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THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN THE  
LIBERATION OF MOZAMBIQUE\*

By

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*A baby is a European  
HE DOES NOT EAT OUR FOOD:  
he drinks from his own water pot.*

*A baby is a European  
HE DOES NOT SPEAK OUR TONGUE:  
he is cross when the mother understands him not.*

*A baby is a European  
HE CARES VERY LITTLE FOR OTHERS;  
he forces his will upon his parents.*

*A baby is a European  
HE IS ALWAYS VERY SENSITIVE:  
the slightest scratch on his skin results in an ulcer.\*\**

One of the most important popular expressions of resistance to the brutality and humiliation of colonialism in Mozambique was cultural. Of these, songs, music and dance were easily the most universal form of protest, with proverbs, stories, and wood sculpture providing other vehicles of resistance. Just as important,

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\*\*An Ewe ( African people's) view of white people in general; Ulli Beier, ed.; *African Poetry*, Cambridge University Press, 1971, p. 64. Ed. K.M.

these cultural expressions also served the additional function of asserting the values of specific African cultures against the dehumanization of colonialism, which either attempted to reduce Africans to nameless and faceless units of labor or relegate them to obscurity. The resort to cultural expressions of resistance was relatively safe by virtue of these expressions being incomprehensible to Europeans, who neither spoke the languages of Mozambique nor understood the cultures of its peoples. Even the few Europeans who were able, (at least partially) to cross the barrier between these cultures and to record much of the material presented in this discussion -- such as missionaries and ethnographers -- failed to comprehend its significance as protest because of their paternalistic attitude towards Africans. They, thereby, either blunted or misinterpreted what Africans were actually saying when publishing their findings.

For the Africans, then, cultural expressions of protest and resistance provided a bond of solidarity with the members of that culture, as victims of colonial rule. They demonstrated that if the Portuguese and their allies in exploitation had destroyed their political and economic independence, they had not captured the basic elements of their cultures. Nor had they obliterated the will to resist, despite a monopoly of effective power. And although it is important to recognize that these artistic expressions did not give rise to an immediate national consciousness, precisely because of their cultural specificity, they created a tradition of popular resistance which eventually became part of such a consciousness when the liberation struggle began in earnest in 1962.\*

Cultural expressions sprouted on three levels; first, the process of diagnosis. This dealt with the analysis of the representatives of colonialism in Mozambique, i.e., the whites. The attempt was to understand their mentality and behaviour by mimicking, as ridicule, their mannerisms and self-conduct. Secondly, the identification process. This addressed itself to those Africans who gave validity to colonialism by identifying with it. These people profited personally as a result of their collaboration with the Portuguese, which is why they were feared, despised and ridiculed by the majority of Mozambican people. The third, and perhaps dominant theme, focuses on work. The colony of Mozambique served primarily as a source of cheap labor for colonial capitalism in Southern Africa; so the fact that this is reflected in popular culture should come as no surprise. Furthermore, given the harsh conditions of work in colonial Mozambique and in the South African mines, it is understandable that the most biting criticism of colonialism appears in work songs and songs about work.

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\*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO), the organization which defeated Portuguese colonialism was founded in June 1962, with Dr. Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane, as its president. On 25th September, 1964, FRELIMO came of age as a guerrilla liberation movement. Ed. K.M.

In each of these themes, we find reiteration of defiance against and commentaries on humiliation and injustice. They provide evidence that Africans had definite views about the conditions which European colonial capitalism imposed on them.

The forms of cultural expression corresponding to the process of diagnosis reflect the changes brought about by colonialism. One theme in this category deals with the differences between Blacks and Whites. For example, according to a Makonde story,

*The Whites formerly were fish; they stayed in the water. One day, a black man seized a fishhook and went to fish. When he dragged him from the water, he saw a fish which turned into a white. The Blacks took care of him until he grew. He acquired good things and, when he was seen to be in possession of them, he began to make us suffer a lot. And since then until today they never cease treating us badly.*<sup>1</sup>

The motif of Whites as fish is also found in the far south of the country, among the Tsonga of Bilene, who also considered Whites to be cannibals because when the Portuguese deported Ngungunyana in 1896 it was believed that they had eaten him. For the Tsonga, however, the transition of white men from dangerous creatures of the sea to equally dangerous predators on the land was explained by the belief that 'those who come to fight against us are the young men; they have legs.'<sup>2</sup> While these two stories ascribe the power and lack of humanity of Whites to the fact that they truly are not human, having only acquired the appearance of humanity for the sake of dominating Blacks, they also reflect the transition of Portuguese imperial interests in East Africa from control of the sea and the coast to control of the land and its people.

The disillusionment embedded in the Makonde story, where the white man was taken in by Africans, treated generously as a guest, (as if he were indeed human), and then turned on his hosts, is also found in a comparison of several Tshopi songs which were collected in 1940. For the Tshopi of Zava'a, Ngungunyana was a hated conqueror and his defeat by the Portuguese was hailed as their salvation.

*The Portuguese came and Ngungunyana fled.  
We are well fed, we are content because now  
we have much food.  
Before, misery entered our huts and we  
endured famine.  
Not so now, we are happy.*

In another song it is declared that 'Now we do not have to pay to such a bad King.'<sup>3</sup> But this honeymoon did not last long, at least not for the common people of Zava'a. Another song proclaims that

*The Portuguese is friend of the black.  
The Portuguese comes here because he is friend  
of the black.  
But, [he is] also great friend of money...<sup>4</sup>*

Here is an example of how an African song incorporates the standard Portuguese rationalization for being in Mozambique and by juxtaposing its repeated expression with the common knowledge of the people of Zavala creates a powerful criticism of colonialism by attacking its most important symbol -- money.

This identification of the white man with money is not isolated and perhaps more than any other commentary stands as an implicit recognition that his unique power and ruthlessness derived from the capitalist system that propelled him to Africa. 'White people are only overcome by death,' says one Tsonga proverb. 'The white man keeps no secrets,' (and therefore cannot be trusted with any of ours), states another. 'The white man is a white man,' goes a third, he can only be understood on his own terms, not those of other people. But the connection with capitalism and its diametrically opposed system of values to those of Tsonga society is made clear in the proverb: 'The white man has no kin. His kin is his money.'<sup>5</sup> Thus, only if one was willing to abide by the rules of the white man and his system, was it possible to get along in colonial Mozambique. As the Tsonga wisdom suggests, 'A man who has paid his tribute to the chief (or the Government tax) is not afraid.'<sup>6</sup>

But to many Africans in colonial Mozambique this system was without reason and it made no sense to them to participate in it except by coercion. The pointlessness of the white man's determination to seek profit in everything is nowhere made clearer than in this children's song from Cabo Estondo, in Zavala:

*Where will we go with this crazy white?  
Where will we be with this mulungu (boss),  
Who orders us to cut stacks of simbir (ironwood)?<sup>7</sup>*

By the same token, even if one sought to flee from this pursuit of profit that consumed the European and consequently drove the African under, there was no escape. In the Makonde 'Story of the man who was very afraid of the Whites,' the main character sees a flag of the Whites and asks what it is. When he is told, he confesses his ignorance of these people, but once he sees them he becomes very afraid, saying: 'These men are like spirits.' He leaves his land and when the flag and its bearers follow him there, he flees that place. This motif is repeated twice again and finally he simply gives up trying to run away from them:

*-Oh! I have been fleeing these men for a long time,  
but now I am tired. These men are not Whites, they*

are people who are strewn about all over the place.  
I am tired. And I am staying on their land, to live  
with them.<sup>8</sup>

Living with colonial domination -- 'on their land', it should be noted -- was not a straightforward proposition. Europeans clearly controlled powerful forces and these had somehow to be confronted in a way which made sense to the society in question and did not provoke the colonial rulers. In a very general way, a case can be made that Africans already had a cultural expression available in the form of animal tales which made this possible. The elder Junod, who had a remarkably detailed if somewhat flawed knowledge of Tsonga culture, believed that many of these tales represented the wisdom of the small and weak against the large and strong. 'I see in these stories,' he argued, 'a discreet protest of weakness against strength, a protest of spiritual against material force; possibly they may contain a warning to those in power from those who suffer.' For Junod, however, this protest was contained exclusively within Tsonga society and reflected the power of chiefs and the weakness of their people. Moreover, Junod understood this struggle in bourgeois terms where "individual freedom" as opposed to "collective submission" is seen as the more positive social force. Thus, he concluded that 'who knows if their ultimate object be not to assert the value of the individual amongst this downtrodden people where the individual counts for nothing.'<sup>9</sup>

In the context of colonial Mozambique the general theme of the weak protesting against the strong carried within it the seed of collective protest by all the down-trodden against the Portuguese colonialists and all those who worked on their behalf. Whether this point was ever made explicitly in discussing these stories, which exist in abundance for the entire country, is not revealed in any of the published collections.<sup>10</sup> European ethnographers understandably chose not to make this connection for their European audiences, tending instead to demonstrate the universal character of such tales in Africa and to relate them to more conventional literary contexts, such as Greek mythology. But how were they explained to African youngsters in Mozambique? Or did they even need to be explained in view of the situation in which Africans found themselves in Mozambique? Given evidence of other, more explicit expressions of cultural protest against colonialism, it seems questionable that these animal tales provided a ready form of oblique criticism of the colonial order of things.

A more powerful means of confronting the seemingly mystical force which Europeans possessed and of integrating it into an African cosmology is well documented for the *mapiko* masked dance complex of the Makonde. The *mapiko* complex lies at the very center of Makonde culture and is considered the most important educational element in the secret initiation of men because 'it is around it that the secret power of men gravitates.'<sup>11</sup> According



WHITE MASK

to Jorge and Margot Dias, the *mapiko* figure, which also appears in female puberty rites, is the critical Makonde cultural symbol of social integration. The rituals in which they appear are 'charged with enormous psychological density' and it is their belief that male control of the secret of the *mapiko* enables men to control both uninitiated boys and all women in the society through fear.<sup>12</sup> *Mapiko* are the spirits of unknown dead, either male or female, terrifying, but not evil. Above all, *mapiko* are mysterious and powerful, representing a category apart from benevolent ancestor spirits (*machinamu*) or any of several categories of known malevolent spirits (*machatwani*).<sup>13</sup>

The dancing of the masked *mapiko* figure embodies great 'comic and theatrical force' which heightens the compelling nature of the mask (*lipiko*) itself. Indeed, while the theatricality of the *mapiko* enhances the mystery of its secret for the local community, it also acted in the past as a link between neighboring villages by attracting people from the surrounding countryside. Thus, argue the Diases, the *mapiko* also became 'one of the principal sources of inter-group relations, not linked by ties of kinship, greatly enlarging the human horizons [of the local village], facilitating for them social contact with strangers.'<sup>14</sup>

Given the characteristics of the *mapiko* complex, it is not surprising that masks depicting Europeans (as well as Muslims, Asians, and possibly Chinese) were integrated into it during the colonial period. It is impossible to say when European *mapiko* first appeared, since they are carved from the very soft wood of the *njala* or cotton tree and deteriorate fairly rapidly if exposed to the elements for a long time. The earliest *mapiko* collected at the beginning of this century do not include any Europeans, but by the early 1950's we begin to find examples of Catholic priests and Portuguese administrators.<sup>15</sup> Even if there was no particular commentary associated with them, the mere appearance of Europeans as *mapiko* indicated that they possessed unknown powers and had to be treated carefully. Two examples of more direct criticism of Portuguese colonial rule are, however, provided by a British dealer in African art, Robert Dick-Read, who visited Cabo Delgado Province in about the mid-1950's. On one occasion he saw a *lipiko* representing Queen Elizabeth II of England, who was referred to by name, and he understood her appearance to indicate that the Makonde 'wished they were her subjects.' This interpretation, of course, must be seen in the context of the relatively favorable economic, social, and political conditions that many Makonde men had experienced in Tanganyika. In another village, Dick-Read witnessed a *mapiko* dance in which the central *lipiko* was an American sailor embellished with Makonde facial cicatrizations. 'This occurred shortly after a U.S. naval ship had put in at Mtwara on the Tanganyika coast; and no doubts were left about the *lipiko*'s meaning when one of the audience came up to me and asked pathetically, "When are the Americans going to take over





*COLONIAL CREATURE*  
*Fig. 1*

from the Portuguese?" Finally, Dick-Read also alludes to masks representing missionaries and 'ugly Portuguese policemen.'<sup>16</sup>

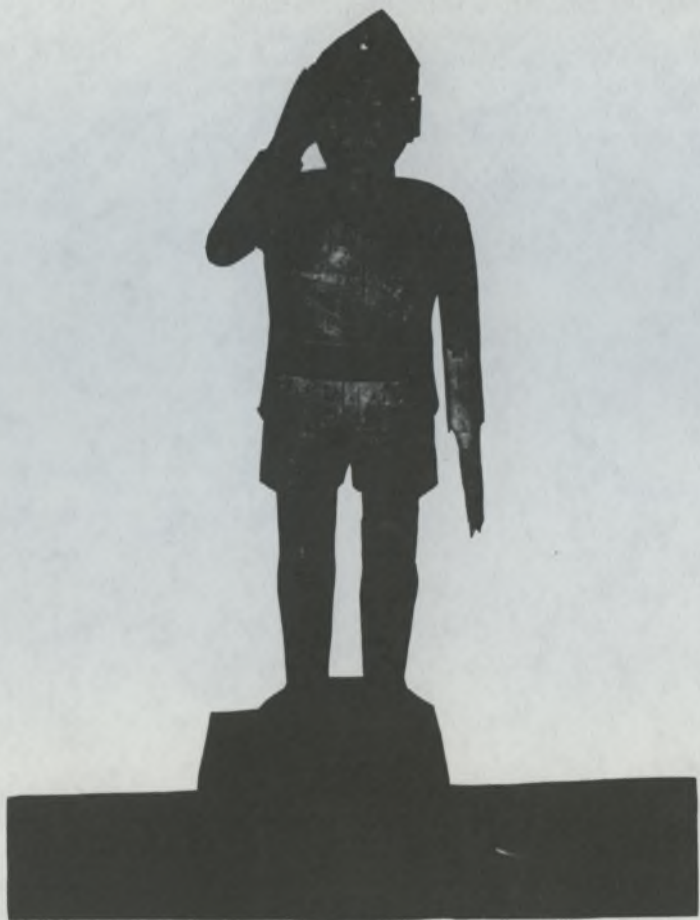
A more recent element of the *mapiko* festivities as recorded by the Diasas also embodies an oblique criticism of Portuguese colonial rule which they totally misinterpreted, being themselves a part of that regime.

*Today a part of these festivities is comprised of a kind of compact chorus of men and boys with books, papers or pages from magazines in their hands and who sing and make gestures as if they were able to read and explain. In front, facing them a man directs the chorus as if he were a chorister or school-master... In the songs the word Tanganyika is heard constantly and the magazine and newspaper pages which they clutch in their hands are English. Only once did we see one with a Portuguese primer. This parody of collective reading gives them enormous pleasure.*<sup>17</sup>

To be sure, it was good fun to participate in a parody of this sort while the *mapiko* danced in the village, but there can be little doubt that this chorus also served as a commentary on the fact that educational opportunities on the Makonde plateau were extremely limited and too rigidly tied to Catholic missions in comparison to those available in Tanganyika.

Yet another Makonde attempt to deal with Portuguese power through the medium of wood sculpture can be found in a transformation in the statuary which was produced in association with the cult of the ancestors. The Makonde word for statue of wood is *lichinamu*, the singular form of *machinamu*, the benevolent lineage spirits through whom prayers were offered up to the Supreme Being (*Nnungu*). In the past, these figures could only be produced with the approval of the lineage head, who was the principal living heir with the *machinamu* and controlled access to them.<sup>18</sup> Several of these were collected by a Portuguese biologist who was stationed at Palma and Mocimboa da Praia in 1916-1917. That one which was acquired from a lineage head who had journeyed to the coast in order to present himself to the Portuguese government, indicates the symbolic significance of these statues. But while this same scientist 'was informed that the Makonde also sculpt caricatures of whites and animal figures,' he was not able to obtain any.<sup>19</sup> It would be helpful to know if these statues of Europeans were merely caricatures, as Pires de Lima emphasizes, or if they did not instead represent the attempt by some lineage heads to associate themselves with the power of the Europeans who were only then really making their presence felt on the Makonde plateau.

Fortunately, some of these figures do exist in the collection of the Nampula Museum in northern Mozambique, although there is no indication as to where or when they were collected. Neither



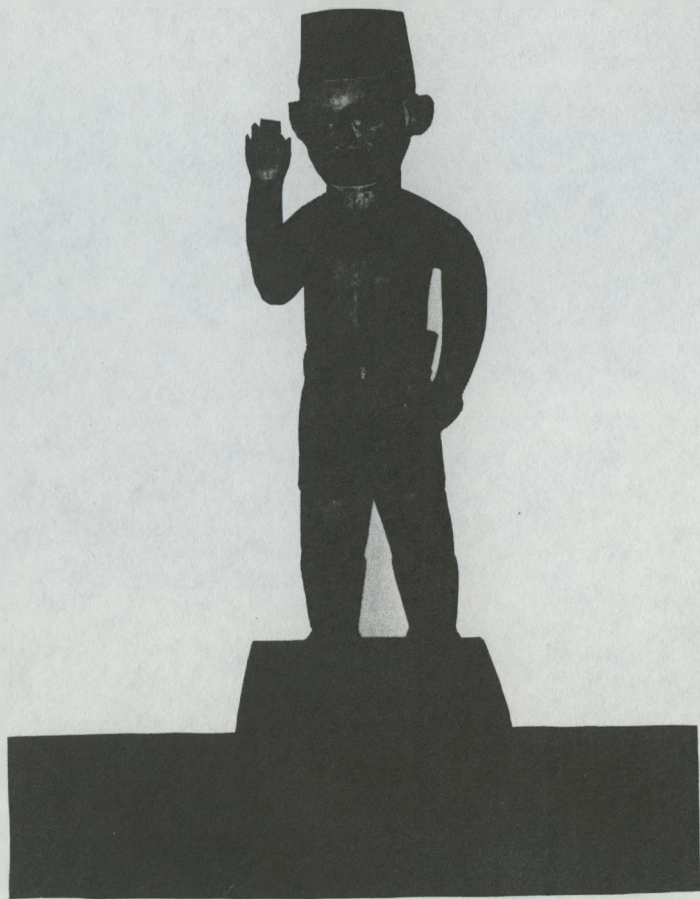
*COLONIAL CREATURE*  
*Fig. 2*

is there any information on the circumstances of their production, so we do not know if they were sculpted independently or only on the approval of some lineage head. What is clear, however, is the fact that these are very critical, unflattering portrayals of colonial authority figures -- a Portuguese administrator, an African soldier, and an African *cipai*.

Although the Makonde have the most highly evolved tradition of wood sculpture in Mozambique, they are by no means the only people to have expressed themselves in this way. A very important men's masked dance tradition -- the Nyau society -- exists also for the Chewa and Mang'anja. Among the former there appear at least two European figures -- *Simione* (perhaps derived from the Portuguese name *Simões*?) and *Makombe* (in imitation of a European soldier carrying a flag) -- although neither of these is known to have been photographed.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, human figures were also carved by the Tsonga in the nineteenth century, and by the early colonial period Tsonga artists had incorporated both Indian traders and Europeans into this tradition.<sup>21</sup> Two African walking sticks, for example, brilliantly satirize their colonial subjects -- a European man with his crucifix at his side and a couple with their dog at their feet, presumably to warn Africans away from their household.<sup>22</sup>

But perhaps the most interesting parallel to the Makonde tradition in this early period exists among the Makua of Erati, to the south of the Lurio River around Namapa, in what is now Nampula Province. Puberty rites among the Makua- and Lomwe-speaking peoples are roughly analagous to those among the Makonde, except for the absence of masked dancers. Both animal and human spirits were, however, represented in these ceremonies in figurines of either raffia or wood, and probably also were manufactured in clay. These 'fetishes', as colonial writers called them, did not greatly appeal to Western sensibilities and were written off as being worthless and of no artistic value. Yet their significance to the Makua and Lomwe can scarcely have been any less than similar figures were for the Makonde. Indeed, given the entirely military character of the Portuguese occupation of Nampula Province, it is little wonder that the Europeans depicted in these apparently clay figures from Erati are all soldiers, some of them being mounted on horseback.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the only known museum example of a similar figure carved in wood depicts an African soldier.

However European observers may have regarded them, the fact that the Makua and Lomwe were considered by the same ethnographer who thought so little of their art to have exceptional powers of observation, combined with a keen and just sense of ridicule when it came to the colonial figures around them, suggests again that the plastic arts were an important medium of social criticism.<sup>24</sup>



*COLONIAL CREATURE*  
*Fig. 3*

On returning to the spoken or sung word, problems of interpretation are much less difficult. When Hugh Tracey recorded the music of the Tshopi in the early 1940s, for example, there was little room for doubting that one of the main concerns of these famous musicians was finding the money with which to pay their taxes to the Portuguese. 'It is time to pay taxes to the Portuguese. /The Portuguese who eat eggs and chicken./ Change that English pound!'<sup>25</sup> As Tracey points out, the reference to Portuguese eating habits echoes the comments made in 1560 by a Jesuit priest on Tshopi xylophone (*timbila*) orchestras. Then, as in the colonial period, these orchestras were associated with specific Tshopi chiefs, and the function of their performances -- consisting of music, song, and dance -- was both to praise their patrons and to provide a running commentary on social conditions within the larger community. Tracey reports that new words, not new music, formed the basis for new compositions, which typically took the form of elaborate multi-movement performances called *Ngodo*. Songs were invariably topical and local, serving both as a form of broadsheet in an overwhelmingly oral culture and as a vehicle for the collective indictment of colonial domination. The lyrics of the *ngodo* (a Tshopi musical performance) songs 'are often highly critical of those in authority over them, white or black, and to a large degree it may be said that the poems reflect the attitude of the common people towards the conditions of their society.'<sup>26</sup>

The songs themselves deal primarily with the humiliations of colonial rule and specifically the treatment of male migrant laborers to the South African mines from Savala District, where they were collected. One song composed by Katini weNyamombe, of Paramount Chief Wani Zavala's village, queries: 'Here is a mystery, /the Portuguese beat us on the hands,/Both us and our wives.' Not only women, but royalty as well were subjected to the pain and degradation of the *palmatoria*, as this song written by Gomukomu weSimbi, of the village of Chief Filippe we Muduamne Banguza, makes plain:

*Even Chiefs are beaten on the hands, you people  
of Wantuma, listen.  
The arrogance of Julai in even beating the hands  
of chiefs!  
We will not wear trousers anymore.  
Julai imagines he has opened a book.  
Julai spares not even women.*<sup>27</sup>

This song introduced two other sources of indignation for the people of Zavala in the 1940s -- the authority of African collaborators of the Portuguese and the cultural imperialism of the colonial rulers. Julai was a Tshopi and head *cipai* in the chief's compound and his arrogance had become so notorious that people suspected him of pretending to become a chief himself ('Julai imagines he has opened a book'). And why not? As Gomukomu remarks elsewhere in this *Ngodo*, colonialism had created its own chiefs,

men like Julai, often ignoring the traditional rulers of society.

*you elders must discuss affairs.  
The one whom the white men appointed was the son of  
a commoner.  
The Chopi no longer have right to their own country,  
let me tell you.*<sup>26</sup>

This same theme recurs in a song by Sipingani Likwekwe, of Chief Chugela Chisiko's village, who wonders out loud,

*Why do they fight about their chieftainship?...  
let them be Chiefs.  
They have taken the country, we know not how,  
and shared it out,*

even to those with no claim to be chiefs. Even the chief of his own village does not escape Sipingani's mocking, as he taunts, 'You, Chugela, you are proud of your position, yet you are only a chief made by the white men.'<sup>29</sup> Finally, if one was not careful to at least pay lip service to Portuguese cultural norms and recognize authority as dictated by, in this case, the government chief, one could end up in jail at administrative headquarters, as this song by Sauli Ilova, of Chief Chigomba Mavila's village, warns:

*To keep on saying "good day" [mbo dia] is a  
nuisance.  
Makarite and Bubwane are in prison  
Because they did not say "Good day".  
They had to go off to Chisiko [Quissico] to  
say "Good day" there instead!*<sup>30</sup>

Songs dealing with the migrant labor are no less eloquent in their revelation of the enormous impact that colonial labor policies had on all aspects of Tshopi life. Many songs protest against the recruitment process of WNLA (Witwatersrand Native Labour Association) agents for the South African mines, or the threat of *shibalo* (African forced labour [cf. *chibaro* in Southern Rhodesia, for which see Charles van Onselen, *Chibaro* (London, 1976)]) for the Portuguese in Mozambique. 'Listen, they are off to their kraals as they are afraid they will be signed on,' records one song, while another takes the voice of a man who is pleading to a friend who is employed by WNLA: 'Natanele speak for me to the white man to let me be.' A cry against *shibalo* similarly declares 'We fear only that our names will be written by the white man,' and another admits that 'Matikiti is worried because they say he has been sent for to go to Delagoa Bay,' probably to work on the docks.<sup>31</sup>

Once the recruitment for the season was over, most of the able-bodied adult men in Zavala found themselves being transported

to an entirely different world with different work and cultural values, where they were denied a normal social life. Another song reports, 'If we go to the City we see wonders as we pass Pretoria,' which was off-limits to contract laborers as they journeyed by train to the Rand or *Cilenguni*, 'the place of white men.' Good jobs in the mines were hard to come by for Mozambicans, however, and one song records the process by which one was obliged to bribe compound police, who generally were either Sotho or Xhosa, in the hope that a word with the white manager would facilitate matters. The work was both physically demanding and spiritually numbing, so it is not surprising that men often sought a day's respite by claiming to be sick or that fatigue and mine associated diseases rendered them unfit for work. Too often, however, their complaints went unheeded.

*We saw you, Blanketi! You say to the clerk,  
"I am sick,"  
and he said, "Sit down, boy, the compound manager  
will come."  
But when the compound manager came he said,  
"By your  
mother! You are drunk. Go and dress for work."*<sup>32</sup>

This song, which was sung to Tracey by Meneti Nzekani We Shutumba at Chisiko's compound, is typical of the songs composed on the Rand, where in 1944 there were more than fifty Tshopi *timbila* (xylophone) orchestras. Of the approximately 6000 Tshopi on the Rand at that time, about 780 men participated in these orchestras and the *msaho* competitions in which they engaged on the weekends provided the principal form of recreation for these men who were denied the company of their families.<sup>33</sup>

The dangers of working in the mines were considerable, and many men were left mutilated for life. In cases where the injury may not have been particularly disabling, it was sufficient to prevent a man from being recruited and therefore from earning the cash with which to pay his taxes. One song asks an ironic question and provides a sarcastic response:

*How can I go to the city since my finger is cut off?  
I have been compensated, so I am glad.  
They say I may feel some pain in it.*

More shattering is the lament composed by Sipingani for his friend, Chilenje, who lost his leg below the knee in a mine accident. Chilenje had been able to retain some of his dignity and independence with the support of his young son, but when his son died suddenly he became entirely dependent upon the women in his family. Thus, in Chilenje's song, he asks, 'If I go [to] the mines, where shall I find the courage to get into the cage?'<sup>34</sup>



Finally, as is apparent from this last song, the absence of nearly all able-bodied men from the district for most of the year created a great many social problems at home for the women left behind. A song by Gomukomu deals comically with this situation by proclaiming to his chief that "It is Filipe's opinion/ That the girls should sign on and go to the mines.' Typical problems highlighted in the songs concern the remission of money from men in the mines to their people at home. The cost of living on the Rand was higher than people at home imagined, bemoans one song, so how can the chief, who knows nothing at all about the mines, claim a pound from every man who goes there? From a wife's point of view, the absence of her husband could leave her in dire straits if he was inconsiderate:

*I am most distressed  
I am most distressed as my man has gone off to work.  
And he does not give me clothes to wear,  
Not even black cloth.*

Even when men were conscientious about sending home money, however, it was not unusual for some unknown hands to open their letters and steal pound notes from them.<sup>35</sup> Thus the entire cycle of working and surviving in an oppressive colonial capitalist state is captured in the rich musical heritage of the Tshopi.

The Tshopi were not the only Mozambicans to express their discontent in song, nor were the South African mines the only workplace which gave rise to such a musical tradition. Even on the Rand, of course, other southern Mozambican workers carried on their own musical traditions, and their songs indicate that their experiences were no happier than were those of the Tshopi. A late nineteenth century Shangana song registers a grievance about the length of time it took to receive payment for one's labor by playing on the fact that the South African pound note carried profile likenesses of Queen Victoria and Paul Kruger:

*We are the unhappy ones  
The pounds look at them from the side  
When will the day arrive  
In which they look at us from the front?*

A similar contemporaneous Tsonga children's song overheard by Junod, with words in Zulu, depicts an equally grim situation: 'Stones are hard to break/ Far from home, in a foreign land.'<sup>36</sup> Less is known about the content of later Tsonga songs and dances from the mines, but they apparently remained an important and entertaining mode of cultural expression and commentary.<sup>37</sup>

Another major source of paid employment for the men of southern Mozambique was the seaport at Lourenço Marques. On arriving from the interior to find work, men used to spend the night at

the village of Machakene (Maxaquene), on the palisades overlooking the harbor, before it was promoted to become an exclusively European neighborhood. This Tsonga riddle brilliantly sums up their first impressions of what it meant to work there: 'What is it that is all over the square at Machakene, that creeps and crawls about on it? It is the louse!'<sup>33</sup> On the quayside itself the arduous job of the stevedore required the men to work in large gangs of twenty or thirty, as they moved industrial equipment destined for South Africa from the ships to the customs warehouse. Their task was made bearable by work chants which were often led by a paid soloist, called the *musimi*, whose only responsibility was 'to begin to sing the refrains, to stimulate the maneuvers, to communicate to them by gesture, by voice, by well-cadenced melodies everything necessary for the transfer of the large pieces.'<sup>39</sup> It is interesting to note that a popular individual lament that was sung by dock workers, among others, at the end of the nineteenth century, concerns the deportation to West Africa of a young Rjonga chief who was defeated in the colonial war of conquest in 1894-1896. The refrain of this song -- 'It is the child! It is the child they have killed! Nwamantibyane!' -- could be interpreted to symbolize the loss of freedom or hope that was experienced by all who had to submit to the demands of the colonial political economy.<sup>40</sup>

Songs such as this one about Chief Nwamantibyane spread far and wide, gaining both genuine popularity and a permanent place in the culture of the people. A much better documented case of this phenomenon is the eighty-year-old song called *Paiva*, which deals with the brutal conditions of work on the Sena Sugar Estates in the lower Zambezi River valley and has its cultural origins in an earlier generation of canoe songs.<sup>41</sup> There are too many recorded examples of this song to include them all here, but all refer explicitly to the violence perpetrated on African workers of all ages and both sexes by their European and African overseers, whose authority was unchallenged in the domain of this most important and exploitative concession company. Vail and White establish firmly that while the title of the song derives from the specific experiences of African workers around Mopeia under Jose de Paiva Raposo, who was administrator of Prazo Maganja Aquem Chire in the last decade of the nineteenth century, its wider fame can be traced to the fact that *Paiva* became a regional symbol for similar brutalization by other individuals like the song's prototype for the remainder of the colonial era. Thus, as Vail and White discovered in 1975 and 1976, every village from the confluence of the Shire River with the Zambezi right to the coast has its own local versions of *Paiva*, which on deeper questioning were discovered to incorporate details of local circumstances, as well as retaining certain requisite formulas that are structurally integral to the *Paiva* song.

The oldest version of this song, collected at Mopeia, is a characteristic form of work song with a lead singer and choral

response: 'Paiva - ay, Wo-o-o, Wo/ Paiva - ay, Wo-o-o, Wo/ Paiva - ay, Paiva, I've killed his money for him, His penis!' Other versions, more recent and from different localities, are generally longer and more elaborate, but they always include the final epigram, which is rhymed in the original ChiSena. The themes of suffering and humiliation run through all of these variants, as does an increasing use of reference to Paiva's genitals. One includes these lines, for example:

*You are making us suffer  
Beating me up  
You, beating me up  
You, Mr. balls-owner  
Your penis  
You are making us suffer for nothing  
Me, working for nothing  
We've seen hardship with the sugar  
Look we're getting just two hundred only  
Getting three small cruzados only, your penis!*

Similarly, the Paiva song was adapted to include criticism of the compulsory cotton and rice growing schemes that were instituted on Sena Sugar Estates from the mid-1930's until their demise in 1961. Women were especially victimized -- including sexual assaults -- by the excesses of forced cotton production, so the song was also tailored in many cases to inform to the structure of other women's songs. In one version a woman sings:

*Paiva -- mother, I'm scared  
I, Paiva, I've been tied up  
I, Paiva, I'm in prison  
Mother, we've been beaten up  
Paiva, I'm worn out  
Paiva, I'm scared  
Paiva, I'm scared  
Mother, we've been beaten up*

Finally, even the defeat of the system for which Paiva was a metaphor is incorporated in versions which have been created since FRELIMO's victory.

More specific references to both the forced cotton and rice schemes appears in widely known songs such as *Tonje Nyankwira*, a woman's song:

*Ay-O-Ay Earthing up cotton!  
Chorus  
I've been beaten! I've been beaten -- cotton!  
Chorus  
Gardening for the man, gardening for the man -- cotton!  
Chorus  
This year we cultivate cotton  
Chorus*

*Gardening for him, I see hardship! -- cotton!*

*Chorus*

*This year I'm cultivating the cotton,*

*Chorus*

*I've been beaten! I've been beaten! -- cotton!!*

*Chorus*

*I've been tied up! I've been tied up! -- cotton!!*

*Chorus*

As Vail and White emphasize, in the lower Zambezi valley 'to this day the word for cotton -- *tonje* -- evokes an almost automatic response: *nyatwa* -- suffering.<sup>42</sup> So extreme was the brutality of the rice concession of the 1940s that when the agents of the company appeared to buy up the crop, everyone would flee in panic into the bush because of the indiscriminate violence that they knew to expect. A song from Pirira Village cries out:

*Fathers, a devil has descended upon the village.*

*Fathers! Brothers! The steamer!!*

\* \* \*

*You must run from that village!*

*The cypaes have come!*

*Today you'll be tied up.*

*Mother, always I have nightmares,*

*You'll be tied with a rope,*

*Mother, you people of Pirira are finished today,*

*Mother, I hear that you've been shipped away,*

*Gone aboard, you've gone aboard,*

*You've been shipped away on the steamer!*

Echoes of this kind of bitter outcry are also known from other parts of Mozambique. Junod caught this scathing indictment of some South African whites who were travelling with their Tsonga servants and had just finished whipping them so that they would work harder:

*They treat us badly!*

*They are hard on us!*

*They drink their coffee!*

*And they give us none!*

That this song was not understood by the young victim's boss in no way lessened its function in helping him to contain his rage and to direct it towards the goal of survival.<sup>43</sup> Comparable, too, is this song composed by *shibalo* workers for an important Portuguese planter and businessman in southern Mozambique, which dates to the first third of the twentieth century: 'Oh Manuel Mendes, Oh Manuel Mendes, if you are such a great man, Manny old boy, why do you dress us in flour sacks and dare not turn your backs on us!<sup>44</sup> An even more striking comparison can be made with a group of Rjonga work songs from Marracuene, one of which explicitly



*"UJAMAA" THEME*

mocks a Portuguese named Fabião.<sup>45</sup> But songs could defy, as well as protest, as this young men's *ngodo*, apparently composed on the Rand in about 1941, makes plain: 'Although you put some of us in jail, you white men, you will not finish all of us.'<sup>46</sup>

To return to *Paiva*, how can we explain official tolerance by local administrators of such personally critical and forthright lyrics, especially in this region of Mozambique where ChiSena served as a widely understood *lingua franca*, even by Europeans? Vail and White argue persuasively that it was only in the form of song that this was possible, citing parallels with Tshopi *ngodo* performances. In many African societies, song provides an acceptable public mode of social criticism -- sometimes the only one -- including direct insults. Riddles are another vehicle which can provide this sort of social ridicule, as in this example from the Makonde, which reduces otherwise overweening Europeans to the same level of frail humanity as victimized Africans: 'The white commands, but there is also one who commands in his body. Answer: The anus.'<sup>47</sup> To be sure, this form of ridicule, as well as the more direct criticisms of colonial oppression, whether or not they were fully comprehended by those who wielded power at the local level, served as a social safety valve, a way of letting off steam in the absence of a more direct means of confronting the system. However, this did not make song an inappropriate form of protest, somehow diverting people from the real task of organizing to overthrow their oppressors. Rather, not only did it enable a savagely exploited people to deal more effectively with their own relative impotence during the heyday of colonialism, but it also maintained an unwavering tradition of popular resistance to the entire colonial system. If that tradition had many local, cultural, and regional manifestations, it nevertheless operated on a territorial scale, waiting only for the appropriate historical moment to be enlisted in the cause of national liberation.

Let us turn now to three rather different cultural expressions of colonial protest: modern Makonde sculpture, modern painting, and modern literature. Unlike the earlier forms that we have been discussing, these were neither traditional nor popular. Makonde sculpture, for example, only emerged under the stimulus of a Western market for African art, while both modern Mozambican painting and literature -- almost exclusively poetry, with one notable exception -- were the product of young intellectuals and artists, several of whom experimented in both media. At the same time, however, working both as individuals and in a community of fellow artists, these Mozambicans also found ways to articulate their opposition to Portuguese colonial rule and eventually to begin to formulate a definition of a national Mozambican culture. While this is much less true of Makonde sculptors, who have always remained close to their peasant roots, than it is of the artists who converged on Lourenço Marques from the late 1940s on, the international identification of the Makonde as Mozambican artists

meant that their sculpture was seen to be at least one element of that national culture.

Modern Makonde sculpture was first unveiled to the public at a lecture in Lourenco Marques in 1935, although it was not until 1949 that an exhibition was mounted in the capital.<sup>48</sup> Both the local Portuguese ruling class and the growing South African tourist trade assured interested Makonde artists of a steadily growing market for their wares.<sup>49</sup> Exactly how this art emerged and the identity of its first practitioners may never be fully untangled, but it seems most likely that local Portuguese patronage in Cabo Delgado and Nampula Provinces provided the initial stimulus. Clearly the critical change embodied in this piecemeal process was the move to carving figures for sale in ebony rather than the softer wood which had traditionally been preferred for *machinamu* statues. Europeans preferred their possessions in permanent form and ebony was ideally suited to this curious bourgeois value. From the sculptor's perspective, although ebony was more difficult to work, it was an intrinsically interesting wood which offered the artist greater possibilities for plasticity than softer wood. But it did not take Europeans to suggest that Makonde carvers begin to work in ebony. As early as World War I Pires de Lima had recorded that the Makonde fashioned spear hafts out of ebony and that 'they also manufacture artistic powder-horns; and I recall seeing a cowbell of ornamented ebony which served the purpose of advising the people of the passage of a chief.'<sup>50</sup> All that remained was for Makonde to carve what Europeans wanted in ebony, too.

Much, indeed most, of the commercial art produced by the Makonde in succeeding decades does not bear upon this discussion because whatever its worth as art, its subject matter was largely dictated by market forces. As Pesa Alimesi commented more than a decade ago in describing one of his pieces: 'This the Europeans like. We find out what they like. We make what they like when we are hungry.'<sup>51</sup> Not surprisingly, most Europeans were not interested in politically conscious art. Nevertheless, Makonde artists occasionally managed to incorporate elements of cultural resistance in their commercially restricted subject matter, although it is just about impossible to detect this in the various psychological interpretations that have been given to their art. Indeed, when directly asked about the meaning of a carving, an experienced man would probably do the obvious thing -- simply tell the eager inquirer what he or she wanted to hear, an artful dodge at which anyone who had lived under colonial rule was adept.

For the Makonde sculptors who migrated in large numbers to southern Tanganyika and Dar es Salaam in the 1950's and 1960's where they could work in greater freedom and find a better market than obtained in Mozambique, this meant attributing almost anything to so-called *shetani* (Swahili word for the devil. Ed. K.M.)



*THE BLACK MAN'S BURDEN*



spirits. Thus, a carving which Stout entitles 'Ambiguous Benediction,' and which he allows 'may appear at first glance a burlesque of the priesthood, but a carver identified it as a "Shetani padre",' seems in our context to be a horrifying vision of a corrupt priesthood, an unambiguous indictment of what the artist believed the Church represented in his homeland.<sup>52</sup> Again, a piece sculpted by Rashidi bin Mohamed in 1969 is described by Korn as 'A city shetani.'

*One of the few modern species of shetani. Dressed in a policeman's uniform he will roam the streets of the town when people have retired to their houses. Sometimes he will make use of a loudspeaker when announcing the kill of a victim to his fellow shetani, and the sound of his voice will be horribly amplified. Even by day he may appear, by then not distinguishable from an ordinary policeman.*<sup>53</sup>

A different perspective reveals instead a policeman whose distorted features suggest the degree of his inhumanity, something not unknown to other Mozambicans, and whose exposed penis ridicules him in the same way as does the epigrammatic refrain of Paiva. A better caption to this carving would be the Tsonga proverb which was reported more than twenty years ago as being applied to seeing a policeman in town: 'One cannot fail to see a fool.'<sup>54</sup>

There is less controversy when it comes to the body of sculpture that depicts the burden of colonialism that weighted down the entire Makonde people. These carvings often take the form of a single figure bearing an immensely heavy load, while others bear witness to the twin themes of suffering and compassion.<sup>55</sup> Possibly the best known style of Makonde sculpture that incorporates elements of resistance to colonialism is that which has gained popularity as *ujamaa*.<sup>56</sup> This style emerged among a small group of artists working in the Dar es Salaam area in the early 1960s. It is characterized by the depiction of a group of figures in high relief who are entwined with each other or emerge out of a solid column of wood. These figures represent the basic Makonde social unit and frequently feature an ancestor spirit at the top. The power of these figures and the social bond that they represent is what caused them to become popularized as *ujamaa* sculptures in post-Arusha Declaration Tanzania, but they reflect more immediately the assertion of unshakeable communal values at a particularly violent period of change for the Makonde.

Finally, there are individual pieces by Makonde sculptors which directly protest colonial rule. The most subtle of these reiterates the anti-Church theme noted elsewhere and is described

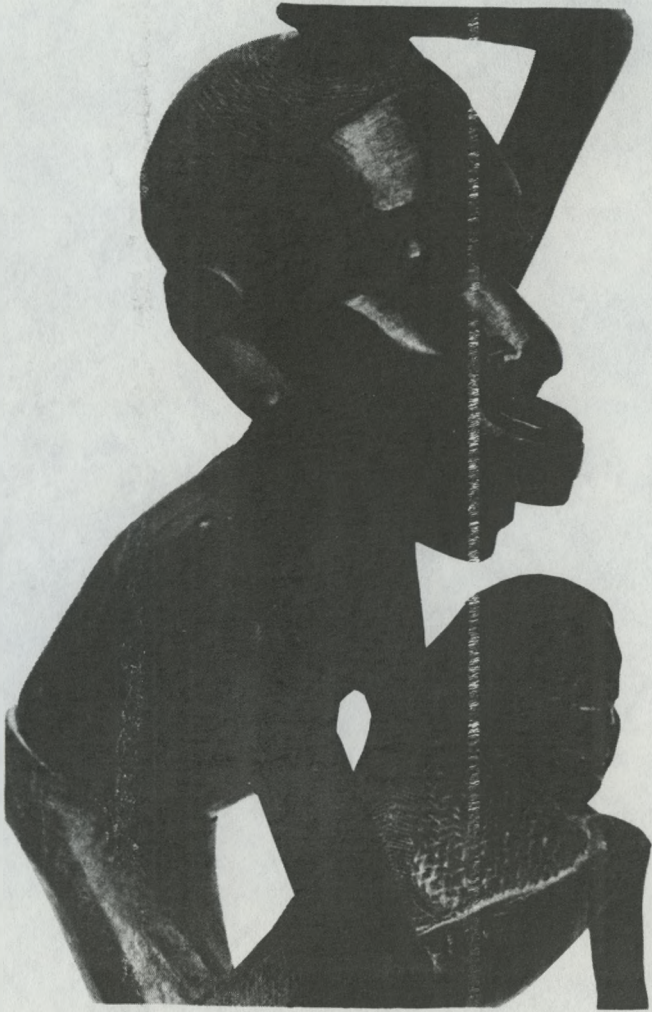


"UJAMAA" (DETAIL)

by Eduardo Mondlane in the following terms: 'a pieta becomes a study not of sorrow but of revenge, with the mother raising a spear over the body of her dead son.'<sup>57</sup> Others detail the humiliation and brutality of everyday Makonde relations with the Portuguese, showing two men bearing an empty *machila* (a litter for carrying *wazungu*) or the brutal application of the *palmatoria*. Pieces like these were definitely not for the tourist trade, but they represented a reality with which virtually all Makonde were familiar.<sup>58</sup>

The world of the circle of artists and writers which arose in Lourenco after World War II, while constituting a social sector different from that of the Makonde artists, or the Tshopi musician, or the Tsonga migrant laborer, came to represent for these men and all the common people of Mozambique their first consciously national cultural voices. Whether they were white Mozambicans attempting to discover exactly what their role as intellectuals meant, or black Mozambicans having to deal with the political and social implications of being or becoming *assimilados*, or *mestigos* who had lived their entire lives caught between African and Portuguese cultures in Mozambique, these men and women struggled individually and collectively from the 1950s until independence to define their art as Mozambicans.<sup>59</sup> And to do so in colonial Mozambique was inevitably to create a national art of resistance.

The best known exponents of this group are the writers, especially the poets, whose work has been translated and anthologized in several foreign languages since the 1960s.<sup>60</sup> The first collective effort of these writers was a small publication of poems in 1952 which was very significantly entitled *Msaho*, after the orchestral competitions of the Tshopi. The major figures in this group were José Craveirinha and Noémia de Sousa, whose poetry captures vividly their identification as Mozambicans and their commitment to creating politically and socially conscious verse. The themes of their poetry are the same ones that we have discussed in looking at popular forms of cultural protest, but to these is added a sense of barely contained rage that arises from their greater understanding of the hypocrisy of Portugal's 'civilizing mission'. Not surprisingly, their poetry contains a number of explicit references to the cultural forms that we have examined, and in some cases was very likely based upon the same sources that we have utilized.<sup>61</sup> To take an example from Noémia de Sousa, in 'The poem of João', she writes of this Mozambican Everyman that 'he swayed to the Chope marimbas on a Sunday' and that 'he sang with the shibalos their songs of homesick longing.' This João, who identified himself with all Mozambicans, is eventually taken away by the authorities, the poem continues, but his spirit remains alive with his comrades. Finally, the poet asks in lines that are strongly reminiscent of the young men's *ngodo* recorded by Tracey ('Although you put some of us in jail, you white man,



*THE WRATH OF THE PEOPLE*

you will not finish all of us.'): 'Who will take us all and lock us in a cage?/ . . . For João is us all, we are a multitude/ and the multitude/ who can take the multitude and lock it in a cage?'<sup>62</sup>

Even more explicit, and requiring no commentary at all, is Noémia de Sousa's poem, 'If you want to know me':

*If you want to know me  
examine with careful eyes  
this bit of black wood  
which some unknown Maconde brother  
cut and carved  
with his inspired hands  
in the distant lands of the North.*

*This is what I am  
empty sockets despairing of possessing life  
a mouth torn open in an anguished wound  
huge hands outspread  
and raised in imprecation and in threat  
a body tattooed with wounds seen and unseen  
from the harsh whipstrokes of slavery  
Tortured and magnificent  
proud and mysterious  
Africa from head to foot  
this is what I am.*

*If you want to understand me  
come, bend over this soul of Africa  
in the black dockworker's groans  
the Tshopi's frenzied dances  
The Shanganas' rebellion  
in the strange sadness which flows  
from an African song, through the night.*

*And ask no more  
to know me  
for I'm nothing but a shell of flesh  
where Africa's revolt congealed  
its cry pregnant with hope.*<sup>63</sup>

Unfortunately, the power of her poetry was not sufficient to protect Noémia de Sousa's own spirit against the colonial system that she criticized and she went into exile and abandoned her writing in the early 1960s. The departure of Noémia de Sousa left José Craveirinha alone as the leading figure in this vigorous Mozambican literary movement and he was equal to the challenge.

One of Craveirinha's favorite themes is the plight of the migrant laborer who goes to the South African mines, the *magaiga*. The dehumanization and therefore deculturalization of this system

is at the center of poems like 'Mamparra m'gaiza', which compares African workers to cattle going to the slaughter, while 'In the pen/ the females stay behind/ to breed new cattle,' a perfect metaphor of the reproduction of the means of production in the political economy of colonialism in southern Mozambique. The destruction of lives and souls in the mines is also the theme of his 'Poem', which specifically refers to Tshopi workers, and 'Mamana Saquina' tells of the loss of a Shangana woman's son to the mines, while 'she scratched maize from the ground/ and achieved the miracle of one hundred and fifty-five bales of cotton.'<sup>64</sup>

The powerful grip that the migrant labor system held on the minds of these writers is further attested to in similar poems by Noémia de Sousa ('Magaíça'), Gouveia de Lemos ('Song of Agony'), and somewhat later, the painter, Malangatana Gowenha Valente ('The Surviving Miner').<sup>65</sup>

The most powerful and threatening of these poems that condemned the entire system of labor exploitation in Mozambique is also by José Craveirinha. Called 'Black Cry', it appears in his 1964 collection, *Chigubo*, which takes its name from the performance of Tsonga war songs (-*gúba*).<sup>66</sup>

*I am coal!  
And you tear me brutally from the ground.  
and you make me your source of wealth, boss.*

*I am coal!  
And you ignite me, boss  
in order to serve you eternally as motive force  
but not eternally, boss.*

*I am coal  
and I must blaze, yes  
and burn with all the force of my combustion.*

*I am coal  
I must blaze in exploitation  
blaze into ashes of malediction  
blaze live like tar, my brother  
until I am no longer your wealth, boss.*

*I am coal  
I must blaze  
burn all with the fire of my combustion.*

*Yes!  
I will be your coal, boss!<sup>67</sup>*

Given the direct challenge to Portuguese colonialism in Craveirinha's *Chigubo* collection, it is not at all surprising that he was one of a number of Mozambican intellectuals who were imprisoned by the Portuguese regime in 1966. Here was an entirely different cultural challenge to the Portuguese ruling class, attacking its premises with the weapons of the 'civilizing mission' just as FRELIMO was attacking its monopoly of force with weapons fit for the task.

A more subtle assault was also being launched at this time by the young Luís Bernardo Honwana, whose collection of short stories called *We Killed Mangy-Dog* was published in Lourenço Marques in 1964. Working in the circle which took its leadership from Craveirinha, to whom his volume is dedicated, Honwana's stories deal in repressed emotions and the struggle for survival against the brutality of Portuguese colonialism. As prose, they are uniquely accessible and can be looked upon as artistic expressions of the popular sentiments chronicled in the letters to the newspaper *Voz Africana* ('African Voice') in Mozambique in the 1960s.<sup>68</sup> The constant humiliation of colonial oppression is reiterated in Honwana's stories, together with the life and death of hope for future change. In 'The old woman' the narrator explains to his mother that although he has been beaten up by an unnamed assailant in a bar -- the context makes it clear that this man is a white settler -- the physical beating is itself unimportant. He explains to her that the real source of his rage is that

*"They made me small, and they succeeded in making me feel small. Yes, that's it. That is everything. And why? They don't even say it out loud. And everything falls on me, not as a slow erosion, for this no one feels, but it falls suddenly, with agonizing noises inside me, and falls, and falls..."*<sup>69</sup>

This same motif of public humiliation and meek acceptance of such outrages occurs time and again in Honwana's stories, linked inevitably to the dehumanizing consequences of such behavior. In 'Dina' it is old Madala who, having just seen the farm Overseer ravish his daughter in the fields in sight of all the workers during the midday meal break, must accept the wine offered to him by this man as a sign of his submission, despite the derision of the younger men around him. And when one of these youths from the Kraal Gang lingers slightly when ordered to return to work, all it earns him is a violent attack by the Overseer.

In 'Nhinguitimo', by contrast, the theme of self-destruction takes a different form, when the over-confident Virgula Oito goes crazy and begins shooting his companions after his land has been appropriated by Rodrigues, the local Portuguese storekeeper, with the assistance of the resident administrator. By lashing out individually against this injustice Virgula Oito ensures his own merciless death at the hands of a vigilante group led by Rodrigues. But Virgula Oito is not the only one whose spirit is crushed in this story, for the narrator himself, by denying his involvement in his acquaintance's fate ('I had just gone on as usual as if it had nothing to do with me...'), also is a victim of the colonial rules of the game.<sup>70</sup>

All of these themes come together in 'Papa, snake and I', when it is the narrator's father who must accept the insults and

the demands for compensation for his dead pointer of Senhor Castro while suppressing his true feelings in front of his uncomprehending young son. Later, when father and son are discussing the incident, Papa explains:

*'Do you know, my son,' Papa spoke ponderously, and gesticulated a lot before every word. 'The most difficult thing to bear is that feeling of complete emptiness...and one suffers very much...very, very, very much. One grows with so much bottled up inside, but afterwards it is difficult to scream, you know.'*

Finally, in trying to clarify his feelings about the hopeless frustration that seizes him, Papa turns to his wife and says:

*'It's nothing, Mother, but you know, our son believes that people don't mount wild horses, and that they only make use of the hungry, docile ones. Yet when a horse goes wild it gets shot down, and it's all finished. But tame horses die every day. Every day, d'you hear? Day after day, after day -- as long as they can stand on their feet.'*

In this single passage Honwana captures the debilitating futility of the colonial situation by telling us that the blind actions of wild horses -- such as the young man from the Kraal Gang or Virgula Oito -- or the stoic acceptance of the tame horses -- such as Papa, the old woman's beaten son, the narrator of "Nhin-guitimo", or the cattle-like *magaiças* of Craveirinha's poem -- leads to the same fate.<sup>71</sup>

The compassionate humanity and sheer literary skill of Honwana's stories invests them with a spirit of hope, however, and it is probably that feature of his art, as much as anything else, which landed him in a Portuguese prison with Craveirinha and the others.

If Honwana stands alone as a writer of prose in this group, he is typical in his experimentation in other media, for example, painting. We have already noted that Malangatana wrote verse and this constant search for the best medium in which to express one's self has been repeated in the careers of younger people like Inácio Matsinhe, an artist who also writes, and Virgílio Massingue, a poet and singer who also paints.<sup>72</sup> Malangatana's art has exerted a powerful influence over all of the Mozambican artists who emerged after he had established his reputation in the early 1960s. His canvases burst with compressed energy and both his style and his subject matter lend themselves to emulation. Whatever he



called his paintings, Malangatana's mature art clearly represented the struggle of an oppressed people to bear its burden of violence and savagery with dignity and to cast off the shackles that bound them. 'Art for me is,' he has written, 'A collective expression that comes from the uses and customs of the people and leads to their social, mental, cultural and political evolution.' Furthermore, Malangatana was committed to the idea that art had to communicate popular aspirations to the people, as well as draw its inspiration from them, so that there came into being 'a simple dialogue, comprehensible, but having all the requirements of art. A vibrant thing, crying to the spectator, full of heat and life that makes him cry, or creates tremors in his body. Thus, it's worthwhile to have art, to make it, to express it as a force of our veins and with the heat of our blood.'<sup>73</sup> For his belief in the political nature of his art, Malangatana was also imprisoned by the Portuguese in the mid-1960s.

It is obvious that this initial emergence of self-consciously national culture was perceived as a serious threat by the Portuguese, coinciding as it did with the formation of FRELIMO and the beginning of armed struggle for liberation. By imprisoning these artists for their political beliefs the Portuguese hoped to destroy the growing unity and militancy within the Mozambican intellectual community in the capital and other major urban centers. In one case, this tactic succeeded, as the dissolution of the *Grupo Sete, Movimento Artístico* (Seven Group, Artistic Movement) in 1965 as a result of official persecution indicates.<sup>74</sup> But individual artists continued to treat the same themes in the last decade of colonial rule, even if they were not organized as they had once been. The powerful sculptures of Alberto Chissano, for example, reflect in three dimensions the same burden of oppression as the canvases of Malangatana and bear no small affinity with similar ones by Makonde sculptors in Tanzania.

The continual rediscovery of popular cultural motifs also characterizes the work of many younger artists during the war-torn twilight of colonialism. Matsinhe draws upon not only the cultural heritage of his own childhood in southern Mozambique, but also upon that of Niassa Province, where he spent his time as a military conscript in the mid-1960s. Indeed, Matsinhe is representative of the way in which many Mozambican artists were progressively radicalized by the liberation struggle and the attempts of the Portuguese secret police to prevent them from presenting their ideas in relation to that struggle. As the very young painter Fernando Sumbana explained just after independence:

*It was hard to express ourselves when the Portuguese were here, for fear of arrest or detention. There was no freedom to speak about our problems or our poverty. To be for Frelimo was against the law. I painted because I wanted to, but also because I had*

to. It was the only way to express what I was thinking, what I was seeing.<sup>75</sup>

It was this sort of relentless pressure that determined Matsinhe's departure from Lourenço Marques to Lisbon, where the impact of his art was extended from a Mozambican to a metropolitan and, before long, international audience. Until the April 1974 coup in Portugal, however, it was not possible for artists like Matsinhe to show their political paintings in public, so his one man show in Lisbon in 1973 featured only his culturally inspired work. Less than six months after the fall of the fascist government, Matsinhe debuted in London at the African Centre with a show featuring explicitly political canvases such as 'WiriYamu -- Everything was devastated,' 'All was denied by whip and ferule,' 'Prisoner's Torture,' 'Our Music was Put in Chains,' '500 Years of Torture and Slavery,' 'Our Tears are of Hunger and Blood,' and 'I Became a Tortoise to Resist Torture.'

In a BBC African Service interview in connection with this exhibit, Matsinhe offered the following commentary on his art:

*I paint for my people but, of course, it is a problem that the world should know about. So I also paint for the world to know the problems of my people.*

*Q: What about your people's political situation? Are you making a commentary? Are you making a protest? What is the political nature of your work?*

*MATSINHE: I'm making a political portrait of the suffering of the people in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea: the people oppressed by the Portuguese. I chose this form because I believe this is a form in which I can tell other people of this suffering.*

*You will notice that one of the features of my paintings is the lips swollen, very swollen lips divided into four: that means that the people in those territories for five hundred years would not speak out, so I portray their suffering, their inability of speaking out in those lips divided into four. [Matsinhe would seem to share this image with both Malangatana and Chissano] ... I've used the tortoise to symbolise the resistance that people have to have in order to face suffering and the conditions of their life. In order to resist the oppression they have become like tortoises, protected by those very big shells.<sup>76</sup>*

If Matsinhe's art represents a clear continuity over a quarter century with the original *msaho* circle of poets, this



*THE BLACK MAN'S BURDEN....  
(Refrain)*



.....AND LIBERATION:  
FRELIMO FREEDOM FIGHTER

statement by the artist also reflects a problem common to most of the intellectuals involved in this cultural movement. As artists and intellectuals, most of these men and women lived in a very different world from most Mozambicans, notwithstanding shared political persecution. Although they drew many of their themes from the life of the common people, they were still an intellectual élite who inevitably tended to see themselves as intermediaries through whom an inarticulate mass might be heard, as Matsinhe's eloquent testimony indicates. But as we have seen, the people of Mozambique were not inarticulate and they spoke out for themselves whenever the right circumstances made such expressions of resistance possible, masking their true sentiments as required and stating them obliquely in most instances. In this they differed not at all from the intellectuals and artists of the major urban centers.<sup>77</sup>

Part of the problem for individuals like Matsinhe was their isolation from the armed struggle to the north in the countryside. There, in the ranks of FRELIMO, poets had become freedom fighters without forgetting how to write poetry. Prominent among the leaders of FRELIMO were Marcelino dos Santos and Jorge Rebelo, whose poetry was geared to the fight for independence and the need to mobilize the people in support of it.<sup>78</sup> Inspiring as this is, however, the really important achievement of FRELIMO in this respect during the liberation struggle was the popularization of all cultural forms as part of the creation of a revolutionary national culture. In a speech at the Second Conference of the Department of Education and Culture in September 1970, President Machel emphasized that 'Mozambique's cultural wealth does not belong to any one region,' citing Makonde sculpture and Tshopi music as two sources of national pride. He then made the following exhortation:

*Let art seek to combine old form with new content, then giving rise to new form. Let painting, written literature, theatre and artistic handicrafts be added to the traditionally cultivated dance, sculpture and singing. Let the creativity of some become that of all, men and women, young and old, from the North to the South, so that the new revolutionary and Mozambican culture may be born of all.*<sup>79</sup>

This process was begun in earnest at FRELIMO's first cultural seminar, which was held at the beginning of 1972. While Portuguese and Mozambican intellectuals debated the existence of a Mozambican culture in urban Mozambique, FRELIMO delegates from the liberated zones of the North organized their work around three basic questions: 'What is the Mozambican Culture? What has our expression of culture been in the past and what must be preserved from that traditional culture? How can we develop our culture?'



FRELIMO FREEDOM FIGHTER  
(Detail)

Structures were created at once to transform ideas and legacies into tangible manifestations, producing collections of revolutionary songs and poems by the end of the seminar and laying the foundation for future development.<sup>80</sup> Indeed, the politics of FRELIMO with regard to culture are made explicit in the introduction to this first collection of poetry:

*Thanks to the Revolution in Mozambique, poetry, like all the other arts, ceased to be a privilege of an élite, of a class. The colonialists, the capitalists, taught us that only he could be a poet who had attended school for many years, gone to universities, who would be that one whom they call "an intellectual." The man of the people, the peasant, the worker -- say the colonialists, say the capitalists -- is not capable of feeling and understanding poetry, much less expressing himself in poetic form...*

*The colonialists and capitalists say that but they know that it is a pure lie...*

*One of the great merits of the Revolution is precisely to permit the people to produce, to free the creative energy of the people, which was suffocated for such a long time. And when it is liberated, how that energy explodes -- and we see then the people producing marvelous things, in all fields -- in politics, in art, in technology, in science.<sup>81</sup>*

Another testament to the implications of the transformation of written poetry from an aspect of bourgeois intellectual culture to an integral part of popular culture in Mozambique is the dedication of a slender collection of poems by Barnabé João Mutimati which was published by FRELIMO at independence: 'Mutimati is an individual voice which embodies the collective voice. *I, the People* is now part of Mozambique. The Mozambican people is its author.'<sup>82</sup> This understanding of the role of culture in the Mozambican revolution would shape the development of Mozambican culture in succeeding years.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Told by Mesa, of Macaba village, near Nangololo, in Manuel Viegas Guerreiro, *Os Macondes de Moçambique*, IV (Lisbon, 1966), p. 309.

<sup>2</sup> Henri A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe* (New Hyde Park, N.Y., 1962, reprinting of 2nd revised ed. of 1927; 1st ed.

1912), II, pp. 353-354. The Tshopi, too, apparently regarded the Portuguese as 'water people' (*Vamadjue* or *Mazi*): see Hugh Tracey, *Chopi Musicians* (London, 1948, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Belo Marques, *Música negra -- estudos do Foclore Tonga* (Lisbon, 1943), pp. 98, 105; for other songs about the invasion of Ngungunyana, see pp. 87-90. Ngungunyana was King of the Gaza Nguni state which dominated southern Mozambique in the nineteenth century until its military defeat by the Portuguese.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> The first proverb is from Junod, *Life*, II, p. 353; the others are included in Henri Philippe Junod and Alexandre A. Jaques, *The Wisdom of the Tsonga-Shangana People*, 2nd ed. (Johannesburg, 1957), p. 111.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115, parentheses in original.

<sup>7</sup> Marques, *Música negra*, p. 103. Ironwood had no economic, medicinal, or ritual value for the Tshopi.

<sup>8</sup> Told by Miguel Licaunga, of Muome village, in Guerreiro, *Os Macondes*, IV, pp. 310-311.

<sup>9</sup> Junod, *Life*, II, pp. 223-225. For an invaluable assessment of Junod's work, see Patrick Harries, "The Anthropologist as Historian and Liberal: Henri A. Junod and the Thonga," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 8, 1 (1981), pp. 37-50.

<sup>10</sup> The most important collections are H. A. Junod, *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga de la baie de Delagoa* (Lausanne, 1897), and Guerreiro, *Os Macondes*, IV, and *Novos Contos Macondes* (Lisbon, 1974); see also, Francisco Manuel de Castro, 'Contos Macuas,' in *Trabalhos do 1.º Cong.º Nacional de Antropologia Colonial* (Porto, 1934), II, pp. 306-343.

<sup>11</sup> Jorge and Margo Dias, *Os Macondes de Moçambique*, III (Lisbon, 1970), p. 196.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 164, 391.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 384-385, 391, 394-395.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 395, 408.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, Figures 87 and 88; Wacaw Korabiewicz, *African Art in Polish Collections* (Warsaw, 1966), Plate 80.



<sup>16</sup> Robert Read-Dick, *Sanamu -- Adventures in search of African Art* (London, 1964), pp. 60-61.

<sup>17</sup> Dias and Dias, *Os Macondes*, III, p. 206 and Figure 92.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 384-385.

<sup>19</sup> Américo Pires de Lima, *Explorações em Moçambique* (Lisbon, 1943), pp. 44-45, and photographs between 42 and 43. Early Makonde carvings of Europeans are also alluded to by Augusto Cabral, 'Les Indigènes,' in *Portugal -- Colonie de Mozambique, Exposition Coloniale Internationale* (Paris, 1931), p. 6. Illustrations of other early *machinamu* statues are included in Instituto de Investigação Científica de Moçambique, *Esculturas do Povo Maconde -- Album* (Lorenço Marques, 1963), unpaginated; Jorge Dias, *Os Macondes de Moçambique*, I (Lisbon, 1964), Figure 108; and João dos Santos Rufino, *Albums Fotográficos e Descritivos da Colónia de Moçambique* (Hamburg, 1929), X, p. 88 (unattributed, but clearly Makoude, including three swagger sticks). Photographs of modern ones can be found in Dias and Dias, *Os Macondes*, III, Figures 159 and 160, between pp. 384 and 385, and Ladislav Holy, *Masks and Figures from Eastern and Southern Africa* (London, 1967), Plates 77, 81, 84-85. Cf. António de Oliveira, *Mahamba -- Tentativa de Interpretação Artística e Psicológica de Documentos de Arte dos Negros Africanos*, Junta de Investigações do Ultramar, Estudos, Ensaios e Documentos, 57 (Lisbon, 1959), pp. 31-32 and Plate 4.

<sup>20</sup> Chewa and Mang'anja masks are best known from Malawi and Zambia, but there is an illustration of one from Quelimane District (now Zambesia Province) in Santos Rufino, *Albums*, X, p. 68. A comparable modern Chewa mask from Tete Province is illustrated in António Rita-Ferreira, *Os Cheuas da Macanga*, *Memórias do Instituto das Investigações Científicas de Moçambique*, 8, Série C (Lorenço Marques, 1966), at p. 75, who also provides the most complete description of *nyau* in Mozambique, pp. 67-82. There are also two helmet masks which are ascribed to the Yao, but about which nothing else is known. Their stylistic similarity to early Makonde helmet masks raises serious doubts about their attribution. See Hans Himmelhaber, *Negerkunst und Negerkünstler* (Braunschweig, 1960), p. 413, and Holy, *Masks and Figures*, Plates 75 and 102.

<sup>21</sup> Junod, *Life*, II, pp. 127-137, showing both carved sticks and statues. See also Holy, *Masks and Figures*, Plates 130-134. Two human figures of uncertain provenance from Manica e Sofala are illustrated in Santos Rufino, *Albums*, X, p. 79. There is a photograph of an African artisan from this province carving human statuettes included in Companhia de Moçambique, *Quarenta Anos de Administração no Território de Manica e Sofala*, Documentário Foto-

gráfico apresentado na Primeira Exposição Colonial Portuguesa (Lisbon, 1934), p. 104. There are seven examples of turn of the century wood sculptures of Europeans from southern Mozambique in the collection of the Museum de Etnografia do Ultramar do Instituto de Antropologia da Universidade de Coimbra: see Fernando Bayolo Pacheco de Amorim and Maria Helena Xavier de Moraes, 'Catálogo-Inventário do. . .,' in J.I.U., *Anais*, X, 1 (1955), pp. 395-397; see also pieces described in *ibid.*, pp. 362 and 493, and in Diogo de Macedo, 'Arte Indígena: IV -- Moçambique,' *o Mundo Português*, I. 5 (1934), pp. 205-212 and following plates, No. 9 of which figures on display for sale.

<sup>22</sup> These sticks were located in the collection of a Lisbon antique dealer in 1975. Other than the fact that they are from Mozambique, and belonged to the collection of a Dona Sara Guedes, their exact provenance is unspecified.

<sup>23</sup> Soares de Castro, *Os Achirimas (Ensaio Etnográfico)* (Lourenço Marques, 1941), p. 47; Rufino Santos, *Albuns*, VII, p. 69, and X, p. 89. The word used in the caption to the photographs in Rufino Santos is *monos*, translated as 'monkeys', but which also carries the meaning of 'unsaleable articles' and indicates the implied commercial value with which Europeans viewed African art. Makua and Lomwe initiation figurines in raffia and wood are on display in the Nampula Museum. See also Macedo, 'Arte Indígena,' No. 15. For Tanzanian Makua clay figurines, see Hans Cory, *African Figurines* (London, 1956), p. 172. There is no mention of similar carvings by J.R. Pegado e Silva, 'Agrupamentos Étnicos e Religiões do Erati (Distrito de Moçambique),' [1961], 11 pp. mimeo, consulted in the library of the Arquivo Histórico de Moçambique, so perhaps this tradition has disappeared, as Cory documents for Tanzania. On this point, see also A. J. de Mello Machado, *Entre os Macuas de Angoche* (Lisbon, 1970), p. 242. Mello Machado is the only author to provide evidence of masked dances among the Makua, although it is nothing more than a captioned photograph (opposite p. 224) which suggests affinities with the Chewa-Mang'anja *nyau* complex. For possible confirmation, see the allusion in Russell G. Hamilton, *Voices from an Empire -- A History of Afro-Portuguese Literature* (Minneapolis, 1975), p. 224. A Makua bust is described in Oliveira, *Mahamba*, pp. 59-60 and Plate 21.

<sup>24</sup> Castro, *Os Achirimas*, p. 25. The figure of the soldier is in the Nampula Museum.

<sup>25</sup> Tracey, *Chopi Musicians*, p. 10.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 146, 2-3.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 48.

28 Ibid., p. 43. Cf. this harsh portrayal of a *cipai* from the perspective of the common folk of Zavala with the tribute paid to another *cipai* by a Portuguese administrator under whom he served in Chicó and Chioco, Tete Province, in 1939-1941: Conde Chioco (pseudonym), *Táulo -- Crónica da vida no mato* (Beira, 1973).

29 Tracey, *Chopi Musicians*, pp. 74, 68.

30 Ibid., p. 55.

31 Ibid., pp. 59, 43, 35, 65.

32 Ibid., pp. 80, 30-31, 82.

33 Ibid., pp. 112-113.

34 Ibid., pp. 81, 68.

35 Ibid., pp. 41, 46, 68, 70; Marques, *Música negra*, p. 23.

36 Gomes da Costa, *Gaza, 1897-1898* (Lisbon, 1899), p. 51; Junod, *Chants et Contes*, p. 37, English translation in Junod, *Life*, II, p. 189.

37 The most intriguing possibilities for research would seem to be the *Makwaya* and *Muchongolo* dances of the Shangana and Ndauswa, respectively, who are Tsonga-speakers. See Tracey, *African Dances of the Witwatersrand Gold Mines* (Johannesburg, 1952), pp. 16-17, photographs on pp. 95-115; Tafirenyika Moyana, 'Muchongoyo: A Shangani Dance,' *African Arts*, IX, 2 (1976), pp. 40-42; Thomas F. Johnston, 'The Stress-Reducing Function of Tsonga Beer-Songs,' M.S. thesis, California State College, Fullerton, 1972, pp. 143-168, and 'The Music of the Shangana-Tsonga,' Ph.D. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1971, pp. 257-277.

38 Junod, *Life*, II, p. 179.

39 Junod, *Chants et Contes*, p. 49.

40 Ibid., pp. 64-65; the English translation is in Junod, *Life*, II, p. 193.

41 The following discussion is based upon the remarkable essay by Leroy Vail and Landeg White, 'Plantation Protest: The History of a Mozambican Song,' *Journal of Southern African Studies*, V, 1

(1978), pp. 1-25; see also the songs analyzed in their "'Tawani, Machambero!": Forced Cotton and Rice Growing on the Zambezi,' *J.A.H.*, Xix, 2 (1978), pp. 239-263, two of which are cited below.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 253.

<sup>43</sup> Junod, *Life*, II, p. 189. This episode brings to mind the scene in Jean-Jacques Annaud's exquisite film about early colonial West Africa, *Black and White in Color*, in which two French priests being carried through the bush on litters comment on how much they enjoy hearing their bearers' song, the content of which is an unfavourable comparison between the heaviness of one and the smelly feet of the other! How many times must this scene have been repeated in early colonial Mozambique, as Europeans were carted about the countryside in *machilas*?

<sup>44</sup> This song and a number of others were collected in Maputo and its suburbs in 1977 by Jean Penvenne of Boston University and can be consulted at the C.E.A., U.E.M., and the Modern Language Tape Library, Harvard University. See Jean Penvenne, 'The Impact of Forced Labor on the Development of an African Working Class: Lourenço Marques, 1870 to 1962,' paper delivered at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association, Baltimore, Md., November 1978, p. 10 and n. 31.

<sup>45</sup> Norberto Santos Júnior, 'Algumas canções indígenas de Marracuene (Moçambique),' *Garcia de Orta*, V, 2 (1957), pp. 327-339. No translation is provided of the Rjonga texts in this article and the entire significance of work songs is not understood by the author.

<sup>46</sup> Tracey, *Chopi Musicians*, p. 78.

<sup>47</sup> Guerreiro, *Os Macondes*, IV, p. 325. So-called joking relationships serve a similar function in many East African societies, allowing for mutual abuse between linked partners within the context of intimate social relations. (It is rather a manifestation of mutual fondness than abuse. Ed. K.M.)

<sup>48</sup> Felisberto Ferreirinha, 'A estatuária dos Macondes,' *B.S.E.C.M.*, XIX, 63 (1949), pp. 19-33; Octávio Rodrigues de Campos, *Arte Negra -- a estatuária dos Macondes* (Lourenço Marques, n.d.), p. 44.

<sup>49</sup> Early critical assessments of Makonde sculpture, which accompanying illustrations suggest was at this time limited to busts, are hopelessly patronizing and racist. See José Nicolau Nunes de Oliveira, 'Arte Gentilica em Moçambique -- (Sumário duma

crítica), 'Mogambique, 3 (1935), pp. 33-53; Abílio Augusto de Brito e Nascimento (Ruy Sant'Elmo), 'A "Mulher" na Arte Gentílica (Macondes), 'Mogambique, 4 (1935), pp. 51-75; and João Augusto Silva, 'Arte -- Considerações Varias,' *Mogambique*, 13 (1938), pp. 79-91, which includes a bust of an African soldier; see also, Oliveira, *Mahamba*, pp. 31-32 and Plate 4.

<sup>50</sup> pires de Lima, *Explorações*, p. 42; see also the ebony amulet carved as a lion's tooth on p. 55, Figure 15; cf. the vague reference in Joao d'Azevedo Coutinho, *Do Nyassa a Pemba* (Lisbon, 1893), p. 65. For royal cowbells, see Jan Vansina, 'The bells of kings,' *J.A.H.*, X, 2 (1969), pp. 187-197.

<sup>51</sup> Quoted in J. Anthony Stout, *Modern Makonde Sculpture* (Nairobi, 1966), p. 16, the sculpture in question being illustrated in Plates XVII and XVIII.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18 and 92, Plate LXVII; see also references to similar anti-Church sculptures in Mondlane, *Struggle*, p. 104.

<sup>53</sup> Jorn Korn, *Modern Makonde Art* (London, 1974), p. 17.

<sup>54</sup> Junod and Jaques, *Wisdom*, p. 109 (#387). As it happens, another very popular style of modern Makonde sculpture features a wide range of obscene acts. Most interpretations read this style in Freudian terms, drawing importantly upon Jorge Dias' explanation of the *mapiko* as a male-female battleground in a strongly matrilineal society, but perhaps these carvings represent instead a combination of catering to European fascination with the sexual practices of blacks (cf. the popularity of so-called 'race records' in the United States in the second quarter of this century) and an entirely African utilization of obscenity to express ridicule.

<sup>55</sup> Roger Fouquer. *The Makonde and their Sculpture* (Dar es Salaam, 1972), illustrations nos. 17-19, 53-55, and pp. 49-50, 56-57.

<sup>56</sup> See the discussion in Margot Dias, *O Fenómeno da Escultura Maconde Chamada "Moderna"*, J.I.U., Estudos de Antropologia Cultural, No. 9 (Lisbon, 1973), pp. 10-14, and illustrations nos. 8-11; also Stout, *Makonde Sculpture*, figures nos. 25-28, and Fouquer, *The Makonde*, illustrations nos. 3,4,7,8, 26-35.

<sup>57</sup> Mondlane, *Struggle*, p. 104. In fact, the weapon that she holds is a straight-bladed hoe, a much more appropriate tool for a woman in the field to have at hand for defense.

<sup>58</sup> A small collection of these pieces used to be on display

at the Mozambique Institute in Dar es Salaam and one of them is illustrated in a FRELIMO poster entitled 'Invasão -- Opressão -- Resistência' which was part of a series of three produced for the tenth anniversary of its founding.

59 For a revealing glimpse of the pressures created by this clash of cultures, see Sykes, *Portugal and Africa*, pp. 76-80. It should be noted that there was at this time a serious division within the Portuguese intellectual community in Mozambique as to whether or not there was yet such a thing as a Mozambican culture. See Hamilton, *Voices*, pp. 171-177; Rodrigues Júnior, *Para uma Cultura Moçambicana (Ensaio)* (Lisbon, 1951); and Alexandre Lobato, *Sobre "Cultura Moçambicana" -- Reposição de um problema e resposta a um crítico* (Lisbon, 1952).

60 Mozambican poetry has appeared in too many different places to bear repeating here. The best critical discussion, which includes an excellent bibliography, is Hamilton, *Voices*, Part II; cf. Margaret Dickinson (ed.), *When bullets begin to flower -- Poems of resistance from Angola, Mozambique & Guine* (Nairobi, 1972), and Eduardo dos Santos, *A Negritude e a Luta pelas Independências na Africa Portuguesa* (Lisbon, 1975), for interpretations of Mozambican poetry that focus on its content as expressions of protest and resistance.

61 I am thinking here of Junod and Tracey, in particular, whose major works (*Life* and *Chopi Musicians*) were published in Portuguese translations in Lourenço Marques in the late 1940s. Without being able to ascertain definitely what these writers read, it seems very likely that they read and discussed this kind of material and that they were profoundly affected by it, since it provided them with a cultural window onto a world beyond their personal experience.

62 Translated in Dickinson, *Bullets*, pp. 70-74. Mondlane, *Struggle*, p. 111, notes that this poem was composed after a companion of the poet was deported after the 1947 strikes in Lourenço Marques.

63 Translated in Dickinson, *Bullets*, pp. 59-60.

64 *Ibid.*, pp. 46-50.

65 The first two are translated in *ibid.*, pp. 45-46 and 41-42, the last in Hamilton, *Voices*, pp. 196-197.

66 See *ibid.*, p. 202; Junod, *Life*, I, pp. 460-464; and R. Cenod, *Tsonga-English Dictionary* (Johannesburg, 1967), p. 44.

67 Translated in Hamilton, *Voices*, p. 204. Craveirinha's *Chigubo*, Coleção Autores Ultramarinos, No. 14 (Lisbon, 1964), pp. 8-9, also includes a poem called 'Msaho de aniversario' which recalls the 1952 collection and reaffirms the significance of popular culture for these writers.

68 See José Rapela (ed.), *Mozambique pelo seu Povo -- Cartas à "Voz Africana"* (Porto, 1971).

69 Luís Bernardo Honwana, *We Killed Mangy-Dog & other stories* (London, 1969), p. 30.

70 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

71 *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

72 For Massingue's poetry and music, see Santos, *Negritude*, pp. 108-109, and his own record, *Viva Mocambique 75*, Orfeu Stat 023, which includes a reproduction of one of his paintings. Matsinhe is discussed below.

73 Quoted in Betty Schneider, 'Malangatana of Mozambique,' *African Arts*, V, 2 (1972), pp. 40-45, which includes several excellent reproductions of his canvases and engravings. Malangatana's earlier work and an autobiographical sketch appear in Julian Beinart, 'Malangatana,' *Black Orpheus*, 10 (1961?), pp. 22-27.

74 Coleção Artistas de Moçambique, 1, *Inácio Matsinhe -- Transformei-me em Tartaruga para Resistir* (Lisbon, [1975]), pp. 8, 54.

75 Quoted in Robin Wright, 'The Art of Independence,' The Alicia Patterson Foundation (received in New York 7 July 1975). At the time of this interview, Sumbana was only twenty years old.

76 *Inácio Matsinhe*, pp. 57, 71-72.

77 Cf. Mondlane, *Struggle*, pp. 108-112.

78 See Dickinson, *Bullets*, pp. 95-98, 108, 110-111, 116-129.

79 Samora Machel, *Mozambique: Sowing the Seeds of Revolution* (London, 1974), p. 41/ *A Nossa Luta* (Lourenco Marques, 1975), p. 37/.

80 *Mozambique Revolution*, 50 (1972), p. 15. It is instruc-

tive to note that the songs that have become part of FRELIMO's cultural arsenal are reproduced in the language of their original composition, whether that be Portuguese or any of the major African languages of the country. People are expected to be willing to learn their meaning and how to sing them in the original language, even if it is not their own, as part of the process envisioned by President Machel. See FRELIMO, *Hinos da Revolução* (Lourenço Marques, 1975). Another example of this sharing of regional cultures can be seen in Robert Van Lierop's film, *A Luta Continua*, which includes one scene where a militant performs an impromptu Makonde *mapiko* dance by pulling a wool knit cap over his face as a substitute for a mask. For an assessment of the importance of popular participation in developing national culture since independence, see Rick Salutin, "The Culture Vul-  
ture in Mozambique," *This Magazine*, 13, 1 (1979), pp. 26-30.

<sup>81</sup> FRELIMO, Departamento de Educação e Cultura, *Poesia de Combate -- Poemas de militantes de FRELIMO*, Caderno N.º 1 (n.d.), p. 1.

<sup>82</sup> Barnabé João Mutimati, *Eu, o Povo -- poemas da revolução* (Lourenço Marques, 1975). This entire collection has recently been translated in Chris Searle, *The Sunflower of Hope: Poems From the Mozambican Revolution* (London, 1982), pp. 84-109.





*FRELIMO FREEDOM FIGHTER  
(Detail)*

THE SOCIAL CHARACTER OF SLAVERY  
IN ASANTE AND DAHOMEY\*

By

Boniface I. Obichere

Most studies\*\* of slavery look at the institution of slavery as one that arose primarily in response to economic necessity. Slavery in Dahomey and Asante was not primarily an economic affair. However, some slaves were used in the production sector of the economy, such as in agriculture for food production, for cattle raising and in the royal plantations in Dahomey. Those slaves who tended the king's plantations and farms in Dahomey had a special status and could not be sold. The king's palace at Akpueho was noted for palm produce. There were royal farms at Affomai, Oumbumedi and along the Hlan. Furthermore, there were slave villages given to production at Ouahoue, Zogbodome, Lissezoun, Tindji and Luokpe. Smiths and other slaves who specialized in the textile industry were concentrated in Male and Becon, and lived in Hountondji.<sup>1</sup>

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\*"Asante... is the Akan-speaking group of contiguous chiefdoms in modern central Ghana united since the end of the seventeenth century by allegiance to the Golden Stool, occupied by the Asantehene and located in Kumasi." Kwame Arhin, "Transit Markets in the Asante Hinterland in the late Nineteenth Century," Odu: A Journal of West African Studies, New Series No. 9 (January 1974) p. 20, note 8. Ghana National Archives ADM. 11/1320 "The Origin of the Asante Confederation. A Theory" by A.W. Noris Ashanti National Authority (ANA) (18/1920).

Dahomey was the pre-colonial centralized kingdom founded by the Fon in the Abomey plateau in the early seventeenth century. Among the class that was ruled and controlled in both pre-colonial Asante and Dahomey were those who could be classified as slaves. See Boniface I. Obichere, West African States and European Expansion: The Dahomey-Niger Hinterland, 1885-1898 (London, 1971) pp. 14-15; 51-52.

\*\*See, for example, Paul Lovejoy, Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa, 1983; Paul Lovejoy (ed.), The Ideology of Slavery in Africa, 1981; John Grace, Domestic Slavery in West Africa, 1975; Fred Cooper, Plantation Slavery on the East Coast of Africa, 1979; Stanley Elkins, Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life, New York, 1963; Laura Foner and Eugene D. Genovese (eds.), Slavery in the New World: A Reader in Comparative History, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1969; David Brion Davis, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture, Ithaca, N.Y., 1966; S. Miers and Igor Kopytoff, Slavery in Africa, Historical and Anthropological Perspectives, Wisconsin Press, 1977; Robert Brent Toplin, The Abolition of Slavery in Brazil, New York, 1975.