a policy framework, under which culture can be observed. Nor does it imply that culture has no role in development. Rather, as sketched in this article, in addition to circulations of official policy agendas, there may exist more local, unofficial types of policy-making; and if more effective cultural policies are to be developed, these bottom-up approaches must be better considered. Indeed, universalist urges to define concepts of culture and policy through arguably North American or European imaginations should be avoided, and issues of informality, local entrepreneurialism and traditional leadership should be taken into account more systematically. Only through this kind of scrutiny can the diversified spaces already existing in the cultural sector be understood, and be supported to work more effectively.

Navigating the complexities of South Africa's cultural sector has forced me to confront unexpected difficulties as an ethnomusicologist; but it has also provided me with new and rewarding opportunities. Charles Seeger argues for 'the importance of using the results of [ethnomusicology] research in places far beyond university walls for the benefit of the communities whose music we study'.[67] The experiences I had in South Africa showed me how my research can advocate change; how it can speak to tangible societal challenges while insisting on the realisation of social responsibility. I learned first-hand how ethnomusicology can inform new knowledge relating to community empowerment and can lead to the documentation of links between the cultural sector and economic growth, and between inequality and poverty. It was a path, to again borrow from Seeger, that could 'improve the field of ethnomusicology itself and increase the impact on the future of both music and community life'.[68]

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