

Sesasedi sa Tsodio

An essayistic video by Rangoato Hlasane

A fugitive flees from both a ghost and the police (as written by harepa player Johannes Mokgwadi in 1974). Tsodio runs to 'Gauteng ma phutha ditšhaba'. Before we ask why, what if Tsodio is fleeing from neither the ghost nor the police? This essayistic video takes a kwaito classic, Tsodio (Lebo Mathosa, 1999), as a song-being that narrates movements and biographies; conquests and namings; defeats and reclamations; returns and ancestries...

The character of Tsodio as lyrical fiction/mythology travels through orature and storytelling in black musical and sonic histories of the past, present and future. Traveling banners, thinking and sounding with three locations – Meadowlands, Mamelodi and Mahikeng - serve as backdrops for oral histories with 'people as libraries', on site. These 'situated lens-based performative' conversations trace Tsodio's multiple umbilical cords and drive the essay video through a journey in sonic, optic and phonetic black world un/making.

Tsodio, a pursued and haunted character who murdered his uncle appears in unrecorded mmimo wa setšo repertoire, and into mainstream circulation through Johannes Mokgwadi (1974), Paulina Mphoka (date unknown), Joe Shirimani (1998) and Lebo Mathosa, (1999). The Tsodio narrative as circulated in song is long and traverses popular and subversive no-genres (includes the 2012 rendition by Thath'i Cover Okestra Vol.2) up to the 2020 amapiano treatment by, amongst others, The Trybe and Penene The Vocalist – at least 11 Tsodio versions are recorded between 1974 and 2021. For *Sesasedi sa Tsodio*, a first in a trilogy on Southern African song-beings, our story zooms into three of Tsodio's sonic speculations:

In Johannes Mokgwadi's 'Tsodio le Khwembu' (1974), 'Bra Tsodio' with 'Bra Khwembu', his accomplice, stole a gun and killed Sehlapaseledu. They are on the run from Sergeant Lekalakala, and end up in Gauteng "maphutha ditšhaba".

For Paulina Mphoka (date unknown), Tsodio killed his uncle Matšhabataga, this time without an accomplice, and there is no mention of guns. For Mphoka, the story of Tsodio is not dissimilar to the experience of women, such as "Mosadi wa sepankana, o rekiša bjala" a brewer of beer during apartheid South Africa is on the look out for 'Maphodisa a Lebowa'. Men and women all evade the police...

For Mathosa, like Mphoka and Mokgwadi, Tsodio doesn't sleep: "okare o tshwere ke sepoko". Mathosa's Tsodio didn't steal, didn't kill no one. There are no police after him. Eish! Ke eng ka Tsodiyo? In a method similar to that of The Otolith Group, *Sesasedi sa Tsodio* starts from a place of criticism, and grows into a fiction-sque... lyric-ficto-mythology.

'Sesasedi sa Tsodio' is a first in a trilogy forming the creative component towards a partial fulfilment of my PhD studies in African Literature. Titled "Reading the historiographic Narratives of Kwaito's Visual Culture". My doctoral study examines what I

call the historio-graphic narratives of kwaito's visual culture – with a special focus on how the music video narrates notions of gender, race and nationalism.

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Situated lens-based performances;
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Type of presentation:

Exhibitions/Film screenings (00:16:03)

Bio:

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