
MAKWAYELA: CHORAL PERFORMANCE AND NATION BUILDING IN MOZAMBIQUE

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Abstract: *This is an ethnomusicological study of choral performance in Maputo, the capital city of Mozambique. It includes a historical perspective over the last thirty years, and it analyzes the changes which took place in performance along with the political changes in this African country. The author studies the use of music for the purpose of creating a national identity. Makwayela, a characteristic kind of male choral performance which developed in Southern Mozambique, is used as a study case. Makwayela is described and framed within the range of expressive modes in Maputo. Its origins are discussed in the background of mining culture in Southern Africa, and its development is associated with recent social history in Mozambique, and particularly in Maputo.*

Keywords: *choral performance, Makwayela, Mozambique.*

Resumo: *Trata-se de um estudo etnomusicológico da performance coral em Maputo, a capital de Moçambique. Inclui uma perspectiva histórica sobre os últimos trinta anos, e analisa as mudanças que se verificaram na performance, em conjunto com as mudanças políticas neste país africano. O autor estuda a utilização da música com o propósito da criação de uma identidade nacional. Como caso de estudo, é referida a Makwayela, um tipo característico de performance coral masculina que se desenvolveu no sul de Moçambique. A Makwayela é descrita e enquadrada no âmbito dos modos expressivos que se encontram em Maputo. A suas origens são discutidas no domínio da cultura dos mineiros da África Austral, e o seu desenvolvimento é associado à história social recente em Moçambique, e particularmente em Maputo.*

Palavras-chave: *Makwayela, Moçambique, performance coral.*

This article originates in a study about expressive behavior in a modern African country, Mozambique. Its purpose is to clarify the relationship between expressive culture – as a group of artifacts for cultural mediation – and social and historical processes. Different sets of historical facts are taken in consideration: labor migration, urban migration and settlement, and the formation of nationality in Mozambique. It tries to analyze the agency of choral performance in the shaping of modern Maputo and the significance of expressive modes for the creation of independent Mozambique as a nation.

With these purposes in mind, I try to examine the large field of expressive behavior within the city of Maputo. Attention is given to the historical setting in which today's expressive modes found its roots, and to the critical social situation from which they emerge. Makwayela and other expressive modes are unthinkable outside of the doubleness of the colonial and post-colonial situation, in which urbanization and labor migration, among others, are the dominant forms of social existence.

This study stems from intensive field research conducted in Mozambique over 1990 and 1992, completed with further field-trips in the last seven years. The major collection of field data took place in the cane city of Maputo, a huge labyrinth of cane walls and narrow passages always crowded with restless people.

The stream of historical events in Southern Africa has generated unique sets of configurations for social relations and cultural figures in Mozambique. Labor migration, apartheid, independence, wars and many other outgrowths of colonialism and its conclusion, as well as direct exposure to modern world economic systems, and drought, were a few of the most important factors of social dynamics in the twentieth century. Prior to the colonial era, significant large population shifts had already taken place in Southern Africa, helping to shape a socially dynamic configuration for the region.

Mozambique, a country raged by war to 1992, has been the stage for many of these processes. Its particular historical experience was extensively affected by its condition as a Portuguese colony until 1975, and by its proximity to South Africa, particularly to Johannesburg and the Transvaal mining enterprise. The course of historical events in Mozambique has caused severe social disruption, among which the displacement of masses of population – along with its social consequences, has played a major role in shaping Mozambican society. Labor migrants to South Africa, town dwellers recently

arrived from the countryside and war and famine refugees were population categories which reflected deep changes at the level of social organization in Mozambique.

Trying to understand the cultural consequences of such an account of social dynamics involves a venture into recent history as well as into social and individual behavior in different aspects of human life. This includes the understanding of expressive behavior, usually conceived as a cultural product. Cultural aspects of human life must be understood as variable independently of social systems, though the two are interdependent. These analytical concepts – culture and social system – must be distinguished in order to understand the role of human artifacts such as art, or religion. Culture, as the “framework of beliefs, expressive symbols, and values in terms of which individuals define their world, express their feelings, and make judgments”; and social structure as the persistent form of the “ongoing process of interactive behavior” (Geertz, 1973, p. 145). Analytical insights into human behavior are thus privileged by this distinction. Using the contrast between the “logico-meaningful integration” associated with culture, and the “causal-functional integration” associated with the social system, I frame the concept of expressive behavior as logico-meaningful integration. Expressive behavior carries the motive of unity, of perceptive implication between apparently disparate areas of life, as Geertz’s (1973, p. 145) “unity of style”. Cultural patterns, generated and transformed by behavior, convey series of different social meanings according to the constraints of specific historical settings.

Cultural patterns have been analogized with living structures whose symbolic capabilities help to guide social action. The instrumentality of symbolic structures in analytic procedures -bringing them close to a kind of symbolic functionalism- has boosted recent efforts to explain the process of articulation between a human group and its encompassing social forces. Symbolic mediation, through metaphoric enactment, is conceived to actuate stability and resolution of social forces within a system – local or global. People’s reactions to changing contexts are seen as a problem of symbolic mediation in order to reestablish “the coherence of their lived world and to render controllable its process of reproduction” (Comaroff, 1985, p. 3). Emphasis is put on communicative processes such as religious celebrations, song, theater, dance, which function as a fusion of “pragmatic and communicative dimensions” (Comaroff, 1985, p. 3). Both commentary and action are understood

as products of this kind of symbolic mediation. David Coplan's (1985) study on South Africa's black city music and theater, and Jean Comaroff's (1985) study on the Tshidi of the South Africa-Botswana borderland are examples of the emphasis on social action in result of metaphoric enactment. Both studies privilege the interaction between two clear-cut analytic universes: a human group and its social environment -colonial or post-colonial. However, both tend to minimize the large borderlands between the two universes, and to enlighten the role of group-internal social dynamics.

Sub-Saharan ethnomusicology in recent years has particularly underlined the dynamics of performance as social action. The study of performance in such a context has been an important tool to empower African societies whose sociomoral integrity "was undermined by the intrusion of the forces of colonial domination and the world market" (Erlmann, 1996, p. 161). This is the case with Veit Erlmann's "Nightsong" (1996), which provides a rich perspective – though necessarily different from my own – on the phenomenon of Isicathamiya, a performative practice which can be considered as a stem for Maputo's choral performance. Christopher Waterman (1990) has studied performance in southwestern Nigeria as a creative response to colonialism; David Coplan (1985) explores the history of black performance culture in South Africa as a dynamic force against the harsh background of the apartheid system. As put by Erlmann (1996, p. 161), "the victims of these processes perceive the breakdown of their universe as being caused from within the very moral core of their societies". Such an inner view, together with recent post-colonial history, has demonstrated that opposition to discrimination and repression has been but only an aspect of the internal dynamics of expressive modes in Africa south of the Sahara. Other aspects of such dynamics have been largely unaccounted for; this study intends to be a contribution to fill such gap.

Expressive modality

Communicative processes -sonic, motional or both- are enacted through specific forms of human behavior, embraced by the general concept of "expressive behavior". Expressive behavior classification involves problematic aspects, such as the misuse of the culture-specific analytic concepts of "art", "performing arts" or more specific concepts such as "music" or "dance", or

even more specific ones which bear several misunderstandings at the categorization level, such as “style” or “genre”. Culture-specific categories like these do not satisfy the conceptual-system diversity which can be encountered behind human expressive behavior in different cultures. In the case of Southern African cultures, body motion, sound production and drama are closely associated in a wholeness-generating behavior. This is an integrated phenomenon, perceived and culturally defined according to criteria which encompass rules of gravity to the awareness of different constituents. These include body movement, sound production, stage settings, text, drama, etc. Emphasis on each of these constituents by the performers themselves, or novelty of perception by the observer, results in different cognitive experiences – and its resulting descriptions – of the performing phenomena.

The terminology used to describe such cognitive experiences often reflects the search for a universal expressive behavior classification. This is the case with “music”, “dance”, or “theater”, concepts which tend to be employed in order to catalog most forms of human expressive behavior. Instead of cataloging these forms in different genres or styles, through its polarization to the three concepts -music, dance, theater-I rather propose the use of the concept of “expressive modality”, a concept which manifests the need for the use of local designations for particular expressive behavior categories, the “expressive modes”. Such designation, in the context of this study, means a rehearsed expressive behavior developed for, or applied to a formal public performance situation. The use of local labels to designate particular modes gives way to the representation of local conceptions about behavior and expression, instead of reflecting the imposition of foreign categories.

Investigation shows that, as a rule in many different cultures, there is a flexible and inclusive idea of modes as basic units; its definition includes the ways in which “relationships among elements are reordered in performance” (Blum, 1975, p. 214-217). The inclusive concept of “mode” as unit of analysis allows for the conceptualization of innovation by individuals and the institutions they operate in, and for the understanding of how and to what extent “particular expressive choices shift the category in which a performance or performance situation is placed” (Blum, 1975, p. 214-217).

This study examines expressive modes as instruments for cultural mediation, its relationship with historical process and its perceived instrumentality for social action. It also examines the role of group consolidation as a domain

of social action which involves the play of cultural mediation. The construction of Mozambican nationality, a major goal for group consolidation, has been a dominant issue for Mozambican leaders since the early 1960's. Among many other resources, expressive modes seem to have been associated with official efforts in the quest for such national identity.

The creation and heightening of a national image has been a central dilemma in post-colonial urban African culture. In the face of vast challenges African countries have to overcome, national image is conceived as a basic condition for development. It is pursued as "the creation of a model at once authentic and modern, indigenous but not isolated or provincial, African but not ethnically exclusive" (see discussion in Geertz, 1973, p. 234-255). As an ideological factor, nationalism struggles to find substance in different sectors of life, creating common values and beliefs among a population of diverging human material.

Nationalism is useful to the state, because it boosts cohesion and loyalty among individuals. Rather than directing allegiance to their kin or village, individuals' loyalty is attached to the state and the legislative system. Also, non-ethnic nationalism presents the nation as a supra-ethnic community replacing undesirable ethnic identities. Thus, nationalism can be imagined as multiculturalism, transcending ethnicity and avoiding inter-ethnic conflicts.

Nationalism is useful to the individual too: it offers security and perceived stability, especially at times when people are being uprooted -such as times of war.

The powers of the state make possible the creation of the nation, both in inside and outside perspectives. Inside perspective includes cultural homogenization, achieved through standardization of languages, compulsory schooling, and cultural policies leading to the creation of several kinds of "myths of genesis" (Eriksen, 1993, p. 117): Mozambique's main myth of genesis is probably the colonial war's common enemy – Portugal.

Symbols are used for the presentation of nations. Shared practices are reified as symbols, and transformed into national discourse which creates the impression of wholeness and time continuity. The selection of these symbols is a highly political decision, usually taken by a group of influential people. In the case of Mozambique, elements considered as "rural" or "traditional" were not used as symbols because they could be ethnically associated.

Facing the illiterate condition of a huge majority of the population, Mozambique had to resort to the media capabilities of several kinds of expression. In doing so, it privileged sonic and visual creations of the nation based on respected cultural values. Beyond their communicative assets, the simultaneous performance of sonic, visual and motional signs had the power to mobilize the enthusiasm of large masses of people.

Based on the assumption that cultural values may provide an asset for the achievement of some degree of national unity, the practice of trying to organize cultural life on the scale of an entire society became current. The domain of expressive behavior increasingly acquired an institutional character and became a realm ruled by state and public organizations, who followed an explicit or implicit cultural policy. Playing an important role in the expression and articulation of national identity, the formulation of expressive modes has to materialize the existing paradigms for an African nation, among which state consciousness is paramount. Cultural unity, africanity and modernity seem to make the substance of such state consciousness. Only specific kinds of expressions which underscore the ideals of geographic and cultural unity (expressed as “moçambicanidade”), africanity and modernity (as well as proletarianism in socialist countries like Mozambique), may precipitate such substance. Selected expressive elements become metaphoric for the national imagination. These elements, which are organized into styles, underscore a specific structure of society, of power structure, and are used for the symbolic enactment of the nation in order to support a particular power and social structure, on propitious occasions such as political celebrations, National Day, etc. On such occasions, utterance of allegiance is commonly channeled through performance of particular expressive modes. Also, on occasions like these, the choice and nomination of a performing mode may be in itself a pronouncement of cultural consolidation.

The struggle for nationhood discloses the reality of diversity within the borders of many African countries. Such diversity is often pursued by individuals and groups extraneous to state and public organizations. This is the case with migrant groups who struggle for some level of identity, usually not national but a lower level of aggregation such as so-called “ethnic” groups. Both ethnicity and nationalism convey the idea that individuals belonging to a human group have the awareness of sharing social and cultural attributes, and act in order to profit from the underscoring of these attributes.

The correlation of expressive modes to the perceived and projected identity of groups raises the important question of how identities and aspirations are expressed in performing decisions and innovations. If group identity is to be formulated through the exploration of expressive elements, then it must be assessed how “the usage of particular structural procedures is restricted to particular groups of performers or participants as opposed to others” (Blum, 1975, p. 214-217). To bring about group consolidation, particular traits are chosen for performance; this choice raises questions as to the grouping effect of expressive behavior, and the kind of audiences to whom it is directed – restricted or large. Reyes-Schramm’s (1986, p. 96) discussion of the “excluding versus including” effects of performance need to be examined, in order to understand the use of expressive modes in the claim of heritage (cultural or historic), identity or nationhood. By “including effects” is meant that music performance is designed to ignore ethnic or other differences and to promote unification (regional, tribal or other); an “excluding effect” meaning that music is expected to underscore differences, emphasizing the ethnic identification of a particular group or groups within a larger environment. Performance may operate processes of situational selection; individual adherence to a particular expressive mode is understood as a statement of grouphood.

Expressive behavior and social history

This analysis uses historical processes which have shaped Maputo’s social configuration, as an attempt to contextualize expressive behavior and to understand how performance has contributed to such configuration, and how social change processes are consistent with performance culture changes. Historical processes also enable the assessment of the socio-historical forces that conditioned the development of particular expressive modes in Maputo, especially their historical developments, their antecedents in the twentieth century, and the kind of heritage they point to.

Within a context in rapid change, mostly undocumented, expressive behavior provides insight into the experiences and values of “groups characteristically excluded from dominant institutionalized means of representing history” (Waterman, 1990, p. 10). Expressive modes convey the nature and direction of historical processes (modernization, change, etc.), and their relation to explicit discourse in the historical ventures from a pre-independent, colonial situation to independence and socialist ideology.

To understand the conceptualization of change – both by insiders and outsiders – is important in order to explain why the performance of expressive modes changes or remains unchanged under certain historical conditions, particularly under the influence of Western cultures. Attitudes towards native or foreign traditions and performers' perception of the fusion of Western and African elements provide valuable insights into the understanding of culture change. The coexistence of Western and non-Western elements in performance may constitute an analogy to other levels of social phenomena, and thus help to create more general analytical procedures in social studies. In this context, the “function-form” juncture, as advanced by A. Reyes-Schramm (1989, p. 3), is a valuable concept for the understanding of change; to it I add “content”, making it a three level model, “function-form-content”, to be used in the diachronic study of Maputo expressive modes. The comparative study of change at the three different levels enables the understanding of central concepts and processes in the changing musical experience of Maputo's population.

The ideological universe centered in expressive modes is relevant for the comprehension of the social significance of expressive behavior performance. The means a performer uses to “articulate his or her stance or position in the context of social conflict” (Blum, 1975, p. 217) reveal patterns of cultural classification and significance, termed according to recognized categories such as “traditional”, “popular”, “cultural”, “modern”, etc. Performing as well as ideological categories are thus expressed and used for the social construction of performance. Particular expressive modes seem to have incorporative properties and to be used as a “utilitarian syncretic ideology” (Baron, 1976), especially by state officials who try to implement the transformation of “implicit little traditions of local non-urban cultures into an explicit and systematic great tradition” (Redfield; Singer, 1954, p. 55-56).

The relevance of performance both as medium and as an effective channel of social commentary, leads to the recognition of audiences' importance in shaping performing modes. From explicit ideological and class-conscious critique, to continuous encoding in song texts of current events – primarily political developments, expressive modes are collectively agents and media for the establishment of peoples' ideas on what music should be, as a cultural patterning of sounds.

Wide patronization of particular expressive modes, by public officials, hospitals, factories, public offices and market places among others, is notably

relevant for the understanding of patronage networks in a heterogeneous urban setting, their ways of operation and their ideological nature. What kind of individuals and groups sponsor specific performing modes, and how did sponsoring – protecting new cultural ideologies -develop new codes in performance are pertinent questions to be answered. These questions largely relate to the issues of group consolidation: nationalism, ethnic identity and cultural engineering.

Maputo and Southern Mozambique once captured the attention of researchers in the domain of music and dance. Hugh Tracey and his son Andrew included numerous items of Mozambican music in their collections at the Johannesburg based International Library of African Music. These were primarily *timbila* compositions collected in the region of Zavala, among the Chopi population, where Hugh Tracey (1948) gathered data for his book on Chopi Musicians, later translated into Portuguese with the title *Gentes Afortunadas* (“Fortunate People”) (Tracey, 1949). Thomas F. Johnston produced numerous articles based on research done among the Tsonga in the early 1970’s; however, he examined only music and musicians in their rural homesteads. Portuguese authors from colonial times, public officials in their majority, did not consider the expressive behavior of the black population in the urban context. Urban choral expressive modes in Southern Mozambique were never investigated by ethnographic literature. It is also the aim of this study to provide a perspective of these modes, centered in the set of their relationships with Maputo’s society and history.

Expressive modes in Maputo

The categorization that the white colonial administration made of local expressive behavior was a direct consequence of the population’s major administrative partition in the ex-Portuguese colony: that of the black people was considered “native”, as opposed to that of the white people (or that clearly influenced by white habits). Such partition corresponded to the division between the population referred to as *nativa* (native), the population of the *assimilados* (black people who adopted living patterns of the white population) and finally, white people and people having originated abroad (in mainland Portugal or one of its colonies). Such categories of expressive behavior – native or other – had been defined following an expansion of its consumption habits in the developing harbor city of Lourenço Marques in the mid twentieth century:

this corresponded fundamentally to the introduction of new concepts by radio broadcasting habits, juke-box machines in suburban bars, and city night life.

The radio broadcasting station, *Rádio Clube de Moçambique*, used several concepts to set apart a category of musical products which apparently had no connection to western civilization. In 1955, *Folclore Negro* (Black Folklore) was the name of the first radio program to include forms of expressive behavior belonging to the black population; *Hora Nativa* (Native Hour) from 1959 on, was a program inspired in the *folclore moçambicano* (Mozambican folklore) (Roque, 1988, p. 58-59). The word *música* (music) was apparently used nowhere in such context. Its application was largely reserved for the sound products of performing groups that had been active in both American and European scenes, and also – though with less significance – in the Johannesburg sphere of influence. Together with Lisbon, Johannesburg was the main source for the broadcast material, through the close association of *Rádio Clube de Moçambique* with the South African Broadcasting Corporation and Lisbon. Within these sources' music repertoire, brass and electric instruments were perhaps the major sound novelty African ears did perceive. Thus, *música* came to convey, among the black population in Maputo, the sound products using those instruments and, sometimes, the instruments themselves. As a matter of fact, the word *músicas* (musics) is used nowadays in Maputo to refer to all different kinds of European music instruments. These include particularly electric and acoustic guitars, electric keyboards, brass instruments and drum sets.

Juke-box machines were common in Lourenço Marques suburban bars, the so-called *cantinas*, a type of public lounge with mixed functions. Its internal space was half-grocery, half-tavern; externally, there was space for people to gather, sitting on small benches or simple logs, having always some kind of sound background, usually provided by a radio set or a jukebox. These devices had been introduced mainly from South Africa – Durban and Johannesburg – in the mid and late 1960's. Juke-Box machines promoted a repertoire alternative to radio. The use of juke-boxes was relatively expensive. By the time of their introduction into the Lourenço Marques' suburbs, the cost of playing a record was 1\$00 (one escudo), the equivalent of about one day's salary of a domestic worker. By the late 1960's, the cost had increased to 2\$50 (“dois mil e quinhenta”). As a strategy for overcoming this excessive cost, *cantina*'s users often associated and had records paid in turns. Coming from

South Africa, mainly through the agency of privately acting individuals, juke-box vinyl records eluded any kind of jurisdiction in matters of musical taste, language, text contents or other. As such, they represented perhaps the most broad-minded attitude through musical consumption in Lourenço Marques. Among *cantinas*' juke-boxes, South-African emerging musical styles were preponderant; this was the case of *mbaqanga*, *simanje-manje* (a style developed from *mbaqanga* featuring a male singer and a female chorus, played on Western instruments such as electric guitars, violins, and saxophones) and other popular styles. South African performers also became well known in Lourenço Marques through juke-box records. These included primarily Simon Nakbinde, known as "Mahlathini", a leader of a group of eighteen singers – Mahlathini and his Queens – whose bass voice had roots in Nguni male singing. Such was also the case with John Bengu, known as Phuzhushukela ("drink sugar"), a Zulu guitarist, leader of an all male group; with Joseph Shabalala and his Ladysmith Black Mambazo, who polished *mbaqanga* style in the early 1970's; and with Miriam Makeba and her female *mbaqanga* singers (in the late 1970's). Although they could have been broadcast by the Rádio Clube de Moçambique (a few of their records show up in the archive of *Rádio Moçambique*, though with no strong indications of use). No broadcasting logs survive, and radio producers of the time are no longer available in Maputo to provide testimony on these matters. Their popularity in Lourenço Marques was achieved primarily by the juke-box system; open air live-shows promoted by white entertainment organizations such as "1001" and "Produções Golo"¹ also helped to promote these artists. The products of these performances were also known as *música*.

City night life was a third agent for the creation of musical categories. It was concentrated in the down-town area of Lourenço Marques, close to the harbor centers of activity, a red-light district mostly centered in the *Rua Major Araújo* (Major Araújo Street) or simply *Rua Araújo*, as it became known. By the early 1970's it included five major night clubs, along with several minor bars, and at least seven brothels (Mendes, 1985, p. 151). The musicians featured by night clubs were black or, in most cases, *mestiços*; they used to perform a variety of genres belonging to the locally accepted category of *música*

¹ These enterprises were born from individual producers of radio-shows, radio publicity and soccer match radio commentaries. They evolved into live-show producing, hiring primarily South-African performers.

folclórica (folk music), ranging from *Simanje-manje*, *Pfena*, *Muthoria*, or *Marabenta* to *música ligeira* (light music) which included local adaptations of some of the Anglo-saxon major hits of the 1960's. Groups of such musicians, who claimed distinctiveness by their featuring of string instruments such as guitars and mandolin-like instruments, were known as *conjuntos folclóricos*.²

The new social order brought about by the independence process also brought a new configuration to this expressive behavior categories scheme. Such categories, previously defined in terms of the introduction of new concepts by broadcasting habits, record industry and city night life, were then updated by the speech of government officials.

Perhaps the main feature of the new speech, in what concerns expressive behavior, was the introduction of the word *cultura* (culture). This was part of an ideological apparatus designed to replace the old colonial systems of classification in Mozambican society. Mozambican leaders who struggled for independence were also struggling for modernization. In doing so, they fought all social institutions reminiscent of *tradição* (tradition). These included initiation schools,³ local medical practices – also known as witchcraft –, divination and local expressions of animist religion, local economic systems (including agricultural procedures), foods, clothing, etc. Thought to perpetuate traditional values, the system of initiation rites was opposed in energetic terms:

[traditional education] ... aims at passing on tradition, which is raised to the level of a dogma. The system of age groups and initiation rites is intended to keep the youth under the sway of old ideas, to destroy their initiative. All that is new, different and foreign is opposed in the name of tradition. Thus all progress is prevented and the society survives in a completely static way. (Machel, 1981, p. 30).

Tradition also included important modes of expressive behavior channeled through initiation schools, previously known as *folclore* to the white population of colonial Mozambique: this was the case of, e.g., *xigubu* and

² A group with these characteristics can be found today in Maputo. It is a trio made of Ernesto Francisco Zevo (Mandolin and Guitar), Feliciano José Sitoye (Guitar) and Abílio Mandlaze (Guitar), who perform regularly in the suburbs, especially in private night celebrations.

³ Initiation schools fell out of usage; they were described to me as *poucas vergonhas* (shameless acts), a description due probably to the fact that boys and girls wore no clothing in initiation rites. The teachings of such schools were categorically forbidden; boys' circumcision, though, was allowed when performed in health-care facilities.

xifase songs and dances of the Tsonga of Southern Mozambique (see Johnston, 1972, p. 484), among others.

In 1975 a government department was created to promote all aspects of the recently developed concept of *cultura moçambicana* (Mozambican culture). The *Direcção Nacional de Cultura* (National Board for Culture) built a staff of practitioners of the distinct expressions of such cultura, including musicians, who worked as experts on its enhancement. It eventually hired foreign specialists as well, as was the case of North Korean *especialistas de cultura* (“culture specialists”) who taught courses in Maputo and Xai-xai in the early 1980’s.

The official speech on the issue of cultura was channeled mainly through political addresses which took place at all of the annual national and party celebrations. President Machel himself led a strong campaign for culture:

Culture is a central question for the revolution. It is one of the fundamental questions for the building of socialism. There is no fight for liberty, there is no revolution, if the struggle against the domination of the bourgeoisie is not cast also in the cultural domain. (INAC, [s.d.], p. 22).

In addresses such as this, a highly heightened speech would induce in the listeners strong ideas on their responsibility in such matters as the vitality of local organizations. These organizations were mainly residential committees, officially known as *Grupos Dinamizadores* (dynamizing groups) or simply GD’s, and company, hospital or department committees, the *Comissões*.⁴ Among these organizations, formal expressive behavior groups were preponderant. Although the official designation for these groups was the *Grupo de Cultura* (cultural group) of the enterprise, market, hospital or quarter, they became known to the population simply as *culturas* (the cultures). In isolating the word “culture” from the official designation, people selected the most noticeable element for its novelty in their daily context;⁵ people also selected the word which represented distinctiveness towards colonial times.

⁴ Leaders of *Grupos Dinamizadores* were powerful people in all aspects of daily life in the *bairros* (suburbs). They were delegates, known as *estruturas* (structures), as opposed to the common people they represented, known in the political speech as *elementos* (elements).

⁵ The introduction of the word *cultura* in Portuguese daily speech (apart from its other meaning as “agricultural production”), in Portugal, also took place after the 1974 revolution. Before the revolution, traditional expressive behavior was classified as *folclore*, and the only state department dealing with such

As a consequence of this kind of classificatory experience, from colonial times to independence, three categories of expressive behavior became clearly established in the speech of the Maputo dweller. These are *Tradições*, *Música* and *Cultura*.

Tradições (traditions), the only one of the three words which has no match in the Tsonga vocabulary on expressive behavior, includes all modes of the old society, those not considered as modern, belonging to initiation schools, drumming schools, exorcism, social beer-drink, transition ceremonies, witchcraft, etc. *Tradições* also include forms of heightened historiographic and praise speech known as *stokhozele*, which take place in private celebrations such as weddings.

Música applies to modes of behavior where Western musical instruments are used – guitars, keyboards, brass, and drum-sets. With very few exceptions, música is apprehended only through radio and cassette; along with any other possible reasons, poverty is strong enough to set aside any attempt to buy – or even build – Western musical instruments. It is, thus, a media phenomenon, with the exception of a handful of young people who build their own guitars and drum-sets; exceptions were also two groups whose members used to live in East Germany, and were forced to come back in consequence of the events which led to German reunification in 1989.⁶

Finally, *Cultura* encompasses those modes of expressive behavior which are considered modern, though not necessarily Western. This is especially the case with choral groups of different kinds, such as *Makwayela*, *Makwaya* and *Canto Coral*. These groups represent a departure from old habits in many different ways; they clearly point to modernity. Thus, they were encouraged over any other mode of expressive behavior, since they tend to symbolize the distinction between “civilized” and “bush” native musical styles.

The early documents of independent Mozambique addressed the issue of culture in a tenuous approach. Among the critical problems to face, culture was understandably not a priority: it was left to the end of all plans, after

matters was named *Secretariado Nacional de Informação* (National Board of Information). From 1975 on, a new department was active with the designation of *Ministério da Cultura* (Department of Culture).

⁶ Upon their return to Mozambique, one of these groups – the *Os Mondlane* –, established a kind of nightclub in the *Chamanculo A* quarter. There, in a cane-enclosed yard, they play and sell food and drinks from about 9 p.m. to late hours. Many other migrants who returned from the DDR also opened small music-related businesses in the *caniço*, such as cassette dubbing shops.

economics, health and education were dealt with. However, there are some instances which clarify the intentions of the new leaders in cultural matters. On the issue of the Party and its People's Fronts,⁷ President Samora Machel reported in 1976 to FRELIMO's third congress that an emphasis was to be placed on the creation of conditions for the cultural education of the people with no discrimination (Machel, 1978, p. 113). He also emphasized the need to fight what he called "cultural conservativeness" (Machel, 1978, p. 137). The same year, FRELIMO's plan of action in the domain of culture contemplated the following:

... the valorization of all cultural manifestations of Mozambican people, giving them a revolutionary content and casting them on the national and international plan, in order to project a Mozambican personality. (FRELIMO, 1976, p. 23).

As a consequence, the political party established the priority task of:

Directing and stimulating the artistic creativity among the people, creating the necessary conditions ... in order to create instrumental and choral [performing] groups. (FRELIMO, 1976, p. 23).

The reverberation of these directions was such that hundreds of choral groups seem to have been created in a matter of weeks.⁸ These seem to have been most often factory, school, communal village and state departments' groups. As to the matter of "giving a revolutionary content" to culture, the outcome seems to have been more than satisfactory to FRELIMO's aims. Two years later, in a document on the issue of a National Festival of Popular Dance, the National Board for Culture makes significant remarks:

Since Mozambican people took power, a large effort has been made in order to identify and adapt the content of dances to the fundamental options of our people. We could even say that there is a tendency to repress and make silent

⁷ The formula "Party" with its "People's Front" was peculiar to Marxist-Leninist regimes. It guaranteed that zealots were grouped in the most responsible bloc, and that other followers had a different place to exercise their partnership. Such conception had a correlate in all Mozambican sectors. The so-called "structures" and "elements", a hierarchy which overruled almost all previous forms of social organization, dominated all aspects of formal social relations.

⁸ It is now impossible to verify this information. However, several informants agree that a large number of formally created groups was established by that time.

everything which has no ‘political and revolutionary’ content... It is not fair to systematically condemn our folk dances, our popular dances, our traditional dances, because of some irrational aspects, mythical, superstitious, magical and religious. (DNC, 1978, p. 2).

The National Festival of Popular Dance, which took place in Maputo in 1978, became the stage for the most meaningful statements in the matter of expressive behavior ever made in Mozambique. Politically, it was the most important event of the year. It was the material manifestation of the ideological roots of the regime. All FRELIMO’s gear was put to work on that project, in particular its exclusive logistic network outside Maputo – a unique tool in an area deprived of the most basic conditions; that was the only feasible way for any organization to gain access to the interior of the country, the so-called “provincias” (provinces). Groups from all-over the country participated in this festival, selected through a regional-hierarchical screening process; only one group from one region would come to Maputo for the “Final Phase”. There were selection committees, that had to follow rules from the National Board for Culture. One of these rules went as follows:

... members of the committees have to consider in their decisions artistic value, duration, clothing, group and individual performance, musical accompaniment, accessory elements, but, above all, they shall take into consideration social and political content and cultural value. (DNC, 1978, p. 15).

Groups were eager to be selected for the “Final Phase”, since that could represent the only opportunity for their members to travel to Maputo; some texts made reference to this fact, emphasizing the particularity of the air travel:

Nossos filhos andam de avião, nossos pais não andavam de avião. (Cardoso, 1978, p. 14).⁹

Consequently, song texts were made to match the “social and political content, and the cultural value”; as an example, initiation schools’ songs from the Tete Province were sung to the words “Viva a FRELIMO!” (long live

⁹ Our children travel by airplane, our parents did not travel by airplane”. This song was documented by Carlos Cardoso in the province of Niassa (North of Mozambique), in 1978. It was performed in the context of a local group screening for the Festival.

FRELIMO!). Such practice became established all over the country, as a new aesthetic value for years to come.

The “cultural conservativeness” Machel made a detrimental reference to was another important issue on the matter of Mozambican cultural affairs. Recently freed from a repressive and conservative colonial regime, Mozambican society was struggling for new ways of life identified with the concept of modernity. Modernization became a key image for the development of the new nation, and was adopted as a pretext for the replacement of all ideologically objectionable aspects of Mozambican society, mostly those who could be tagged as previous to independence -related to colonial times: these belonged to the domains of allocation of village power, village social organization, religious beliefs, healing, etc. When applied to cultural affairs, modernization meant the adoption of new aesthetic values leaving behind the old – known as “tradition”.

PRE-INDEPENDENCE EXPRESSIVE CATEGORIES

Radio

Folclore
Música Nativa

Red-light district

Música Folclórica
Simanje-manje
Pfena
Muthoria
Marabenta
Música ligeira

Bairros

Música
Juke-box
Mbaqanga (RSA)
Simanje-manje (RSA)
Open-air live shows

POST-INDEPENDENCE EXPRESSIVE CATEGORIES

Tradições

- Initiation schools
- Drumming schools
- Beer drink ceremonies
- Life-cycle ceremonies
- Witchcraft
- Stockhozele
- Danças das Províncias

Música

- Performance involving western musical instruments

Cultura

- Makwayela
- Makwaya
- Canto-coral

Expressive behavior and regional unification

“Moçambique é só um, do Rovuma ao Maputo” (Mozambique is only one, from the Rovuma to the Maputo [rivers]) was President Samora Machel’s dictum to elude what he knew would probably be the major predicament of the recently born Mozambican nation. Before he came to power on the 25th September 1975, he made a land journey of several days from the Northern border with Tanzania -from Rovuma River, to the Southern border with South Africa -Maputo River, crossing the country on its largest dimension. On his journey he was unanimously acclaimed as the President to be of all ethnic groups bound within the political borders of the nation. Both his saying and his journey anticipated his major concern with the issue of unification of something he knew was diverse on many fronts: the peoples of Mozambique.

Expressive behavior was one of the aspects where diversity was most conspicuous. FRELIMO's strategy on this matter was not to try to efface such diversity for the sake of national unity, but rather to put the accent on a discrete matter, the issue of non-exclusivity. This was a strategy of the kind 'unity within diversity': different regional expressions were tolerated, but exclusivity of expressions was not. At the expressive behavior level, knowledge and performance of other groups' expressive repertoire was encouraged. Such an idea was clearly put forward by the National Board for Culture, in a document on the National Popular Dance Festival:

It shall never be too much to emphasize that the National Popular Dance Festival... must be a contribution to make our culture become a basis for national unity, fighting regionalism, racism, tribalism, elitism, stimulating the People to get acquainted and to perform dances from all over the country, fighting and destroying the myth that dances originating from a certain region can only be correctly performed by people from that region. (DNC, 1978, p. 1).

People's knowledge of the variety of modes of expression within the borders of Mozambique was required for such a scheme be put to work. Several attempts were made in that direction: most important among those, the National Popular Dance Festival was organized in 1978 with the purpose of being

... a great moment for the knowledge of the wealth and diversity of our cultural patrimony, and a first step for the assessment of multiple aspects of our culture: origin and meaning of several dances and musics, the evolution of their forms and contents, their circumstances in man's life, in family and society, their garments, musical instruments and other tools, etc., etc. (DNC, 1978, p. 1).

So-called "Cultural Brigades" were created for the assessment of the legacy of music and dance, and sent to the "provinces" with tape recorders and cameras. Two small brochures were produced on musical instruments and general aspects of expressive behavior in Mozambique, respectively *Instrumentos musicais de Moçambique* (Duarte, 1980) and *Música e dança*

em Moçambique (DNC, 1980).¹⁰ And a dance troupe was created, the National Company for Song and Dance, which supposedly should enact dances from all over the country:

The National Troupe of Song and Dance is a cultural group of 30 non-professional artists born in different regions of the country, interpreting some of the most representative dances, songs and poems. It is an important weapon for the People's revolutionary education, a fundamental instrument in the creation of new Man ... it witnesses the joys and conquests of the Mozambican people in its creation of a new life, of new relationships among men; expresses and highlights the conquests achieved by the working-classes of the whole world; expresses the proletariat internationalism and the solidarity of the Mozambican People with the oppressed people; exhorts the people to come together in struggle against their permanent enemy -imperialism; and finally expresses that the happiness of the people can only be obtained in Socialism. (INAC, [s.d.], p. 1).

For a variety of reasons, however, the general goal of creating a common corpus of repertoire from all the nation, and having it become known and performed, was never achieved. These included the lack of technical capacity for such a task, as well as instability caused by war and frequent changes in state administration.

There was an exception, though. Makwayela,¹¹ a mode of expression said to have emanated from the South of Mozambique, was reported as North as the cities of Tete, Nampula and Pemba, the capital cities of the Northern provinces of Tete, Nampula and Cabo Delgado. For a moment, Makwayela came about as the all-nation emblem in the field of expressive behavior. This was due to an array of reasons which deserve some mention.

In the first place, while FRELIMO's military power was handled mainly by members of Northern ethnic groups – especially Makonde and Makwa –,

¹⁰ Among other writings, this brochure includes articles by John Marney – a British citizen on a cooperation mission – on music and dance in Mozambique. These, however, are merely translations with a few adaptations from a few of J.H. Nketia and Klaus Wachsmann's writings.

¹¹ The etymology for this word is uncertain. It also does not seem relevant on linguistic grounds.

on the verge of independence political power was allocated to members of the Southern ethnic groups. That was the case with many Protestant mission graduates such as Samora Moisés Machel, Joaquim Chissano, or Marcelino dos Santos, respectively the President, Vice-President and President of the National Assembly of the new independent nation. Southern patterns of behavior were naturally endorsed by the prominent position of the leaders, and so was Makwayela. Samora Machel himself had been a member of a Makwayela group in Xilebene (Gaza province); he was known as a fine performer. Makwayela was performed in the opening sessions of both Party and National Assembly meetings, as well as in many other official ceremonies; significantly, on these occasions party and assembly members were themselves the performers.

Secondly, Makwayela was said to have been born in South African mine compounds, thus benefiting from a proletarian ancestry. Such ancestry was most proper for a Marxist-Leninist political regime which pursued the end of imperialist exploitation as a basic principle.¹²

Makwayela is a dance against exploitation, racism and apartheid... Today, Makwayela also expresses the support of the Mozambican People for the cause of the oppressed people... (INAC, [s.d.], p. 4)

As a product of the proletariat, Makwayela was also enhancing the image of an industrialized country: though not the reality, that was a priority goal of the government.¹³

In the third place, Makwayela represented an all-vocal communal type of performance, underlining anonymous authorship and collective undertaking. It could, thus, represent the creative power of the People and the collectiveness of Mozambican society.¹⁴

In the fourth place, Makwayela had a syncretic nature which gave it the ability to comply with two basic avenues of development of the Mozambican society of the time. The first of these was modernity: Makwayela adopts Western four-part harmony and modern suits, features which are clearly

¹² See *Estatutos da Frelimo*, Art. 5 (FRELIMO, 1976, p. 7, 41).

¹³ See *Frelimo, programa e estatutos* on economic issues (FRELIMO, 1976, p. 16).

¹⁴ The goals of FRELIMO are straightforward on these matters. Mozambican population, both in terms of residence and production, was to be organized in collective units (see FRELIMO, 1976, p. 15, etc.).

identifiable with modernity. The second was race pluralism:¹⁵ Makwayela is unmistakably a product of Western and African culture-contact, thus providing a expressive analogy to the goals of FRELIMO.

Makwayela became a national symbol, as it was used virtually everywhere in the South, and a little all over the country. It also became a fundamental part of state paraphernalia, performed by both party and government members, and by groups whose brilliance added significance to state ceremonies. Makwayela groups were established to the hundreds. There were groups established in every factory – sometimes more than one –, every company, every market-place, in every agricultural production unit, every hospital, in every department of the state administration;¹⁶ groups were created even in the military and police forces. The national Board for Culture conceded, indeed, that “Makwayela is a dance which rapidly became famous and popular in the whole country after the liberation from the colonial yoke” (INAC, [s.d.], p. 4).

The development of Makwayela

The history of local performance genres is often blurred. As part of the black population’s expressive culture, they were not considered by colonial authorities a primary object for historical concern. There are very few written accounts of Makwayela and other expressive modes, prior to independence. The writing of such history, as of many other histories in non-literate human groups, has to be made from oral sources.

Collection of testimonies on such matter is problematic; on a local scale, informants are often eager to tell stories about themselves and their group-hoods. As a result, history tends to become self- or group-centered, and the observer has to counterbalance such tendencies using other testimonies, and making use of his best understanding. That may not necessarily come closer to what might have happened in the past. This is particularly so where the origins of expressive modes are concerned, since very often each individual attributes to his group, as a strategic advantage over other groups, the fact of having

¹⁵ Samora Machel’s positions on the issue of race relations clearly favored the share of power among black and white Mozambicans (see FRELIMO, 1978, p. 21).

¹⁶ It is never too much to emphasize that Mozambique was a state-run society. State administration was present in every corner of Mozambican life.

originated important factors of a larger group's social life. The assertion of grouphood is conspicuous in the city of Maputo; the assertion of ownership of expressive modes is a factor of such grouphood.

Makwayela became well known as a political tool and national symbol in Mozambique soon after independence. Nevertheless, the practice of such genre -or other closely related genres- was spread among black populations in Southern Mozambique prior to 1975. It hardly can be said when the first performances of Makwayela -known as such- took place within the political boundaries of Mozambique. Going back as far as one can, there is evidence from aged informants that a form of expressive behavior known as Makwayela was performed in the decade of the 1930's in the South of Mozambique. These informants also maintain that the word -associated to a new genre- was invented by that decade.

There is evidence from literature (Tracey, 1952 et al.), as well as strong consensus among informants, that such a kind of performance was closely associated with labor migration to the Rand mines in South Africa. It is said to have been taken from mine compounds and brought to Mozambique by male migrants going back home.

Mention of an antecedent of Makwayela is often made by aged informants. *Marabi* is referred to as a kind of performance from which Makwayela originated in South Africa. According to a conviction held among aged informants, Makwayela is a Mozambican outcome of *marabi*, which grew out in the mine compound context and was brought to the South of Mozambique by the 1930's. *Marabi* is often said to be "our parents' Makwayela" by aged performers.

As a style of music, however, *marabi* seems to have little in common with Makwayela. According to Erlmann (1991, p. 83), by the 1960's *marabi* used instruments such as the violin, and percussion traditionally performed with pebble-filled milk tins. Another content for the same word is rendered by Coplan (1985, p. 267), who describes *marabi* as "a pan-ethnic urban African proletarian style of music developed in Johannesburg during the 1920s and '30s." Imprecise as it is, he goes on adding a functional clue: "Also a term for the dance occasions where it was performed and for their patrons." In this latter sense, one can find a much more inclusive meaning for the word *marabi*, which helps to understand why it is considered by Mozambican performers as an antecedent of Makwayela. It is conceivable that the meaning of the word

had been expanded to include different kinds of performing occasions, such as those with which Makwayela might have had different kinds of affinities.

In the course of a diachronic comparison exercise, resemblances can be found between Makwayela and other South-African performance genres. Such is primarily the case of *isicathamiya*, a type of performance still alive and popular in Natal and among migrant workers in the industrial areas of the Transvaal. This kind of Zulu harmony singing was deeply influential in a very large number of black Southern Africans, who learned to perform it and transmitted many of its features to other regions of Southern Africa.

Isicathamiya grew from a complex of performance genres that were available to the population of the Natal province by the early decades of our century. The minstrel shows introduced to South Africa primarily by an American troupe, the *Orpheus McAdoo's Minstrel, Vaudeville and Concert Company*, were highly influential in the formation of a local genre of harmonic singing. This minstrel troupe, who made two successful tours of South Africa that lasted more than five years – between 1890 and 1898 –, left a deep impression on the black population. According to Erlmann (1988, p. 1), “by the turn of the century, in the wake of McAdoo’s tours, minstrels had reached even remote rural areas, where mission school graduates formed minstrel troupes modeled on either McAdoo’s company or on the numerous white blackface troupes...”. Elements from minstrel’s shows were popularized by troupes such as missions’, and made available to the industrial population of the Transvaal mainly through annual tours of the Ohlange Choir of Durban’s Ohlange Institute, in the 1930’s, led by Reuben T. Caluza. Mission educated performers such as Caluza were responsible for the emergence of precursor styles of Mbube, “in bridging between elements of American minstrelsy, rag-time songs suited to predominantly urban tastes, and semi-traditional styles” (Erlmann, 1988, p. 1). After a process of incorporation of different local elements, *Mbube* (lion)¹⁷ became synonymous with the genre, which was, by the 1930’s, a success among the audiences in the Johannesburg and Durban regions. Mbube dancing reveals several levels of proximity to Makwayela. Among them, Mbube dancers were supposed to fidget with their feet, while

¹⁷ *Mbube* was the title of a recording by Solomon Linda’s Evening Birds, issued c. 1939 by Johannesburg-based Gallo producers. This recording is available in Veit Erlmann’s *Mbube Roots: Zulu Choral Music from South Africa, 1930’s-1960’s* (Rounder Records Corp. Massachusetts: 1988).

keeping their body straight and uninvolved. According to Erlmann (1996, p. 78), the models for this kind of choreography were films featuring Fred Astaire and Ginger

Rogers that became popular among African elite and the lower strata of the black population.

Isikhwela Jo, a substyle of Isicathamiya according to Erlmann (1996, p. 78), was popular in Natal in the 1930's. It used high vocal registers, apparently introduced by church male-only singing, and the choir bursting out into high-pitched yells. Written evidence shows that it emerged in the 1890's,¹⁸ and its description points to levels of proximity with Makwayela, other than high-pitched singing and choir outbursts. These are, in particular, choir competitions¹⁹ whose general format bears a strong coincidence with today's Makwayela competitions.

Another popular expressive mode in the Transvaal region which bears resemblance to today's Makwayela was *kwaya* or *makwaya*. Deriving its name from the English word "choir", it was performed by Shangaan miners in the Transvaal from, at least, the 1940's on. Hugh Tracey (1952, p. 16) classified this mode as a "miming and group singing dance". Coplan (1985, p. 267) emphasises its development by mission-educated Africans, and so does Erlmann (1991, p. 123) by labeling it as "nineteenth-century choir music of the mission educated elite". The sharing of this performance-label by miners and mission-educated elite shows – as *marabi* did – how *makwaya* is another example of how wide was the use of labels for performance genres. In Mozambique, soon after independence, *makwaya* became very popular as a highly demanding mode: it combined very lively skill-demanding stage action with loud singing and shouting. By the early 1980's *makwaya* fell into disuse in Mozambique, where it was extensively replaced by Makwayela.

Maputo Makwayela performers divide existing groups into four different categories. These are *Grupos das Localidades* (locality groups), *Grupos dos Bairros* (neighborhood groups), *Grupos das Empresas* (company groups), and *Grupos das Igrejas* (church groups). The naming of these categories reflects

¹⁸ Veit Erlmann quotes an anonymous author in an article that appeared 13 October 1956 in *Ilanga Lase Natal* (1996, p. 79). The author mentions *jazbaaitjies* singers, which Erlmann associates with *isikhwela Jo*, and their competitions in Natal.

¹⁹ Competition is a common feature among several expressive choral modes. It is found in many areas of the Republic of South Africa (see Coplan, 1985), Mozambique and Tanzania (see Ranger, 1975).

both geographic and functional concerns. *Grupos das Localidades* and *Grupos dos Bairros* are categorized according to their geographic origin. The two other types of grouping reflect a functional categorization, associating together workers in the same work place as in *Grupos das Empresas*, or followers of the same religious faith or worship place as in *Grupos das Igrejas*. No matter what, as a general rule the formation of groups is always associated with some degree of locality, on different scales.²⁰

Grupos das Localidades was the first category to occur in Mozambique. They were established usually after a few migrant workers from a locality had returned home permanently or for the routine six-month interval before going back to the Transvaal mine-contract. These workers did establish a performing group at home, teaching younger members the performing competence and creating a leadership alternation which allowed for the continuity of the group despite the eighteen-month periods of absence of their founders to the Transvaal.²¹ The criteria for the generation of these groups was the agnatic²² residential unit, expressed through the perception of belonging to a common dwelling, designated as *casa*. The Tsonga *casa* residential unit, or *muti*, has a polygynous organization; the number of sons of the headman's several wives was enough for the creation of a performing group;²³ these knew themselves as *irmãos* (brothers). In some cases, *primos* (cousins)²⁴ were also admitted to the group, expanding to need the total number of participants. Rehearsals took place at an open spot, usually within the walls of the *muti*'s space in

²⁰ This can be easily understood through a quick look at transportation resources in Maputo. People's mobility is limited by the high cost and low availability of transportation. Any choice of association, and even of employment, must take such limitation into serious consideration.

²¹ The eighteen-month maximum period of work was enforced from 1928 on (CEA, 1977); the re-employment of workers before they had spent at least 6 months in Mozambique was forbidden. Before 1928, workers could be absent from their homestead for indefinite periods.

²² Agnatic unit" is hereafter used to convey a group of people who claim descentance from the same forefather. The ascendant to which people claim kinship can be of different rank. Such unit is operationally defined by people within social situational strategies. As a consequence, its scope is highly arbitrary.

²³ According to Junod (1927, p. 317), it was fairly common for a headman of a Tsonga homestead to have three to four wives. Wealthier men could have many more, because they could afford higher quantities of food resources.

²⁴ As far as it could be inquired, cousins belonging to a *casa* performing group were primarily sons of the mother's brothers. However, two obstacles made irresolvable further investigation. First, time distance made difficult precise informers' recollection. Secondly, polygyny became a critical issue in independent Mozambique; it was considered a sign of backwardness, and as such condemned. People were reluctant to discuss such matters.

the locality, from about 4 p.m. to early dusk. *Localidades'* Makwayela primary performance occasions included life-cycle ceremonies and performing competitions.

Weddings were most often the stage for performance;²⁵ the groom was supposed to contribute to the celebration with a group made up of his close family members. Songs were composed for that specific occasion.

Grupos das Localidades were also established adjacent to mission schools. Missionaries, belonging primarily to Swiss and North American affiliations such as *Igreja Presbiteriana* (Presbyterian Church) or *Igreja Metodista Unida* (United Methodist Church), did happily endorse the practice of Makwayela in their establishments. Such endorsement made possible the continuation of one or more formal Makwayela groups made up of each mission's young students, who performed at mission official and church celebrations,²⁶ mission groups' competitions, and mission weddings.

Following the emergency situation created by war in Mozambique in the late 1970's, subsistence in most rural localities of Southern Mozambique became almost impossible. The impossibility of trade due to lack of communications, and the constant stress of night attacks by terrorist forces lead to an almost total abandon of rural residences and land. Among many other consequences, a large number of *Grupos das Localidades* collapsed.

Grupos dos Bairros are typical of a different social environment. They occur only in large population settlements, where discrete neighborhoods can be found. Unlike *Grupos das Localidades*, who may have originated by the 1930's, these groups came into existence only by the late 1940's, a decade which saw a decisive growth of migratory flow to the cities, particularly to Lourenço Marques. *Grupos dos Bairros* were established by rural dwellers who migrated to Lourenço Marques and other cities. Once there, they joined other migrants from the same locality and started participating in the Makwayela group activities. When possible, members of the same agnatic unit²⁷ did assemble in the city and form a group. Usually having participated

²⁵ Rural wedding repertoire is considered as a source of isicathamiya. Zulu wedding songs of the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries – such as inkondlo – have been sung by mixed groups in polyphony, a fact which – according to Erlmann -, has favored the transition to religious-type four-part singing structures (1991, p. 161).

²⁶ Among mission official celebrations most often alluded by aged informants, are the visits of church superiors, whose positive remarks on Makwaela performance are well vivid in their memories.

²⁷ Under these circumstances, members of the same agnatic unit call themselves *primos* (cousins).

in rural Makwayela performance before migrating, they readily form a new group in the city.

The criteria for group participation are somehow wider in *Grupos dos Bairros*. The stem being always a small agnatic association, the group is ready to admit urban migrants coming from the same locality, the same region, sometimes the same province, or simply neighbors – which in Maputo most times means people coming from the same region. The rehearsal among *Grupos dos Bairros* takes place at an open spot in the quintal -cane fenced area joining the house²⁸ of one of the group founders.

During the colonial period, *Grupos dos Bairros* faced a strong opposition from colonial police. Though no legislation could be found on the issue of music performance, evening meetings were always condemned. The Portuguese authorities disapproved of Makwayela public performance; not so much, however, as group rehearsals. From the late 1940's on, a curfew system was imposed on the black population of Lourenço Marques which prohibited any agglomeration or noise-producing activity after 9 p.m. Makwayela performers, many of them construction or industrial workers, and public or domestic servants, could not meet before that time due to their work and transportation schedules. Makwayela rehearsals at night, though, were an illegal activity, always subject to immediate punishment (beatings) or arrest. Men with steady employment could easily be set free in the morning; the others were simply enlisted for *shibalo*. In addition, due to the *shibalo* forced work system implemented in 1906, the state routinely carried out so-called *rusgas* (night-raids) looking for people with “documento” (pass) irregularities, and arresting men on any pretext they could produce – vagrancy being the most common. With the exception of those who could be set free by their employers, these men were sent to carry out a six-month period of forced labor. Repression, however, was not always exercised over public Makwayela performance; some Portuguese administrators favored group competitions, and authorized Saturday-night performances in the *quintais* under special conditions. That

²⁸ Quintal actually stands for the city equivalent of the fenced area occupied by a rural muti. In Maputo, it encompasses the headman's house (cane or cement built) and often a few smaller huts designed for second and further wives and their children, the headman's mother, its oldest son, kitchen and a rudimentary latrine. The word kraal, sometimes used for a similar purpose, it has been suggested, has derived from the Portuguese word curral (The Oxford English Dictionary, 7th Ed. 1983, p. 557), which sometimes is also used to refer to a analogous kind of dwelling.

was the case of the administration of Lourenço Marques, who between 1958 and 1964 promoted Makwayela competitions. This leads to a comparison with South African mining policy, which encouraged performance, according to Hugh Tracey (1952, p. 2), as a matter of “an accredited recreation for native miners”, or according to the Secretary for Native Affairs in Pretoria, as a matter of learning “to see our Bantu fellow-countrymen in more correct perspective” (Tracey, 1952, p. 1).

After independence, the practice of carrying public performances in quintais was further developed. *Fechar* (to close) *quintais* became a common procedure, where an admission fee was collected at the fence entrance. In such cases, the *quintal*'s homestead headman invited two or three Makwayela groups to complement his own group for the night-long performance, and drinks were provided to the public at cost. As of today, however, *fechar os quintais* is no longer a suitable practice. First, because many forms of entertainment have become available to the public, especially radio and television. Secondly, because safety in the *caniços* is more and more a matter of self protection. It happened recently that criminals broke in on Makwayela performances in the *quintais* and caused a lot of personal and material damage. Authorities have thus forbidden the continuation of this kind of activity.

Grupos das Empresas are the third type of Makwayela groups in Maputo. One of the most recent types, it is also the most subject to discontinuity. This type includes groups belonging not only to industrial companies, but also to public services. For performance purposes, people make no distinction between these different types of activity, provided that they are state-owned, and wage-paid. Following independence, nationalization of all industrial facilities, land and services took place in Mozambique.²⁹ Following political recommendations by the government, administrators of companies and public services encouraged the formation of performing groups in their organizations. Encouragement took the form of space and free hours for rehearsal, transportation to places of public performance, and special performance costumes. Very often, the person in charge of the group had no working duties, being exclusively assigned the job of leading the group's activities. Considerable prestige was accrued to such a person since, as Makwayela was an indispensable

²⁹ Nationalizations are celebrated each year in Mozambique on the 24th July; one of the largest streets in Maputo was named after that date.

part of party and state celebrations, he often was the representative of the company or other organization in public ceremonies. However, a major change took place in 1988, with the state-implemented *Programa de Recuperação Económica* (Economic Rehabilitation Program), simply known as PRE.³⁰ As company administrators were made responsible for economic results, productivity levels were maximized at all costs. These included the suppression of all non-productive expenditures, and the optimization of working schedules. As such, free hours for rehearsal, positions for group leaders, transportation and costumes were gradually suppressed in the years following 1988. As of today, performers take some time out of their lunch interval to rehearse, anywhere in the industrial or service facilities. Performance occasions also experienced heavy setbacks with the new national political setting and the PRE. Before, all company celebrations, official visits, workers and administration meetings were heightened with Makwayela performance.

The effect of changing government economic policies in the expressive domain were noticeable in Makwayela. Following PRE, many groups could not survive the changing conditions. Groups who could survive in spite of all difficulties have very few opportunities to perform in public in the context of their work-place. In many cases, these groups tend to adopt the performance opportunity strategies of *Grupos dos Bairros*, and act as one of those.

The effects of support reduction in *Grupos das Empresas* have been noticeable in several domains. In the first place, musical style associated with the formal environment of *empresas* has been progressively abandoned: different unrestricted structural sequences and richer polyphonic procedures have been adopted. Secondly, the content of texts has abandoned the issues of productivity and government praise, and has favored morals and social behavior. In third place, the social construction of these groups now tends to approach *Grupos dos Bairros*, organized on a different social basis. In general, the category *Grupos das Empresas* seems to be endangered as performers give up resisting the lack of rehearsal and performing conditions.

³⁰ Following President Samora Machel's death in a plane crash on October 19th 1986, new rulers initiated a set of state reforms. Under the direction of Joaquim Chissano, the first President of the *Segunda República* (Second Republic), PRE was designed to halt inflation, reduce state expenditures, and make economy less dependent from state protection. It also reflected the economic costs of war in the yearly state budget, which amounted to 136 billion Meticalis (BIP, 1992, p. 6). PRE became known to the population as a very harsh period, the time for *apertar o cinto* (tighten one's belt), since consumer prices increased dramatically and salaries almost stagnated.

Association criteria in *Grupos das Empresas* have their own different rules. Usually, the stem is of the agnatic kind. Brothers or cousins, or even father and sons can be easily found in the same workplace.³¹ Expansion goes through ‘home-boys’, and finally through any worker who is willing to accept the rules and discipline of Makwayela performance. *Grupos das Empresas* have started an innovative practice in Makwayela. Clearly related to mine migrant labor patterns, Makwayela was restricted to male participation. In the factories and public services, however, women were represented and, according to the state political orientations in the domain of women emancipation, they could not be excluded from any sector of life. Thus, women started to show up in Makwayela groups.³²

Grupos das Igrejas are the fourth and most recent type of Makwayela groups in Maputo; they became common only in recent years. Following independence, a strong secularization was evident in Mozambique, due to the socialist directions adopted in the early years of FRELIMO. The clear separation between church and state party’s doctrine,³³ and the pre-independence association of most sectors of the catholic church with colonial policies led to a general climate of secularization, or at least to discrete church demeanor. More recently, related to a progressive downfall of socialist doctrines in the country, churches have become much more noticeable.

Grupos das Igrejas grew out of the pertinence of group performance to the liturgy of most African churches. Makwayela, as a local variety of part singing and dancing, was adopted as constituent of the local liturgical ceremonial, occupying a place where distinct expressive modes are used in other parts of Southern Africa. This is, among others, the case of *Igreja Apostólica Velha* (Old Apostolic Church), or *Igreja dos Velhos Apóstolos*. On Sunday mornings, meetings of the *comunidades* (communities) of the church are held from

³¹ Employment strategies of newcomers to the city include the search for jobs at the same workplace of their employed cognates. In this search they are supported by them, in many cases the newcomer ending as a workmate of his cognate. In addition to an ethnic division of labor, which clearly shows up in many cities of Africa (Hanna; Hanna, 1981, p. 132 ff.) and elsewhere, there are also clear signs in Maputo of patterns of such cognate employment strategies.

³² Women rights were from the beginning a key issue in Mozambican liberation. Equal rights were asserted, and a special organization was created, the *Organização da Mulher Moçambicana* (Mozambican Women Organization), or simply the OMM.

³³ See the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique. In Art.33, it goes “In the Republic of Mozambique the State guarantees the citizens the freedom of following or not following a religion”.

about 9.30 a.m. In each religious community, performance by a succession of several groups opens the weekly ceremony, the texts of the majority of pieces in the repertoire being Old Testament verses. These performing groups reflect the church's local organization at the level of activist categories. They include the *juventudes* (youth), made up of teenagers and young unmarried adults; the *grupos especiais* (special groups), built upon adult groups of common interest and church activity; and the *grupos gerais* (general groups), made of any church member who does not belong to any of the former groups. These groups participate in several sections of the liturgy.

There is no gender-specific criterion for the formation of these groups. Since women are a part of the church assembly, they are members of the performing groups. However, in some cases, male performers prefer to safeguard what they see as original in Makwayela performance; in these cases, some pieces of repertoire are performed with no women, who go to the back of the altar -also the stage for performance- and wait for their time to come back to the front. *Grupos das Igrejas* have their rehearsals at the end of their regular weekly church meetings, which take place most often at weekday late afternoons in church facilities or at some group members' place.

Conclusion

The role of expressive behavior in adaptive responses to changing environments in Southern Mozambique is clarified by the study of choral performance. Here, the performance of expressive modes can be understood as a strategy for operation in a new environment in different ways. Choral performance acts as a functional solidarity strategy both for performers and audiences, since a common historical and emotional experience is channeled through visual, sonic and motional sensations. Also, choral performing groups in Maputo act as voluntary associations which help to promote migrational paths and to successfully adapt urban migrants to the social and economical reality of the city.

Changes of performance culture in the domain of expressive modes are consistent with social change processes in Maputo. The range of choral expressive modes performed in the city was determined by processes of change at the social and political level, in the historical ventures from the pre-independent, colonial situation to independence and socialist ideology. The most noticeable of these, Makwayela, originated and developed according to historical

junctures in both Southeast Africa and Mozambican society. Unlike any other expressive mode, Makwayela reflects the historical events that shaped modern Mozambican society and made Southern Mozambique an important part of the economic system of South Africa. Its historical itinerary included: its genesis, which took place when migration paths from Southern Mozambique to the Transvaal became well established; its expansion in the city when substantial numbers of migrants returned to the countryside started to settle in Lourenço Marques; its heightening when it was adopted and fostered as a national symbol, during the 1st Republic regime; and its decline with the advent of the 2nd Republic, when changing economic policies brought performance state patronization to an end.

Those expressive modes that were considered “traditional” were entirely neglected, in consequence of the 1st Republic’s modernizing cultural policies. The range of modes now available conveys the nature and direction of historical processes (modernization, change, etc.); it also carries a direct relation to explicit political discourse, materialized both in song texts and in coreographies and costumes.

The socio-historical forces that conditioned the development of particular expressive modes in Maputo (such as the rise of Makwayela and the fall of “traditional” modes) are made explicit by the performance itself. The individual and group-decisions involved in the choice of texts, languages, body movement, costumes and musical styles within each expressive mode are the corollary of a socio-historical experience. This is the case with the fusion of Western and African elements in performance, which constitutes an analogy to other levels of society. Also, participants’ awareness of the coexistence of African and Western elements offers valuable insights to the understanding of culture change.

In Mozambique, the 1st Republic regime engaged in a cultural engineering venture, largely rooted in post-colonial group consolidation issues. These included pan-ethnic identity and nationalism. Facing the illiterate condition of the huge majority of the population, officials had to resort to the mediatic capabilities of different kinds of expression which privileged sonic and visual elements. The synchronous performance of sonic, visual and motional signs had the strength necessary to mobilize the energy of large masses of people. The creation of a nation had to be based on respected cultural values: dance and song were among such values. These elements, organized into expressive modes, underscored a specific structure of society: they were used for

the symbolic enactment of the nation in order to support a particular ideology with its power and social structures. This was accomplished especially by state officials who tried to create a national great tradition from a local expressive phenomenon.

One particular expressive mode, Makwayela, was to play an important role in the expression and articulation of national identity. Makwayela evidenced incorporative properties that allowed its use as a syncretic ideological tool. These properties corresponded to the existing paradigms for an African nation, the essentials of the nation-building process under the 1st Republic: both Makwayela and Mozambique were modern, African (but not exclusively), communal and proletarian.

A patronage network for performance was established at the time of the 1st Republic. *Estruturas*, FRELIMO's political action network, operated in the heterogeneous urban setting in a supra-ethnic way. They favored, however, expressive modes representative of the South (political power was allocated mostly to southerners), and, most especially, Makwayela. Sponsoring of Makwayela developed new codes in performance: adoption of different clothing, different movement routines and new song texts were a response to the new cultural state-emanated ideology whose pursuit *estruturas* demanded. This kind of sponsoring included protection measures for Makwayela groups' activity, such as time for rehearsal in the factories and public services, new clothing, transportation and, above all, official recognition and praise. The action of *estruturas* also originated a new process of group formation: as part of the new ideological apparatus in Mozambique concerning gender relations, women started to participate in Makwayela performance.

Makwayela also carries the signs of a double identity. It is simultaneously Western and African in its form; it is neither exclusively proletarian nor peasant; it is urban, but also rural in its origins and networks; it is both colonial and post-colonial in its cognitive standards. The bi-directionality of Makwayela symbols may thus be understood as an analogy to Maputo's bi-dimensional rural-urban polarization. Under these circumstances, expressive behavior can be framed in terms of a meaningful integration, of unity between apparently disparate areas of life. It can be understood as symbolic mediation, through metaphoric enactment, conceived to actuate stability and resolution of social forces within a local system, and to reinstate coherence in the lived world and render it manageable.

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