

## Post-colonial cinema and the reconfiguration of *Moçambicanidade*

«We place training, education and culture primarily at the service of the large masses oppressed and humiliated by the system of colonial and capitalist exploitation. The blood of our people was not shed only to liberate our land from its domination by foreigners but also to reconquer a Mozambican personality, to create a new mentality, a new society»<sup>1</sup>.

«[R]esearch increasingly needs to attempt to comprehend and theorize the "third spaces"<sup>2</sup> of politico-economic, social and cultural transnationalisation and transculturation apparent in contemporary Mozambique»<sup>3</sup>.

From the very beginning of cinematic production in Mozambique in the early 1960's to the gradual eclipse of national cinema in the 1990's (with the introduction of the austerity measures of Structural Adjustment<sup>4</sup>), cinema has been witness to (and participant in) some of the most important periods of recent Mozambican history, from conflicts and revolutions to ideological and demographic shifts and to the subtly changing patterns of everyday life<sup>5</sup>. The quantum leap taken by the audio-visual media not just as entertainment, but in public life, politics, education and science «alerts us to the historical role of cinema in the more general transformation of the ways knowledge is stored and disseminated, social experience is recorded and

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1. S. MACHEL, *Declaramos Guerra ao Inimigo interno*, Maputo, INLD, 1980 : 23.

2. H. BHABHA, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London, 1994.

3. J.D. SIDAWAY & M. POWER, «Socio-spatial transformations in the "postsocialist" periphery: the case of Maputo, Mozambique», *Environment and Planning A*, 27, 1995: 1485.

4. For a useful review of the broader impacts of Structural Adjustment programmes on African cinema see M. DIAWARA, «Film Production in Lusophone Africa: Toward the Kuxa Kanema of Mozambique» in M. DIAWARA, *African Cinema*, Bloomington, Indian University Press, 1992: 88-103. See also J. HAYNES, «Nigerian Cinema: Structural Adjustments», *Research in African Literatures*, XXVI (3), 1995: 45-59.

5. It is necessary to qualify this assertion with respect to the coverage of the civil war in Mozambique after Independence. At least in comparison to Angola, much less coverage of the dynamics of the war in Mozambique was represented by Mozambican film-makers. See L. AZEVEDO, «Cinema Moçambique», *Tempo*, 8 November 1987: 23-26; Interview with Camilo da Sousa, 22 August 1995, in T.S. NOGUEIRA, «Cinema Moçambicano (IV)». Camilo da Sousa: "Aqui não há cinema sobre a guerra", *Tempo*, 21 September 1986: 43-46.

subjectivity constructed»<sup>6</sup>. It is only relatively recently however that researchers concerned with the history of the medium have come to recognise that these kinds of reflections are an important part of a necessary «cultural archaeology»<sup>7</sup> of cinema which rejects linear histories of fearless pioneers, of firsts, of adventure and discovery, of great masters and masterpieces. In compiling histories of African cinema it is necessary to proceed with some caution and to suspect every biography and check every monograph<sup>8</sup> relating to the history of cinema (particularly the Eurocentric tendencies<sup>9</sup> of some analyses of «Third World» cinema).

### Cinema and History

It is important to recognise that on at least three levels, the history of cinema in Mozambique bears a national specificity. The earliest historical moments in the emergence of cinema in Europe and North America in the first decades of the twentieth century are of limited relevance to Mozambique where radio was the preferred medium of communication for the colonial state<sup>10</sup>. Secondly, the emergence of cinematic production in Mozambique coincided with an international rediscovery and revitalisation of the medium in the 1960s and 1970s which profoundly affected the agendas set by both colonial and post-colonial film-makers. Thirdly, the medium of television which so radically transformed the popularity of cinema internationally<sup>11</sup> has had little bearing on the history of cinema in Mozambique, being (provisionally) introduced<sup>12</sup> only in the early 1980's in the largest cities of the country.

This paper partly seeks to illustrate that the use of the concept of «post-colonial» cinema is somewhat problematic in the Mozambican case where numerous forms of cultural translation between the «colonial» and «postcolonial» have emerged in recent decades through cinema. Additionally, dramatic technological, economic and regulatory changes in the last three decades have created a new global media landscape, with important implications for the relationships between global and national media industries, for public service broadcasting agencies and their multiple

6. T. ELSAESSER, *New German Cinema: A history*, London, British Film Institute, 1989: 1.

7. *Ibid.*

8. G. NOWELL-SMITH, «On History and the Cinema», *Screen*, XXXI (1), 1990: 160-171.

9. P. WILLEMEN, «The Third Cinema question: notes and reflections» in J. PINES & P. WILLEMEN (eds), *Questions of Third Cinema*, London, BFI, 1989.

10. M. POWER, «Aqui Lourenço Marques!! [Lourenço Marques here!!]: "Radio-Colonization" and cultural identity in colonial Mozambique 1932-1974», *Journal of Historical Geography*, XXVI (4), 2000: 605-628.

11. In Angola Television and Cinema also exhibit something of a unique relationship to each other. Film production tailed off after Independence because of conflicts between the MPLA, Unita and the FNLA and as a consequence of the absence of vital production structures which were hardly ever explored by local colonial capitalists. See also C. ANDRADE-WATKINS, «Portuguese African Cinema: Contemporary perspectives», *Research in African Literatures*, XXVI (3), 1995: 109-114.

12. Jean-Luc Godard was the film director Frelimo turned to in the earliest moments of TV in Mozambique when he was invited to study the possible impacts of the medium and to make recommendations. Godard had been fascinated by the links between TV and video, considering the narrative address of each and many of his films were financed by TV. See J.L. GODARD, «Le dernier rêve d'un producteur», *Cahiers du Cinéma*, 300, 1979: 109-117. *Tempo*, «Jean-Luc Godard: Aprender e ensinar no Moçambique Independente», 408, 30 July 1978: 30-39.

roles in public life and national culture<sup>13</sup>. It is argued here that a range of important «post-colonial» Mozambican subjectivities were constructed through film which were predicated upon an attempted erasure of their colonial cultural origins at the same time as they (inevitably) re-inscribed the centrality of colonial power. Similarly, cinema was an important component in Frelimo's negation of ethnicity and denial of «traditional» forms of culture and authority. During the colonial period in Mozambique, the Portuguese turned to cinema in order to liquidate the cultural heritage of the indigenous population who rarely appeared in colonial films except as «terrorists», as mythologised ethnographic subjects or as the passive recipients of colonial development.

This paper attempts to show that the historical and geographical analysis of colonial, anti-colonial and post-colonial cinema in Mozambique, though a widely neglected area of Mozambican studies, can raise important questions about the construction of Mozambican subjectivities and about the cultural meanings of *Moçambicanidade*. It is important to recognise however that *Moçambicanidade* is not some singular condition nor does it correspond to a specific list of its modes of expression. Neither is the making of Mozambicanness confined to Mozambique or to a set number of intellectuals, historical forces or cultural groups.

Cinema in post-colonial Mozambique provides a powerful countenance to the assumption that Mozambican Marxism can be customarily dismissed as purely «instrumental» or superficial. The idea of cinematic representation as constituting a «Third cinema», a «third space» for the decolonisation of Mozambican culture was taken very seriously by Frelimo from the very beginning of the liberation struggle winning Mozambican film-makers widespread international acclaim. The analysis of «national cinema» in Mozambique is a key feature of this discussion as is the cultural address to the Mozambican nation that these different modes of cinematic representation incorporate. In «post-colonial» society, cinema came to reinterpret histories of colonialism and to represent the ideals of planned socialist development (as well as those of its subjects). Colonial Mozambican cinema on the other hand was no less central to constructions of (settlers) cultural identities and exhibited many of the principal features of Portuguese colonial rule more generally in that it was dominated by a limited number of (white male) private capitalist interests. From the six production companies set up in Lourenço Marques by 1970, the colonial state strongly encouraged the production of propaganda films<sup>14</sup> espousing the merits of Portuguese colonialism in all parts of Mozambique. In 1973 more feature films were produced in Mozambique than in Portugal<sup>15</sup>. The forty-two cinema theatres inherited by Frelimo in 1975 had been largely

13. D. MORLEY & K. ROBINS, *Spaces of Identity: global media, electronic landscapes and cultural boundaries*, London, Routledge, 1995.

14. Schmidt points out that the word «film» is usually used generically yet «to understand film history and influences within specific countries, one needs to include whatever exists – documentaries, features, videos, television films, etc.» This is an important point since in Mozambique the documentary form of film-making (both in colonial and postcolonial times) has predominated. N. SCHMIDT, «The challenges of African Film Bibliography: Content and Audience», *African Research and Documentation*, 72, 1996: 1-8.

15. In part the reason for this increase in output was the production of pornographic films by Courinha Ramos and Antonio Melo Pereira destined for the South African market. See also E. GEADA, «O Imperialismo e o Fascismo no cinema», Lisbon, Morães, 1977, and J.B. da COSTA, *Stories of the Portuguese Cinema*, Lisbon, Imprensa Nacional, 1991.

(exploitatively) controlled by one man, Manuel Rodrigues (and later his sons) and were profoundly racialised and exclusive spaces under the Portuguese.

### Cinema and the *Estado Novo*

Film images played an important part as information, scientific record and novelty in the Imperial propaganda used in a number of countries which also embraced the press, education, international exhibitions and popular art<sup>16</sup>. Eduardo Geadá<sup>17</sup> has observed how in Portugal the cinema acted as an important cultural site during the time of Salazar's *Estado Novo*:

«The [cinema] sessions began late and the intervals were long. The people were to be found *in the hall, in the bar, in the promenades* where they would greet each other [*saudam-se*], converse and agree business lunches. The most distinct families had boxes reserved in the Tivoli and places reserved in the Empire. The cinema fulfils here a social function frequently forgotten by sociologists of the spectacle» (emphasis in original).

For Geadá, cinema deserved, without doubt, a place of distinction in the publicity worries of the New State whilst both nationally and internationally produced cinema were subjected to rigorous censure under the New State. Large subsidies were granted in particular to, as Geadá<sup>18</sup> points out:

«The superproductions of patriotic exaltation, to "historical" films, to costume drama, to the bourgeois melodrama, to the tourism documentary and of course to those regular [*journaux de actualidades*] that limit themselves to registering the inauguration of small events and to the grandiose patriotic commemorations».

Collectively, many of the films sanctioned by the New State «hid the violent reality of the dictator, of capitalist exploitation and of colonialism»<sup>19</sup>. Between 1918 and 1924 a total of 35 films were made in Portugal<sup>20</sup> and production remained limited to just four production companies. Between 1942 and 1950 the number of cinemas more than doubled and competition between distributors began to emerge through the international market (where the acquisition of imported commercially successful films was a lucrative enterprise). Foreign films had a much lower financial risk to the distributors in Portugal who acted as a kind of «comprador-bourgeoisie» consequently subduing the production of national cinema in Portugal (and in the African colonies) to the economic and ideological demands of Imperial power. In Portugal, a *Movimento Cineclubista* (a movement for

16. The *Bantu Educational Cinema experiment* in South Africa (1935-1937) and the colonial film units that emerged in Africa at the beginning of the Second World War (in an attempt to supplement the propaganda power of the radio broadcast) were important examples. World War Two also drew the attention of the French authorities in Algeria to the propaganda potential of film where a *Service de diffusion cinématographique* (SDC) was established in 1943 to bring *ciné-bus* units to rural communities, showing films to some one million Algerians by 1948. See also A.E. COOMBES, *Reinventing Africa: museums, material culture and popular imagination in late Victorian and Edwardian England*, New Haven-London, Yale University Press, 1997, and L. MALKMUS & R. ARMES, *Arab and African Film Making*, London, Zed, 1991.

17. E. GEADA, 1977a, «O Imperialismo...», *op. cit.* For more on the Portuguese *Estado Novo* and its geopolitics and cultural sites see M. POWER & J.D. SIDAWAY «The tears of Portugal: empire, identity, «race» and destiny in Portuguese geopolitical narratives», forthcoming *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* (2005, forthcoming).

18. E. GEADA, «O Imperialismo...», *op. cit.*, 1977a: 75.

19. E. GEADA, *op. cit.*: 74.

20. J.B. da COSTA, «Stories of the Portuguese cinema», 1991.

cinema enthusiasts) became known as a centre of cultural anti-Fascist resistance. The *Cinema Novo*<sup>21</sup> movement in Portugal also contributed to this questioning of the cultural standards of the new regime<sup>22</sup>.

Cinematic exhibition first emerged in colonial Mozambique in the late 1890's when José Onofre (a Portuguese civil engineer) rented a marquee from the colonial state in order to screen films provided by Pathé to the gathered population of Lourenço Marques<sup>23</sup>. Also using the same international distributor, Manuel Augusto Rodrigues established a second film theatre (Salão Edison) in the colonial capital in 1907. Both Onofre and Rodrigues organised theatre and concert performances in addition to film screenings so as to ensure the commercial success of their enterprises. Pianists and artists from Portugal and from neighbouring white settler states were initially contracted by these *comerciantes* «to strum [*dedilhar*] inspired melodies to soften<sup>24</sup> the atmosphere».

In September 1913, the first cinema theatre capable of seating more than a handful of the wealthiest settlers was constructed by Manuel Rodrigues in the colonial capital<sup>25</sup>. The *Teatro Gil Vicente* occupied a prominent role in the formation of Portuguese colonial cultural identities, particularly in the construction of *Portugalidade* as «civilized»<sup>26</sup>. One of the first acts passed by the *Estado Novo* relating to the regulation of cinema exhibition came in 1928 when the then Minister of Colonies announced that all foreign films screened in Portuguese colonies had to be subtitled in Portuguese unless at least 40% of the population in the locality of a theatre were foreigners<sup>27</sup>. Further legislation followed in 1953 when it was decreed that all colonial territories should establish national cinema censorship commissions with

21. Brazil's *Cinema Novo* movement which developed during the 1960's was arguably just as, if not more, important in the crystallisation of a cinema of resistance in Portugal. The name originated in 1959 when a group of young film critics registered their disgust with the seemingly endless series of Brazil's cheap imitation-Hollywood *chanchadas* (musical comedies) by organising an independent production group. For the first time, Brazilian social and cultural environments were being represented and became part of motion pictures; the *Sertão*, the *re-iterantes* (migrant workers), the *cangaceiros* (rebel-bandits) and the *favelados* (squatter settlements). For more on this see G. ROCHA, «Cinema Novo vs. Cultural Imperialism» in *Art, Politics, Cinema: The Cineaste Interviews*, London, Pluto, 1984: 10-23 and P.C. SARACENI, *Por Dentro de Cinema Novo: Minha Viagem*, Rio de Janeiro, Editora Nova Fronteira, 1993. Through the new cinema, allegories of underdevelopment were «metaphorically transmogrified into an expressive force», E. SHOHAT & R. STAM, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the media*, London, Routledge, 1994: 256. Jameson would argue that all Third World texts are «necessarily allegorical» in that even the most culturally dynamic film projects a political dimension in the form of an allegory. F. JAMESON, «Third World Literature in the era of Multinational Capitalism», *Social Text*, 15, 1986: 11-19.

22. A.P. de LIMA, *Pedras que já não falam*, Maputo, Notícias, 1985.

23. A. ROSALDO, *Uma Obra: 1907-1957*, Lourenço Marques, Gazeta do Sul, 1958.

24. However, «the musician didn't always properly temper the story that the celluloid told», A. Pereira de LIMA, *Para a história das Comunicações em Lourenço Marques*, Maputo, Empresa Moderna, 1974: 261-262.

25. A smaller, mobile projection unit was also established by Manuel Rodrigues in the Café Paris of Lourenço Marques in 1917.

26. On July 1 1913 a group of Portuguese colonists constructed an «*abaixo-assinado*» («we the undersigned») letter addressed to Manuel Rodrigues requesting that he proceed with caution in the naming of his new theatre in Lourenço Marques, preferably choosing a name which was «genuinely Portuguese» (ROSALDO, *Uma Obra*, 1958, *op. cit.*: 34). Rodrigues responded in a letter which was published in «*O Africano*» on July 12 1913 which suggested the name "Teatro Gil Vicente" and pointing out that "the enthusiastic patriotism that the population of this city has will be perpetuated in the building under construction, by the name of «Gil Vicente», illustrious Portuguese poet that initiated the sixteenth century of modern European poetry» (RODRIGUES quoted in ROSALDO, 1958: 38).

27. E. GEADA, *O imperialismo e o fascismo no cinema*, Lisbon, Morães, 1977.

provincial delegations<sup>28</sup>. The majority of colonial legislation relating to the exhibition of films was concerned with the age group classifications that were attached to each film and it was not until 1954 that any mention was made in the official colonial (or imperial) statute books about the rights of *Indigenas* to access to cinema.

It was inconceivable to the colonial state at this time that the indigenous population might be allowed to enter the esteemed cinema theatres of the colony and so instead the entirety of this legislation related only to the exhibition of films through mobile or «wandering» cinemas. After Independence Frelimo spoke of the vulnerability of and danger to Mozambicans of foreign films, repeatedly arguing that this kind of exclusive and dualistic mode of cinematic exhibition led to widespread alienation<sup>29</sup> particularly amongst the bourgeoisie. Some of the first initiatives toward cinematic production were allied to the *Cine-Clube de Lourenço Marques* which was established in the capital in October 1957 which aimed to stimulate and defend the development of Portuguese cinema in the main colonial cities<sup>30</sup>. In 1961 the *Cine-Clube*<sup>31</sup> established a «commission of cinema-enthusiasts» under the control of José Almeida and Manuel Faria de Almeida to encourage the production of experimental film in Mozambique. From 1956 the production of a kind of newsreel/documentary style of film-making became a highly lucrative enterprise when the colonial state offered one entrepreneurial cinema capitalist (Antonio Melo Pereira) a contract to produce *Jornais das Actualidades* covering the national events of political significance in the development of colonial power.

### «Parasitic» Cinema and the Colonial State

*Imagem de Moçambique* produced by Eurício Ferreira on behalf of *Radio-Televisão Portuguesa* (RTP) and *Visor Moçambicano*<sup>32</sup> produced by Courinha Ramos were other examples of the same kind of newsreel format, though more *Actualidades* were produced than any of its competitors, some 250 had

28. *Ibid.*

29. Frelimo's notion of cultural alienation was closely associated with their experience of (an intense) exclusion from cinema under colonialism. Frelimo rarely recognised that «Many African and Arab film-makers learned a love of cinema, not cultural alienation, from western movies» (L. MALKMUS & R. ARMES, *Arab and African film... op. cit.*: 18). The work of Haile Gerima, the Ethiopian director who organised a US tour for INC productions in 1981, is in no way diminished by the fact that as a child in the provincial town of Gondar, he identified with Tarzan, shouting warnings against the Africans. Frelimo seemed unable to accept that films can be read in an alternative way to that suggested by their directors. Senegalese director Ousmane Sembene claims to have realised the power of the cinema for the first time from seeing the feats of the black American athlete Jesse Owens in Leni Riefenstahl's Fascist-inspired documentary on the 1936 Berlin Olympics, *Olympiad*. V. BACHY, «Dictionnaire de 250 Cinéastes» in *Ciné-Action*, 26, 1982: 180-192. O. SEMBENE, «Jean Rouch - Sembene Ousmane: comme des insectes», *Ciné-Action*, 17, 1982: 77-78.

30. Cine-clube de Lourenço MARQUES, *Estatutos do Cine-Clube de Lourenço Marques*, Lourenço Marques, Imprensa Nacional, 1957: 2.

31. The period 1960-1961 was also an important one for the development of cinema in Cabo Verde. In 1960 at the Cine-Teatro Municipal da Praia the first ever Cine-Clube meeting was held but was shut down by PIDE in April 1961 and no further efforts were made to continue the «Clube» until after Independence (ANDRADE-WATKINS, *op. cit.*, 1995).

32. «*Visor Moçambicano*» was another form of the newsreel film, established by Courinha Ramos in 1960. These reports were initially subjected to heavy charges by the colonial state who offered no patronage because the reports were seen to be too «independent». See «Quatro Empresas sustentam o cinema Moçambicano», *Tempo*, 12 November 1972: 20-24.

been recorded by 1975<sup>33</sup>. Production costs for short newsreel, advertising and documentary films were considerably cheaper in South Africa and as a result most of the initial production of the *Actualidades* was conducted in Johannesburg<sup>34</sup>. As was also the case with radio broadcasting in Mozambique, the object of these films was to focus attention on the apparatus of the colonial state, conveying information about its latest political decisions or documenting the visits of officials across the province-colony. The newsreels were also tied in with the «psycho-social» action plan<sup>35</sup> to defend Mozambique as a Portuguese colony.

The newsreels attempted to illustrate the health benefits to indigenous peoples in rural Mozambique, the role of doctors and nurses of European origin in visiting «immaculate» health stations and hospitals where they were warmly welcomed by «the natives» or highlighted the «brave» Portuguese soldiers that defended Portugal (and the support they received from Apartheid South Africa). The «enemy» that these soldiers fought against is never mentioned by name in the films «leaving the impression that the colonial forces were struggling against ghosts/spectres [*fantasmas*]»<sup>36</sup>. In Mozambique, as Dagron<sup>37</sup> has suggested, these newsreels served to reassure the colonial settler population of the permanence of their residence in Mozambique at a time when this was being radically denied by the incursions of anti-colonialism:

«Portuguese cinema in Mozambique... [exercised] a well determined ideological function: to justify, in the eyes of the Portuguese colonist, their place in this African country. In these films, the white man sees himself in the streets of Lourenço Marques and recognises himself in the official ceremonies... The first films were documentaries and with the development of guerrilla war it submerged the presence of the colonial exercise that it defended. At times it would suggest "we are here in our home, the image gives us proof of this", these documentaries also affirmed that "we are permanent in this country..."».

The production of *Actualidades de Moçambique* has also to be considered as an expression of the way in which colonial capitalism operated within the cinema industry in late colonial Mozambique. As Jorge Rebelo (first Minister for Information after Independence) has pointed out, the production of newsreel footage was a somewhat peculiar basis for the cinema industry in colonial Mozambique:

«A strange phenomenon took place in Mozambique in the field of film production. From the fifties and for many years after, production was restricted to small *parasitic producers* who made monthly newsreel or documentaries for the colonial government... This led to the appearance of new *parasitic production companies*, normally in the form of one person with rudimentary knowledge of film photography or editing, who would hover

33. A.G. DAGRON, «Africa: El Cine en Mozambique», *Film/Historia*, 1, March 1978: 44-56.

34. It is important to register here also that the *Actualidades* that Melo Pereira produced were offered free to South African distributors and exhibitors, *O Seculo de Johannesburgo*, 12 April 1976.

35. For more on this see M. POWER, «Geo-politics and the representation of Portugal's African colonial wars: examining the limits of «Vietnam Syndrome», *Political Geography*, 20, 2001: 461-491.

36. A.G. DAGRON, «Africa: El Cine...», *op. cit.*: 460.

37. *Ibid.*: 13.

around the colonial government in their anxiety to obtain orders for propaganda at *very high prices*<sup>38</sup>.

These «parasitic production companies» of late colonial Mozambique were relatively few in number (no more than six at any one time) and competition was fierce for advertising revenues and colonial state funding. Similarly, in the field of cinema distribution, capitalist social relations existed that were highly typical of the broader regime of colonial capitalism. Mozambique was dependent for film distribution on Portugal and on neighbouring South Africa. The colonial tax system had made it prohibitively expensive for any Mozambican film distributor to deal directly with film producers, while protecting Portuguese distributors who had bought the right to distribute films in Portugal and in the African colonies. These Portuguese distributors subsequently rented their films, often for considerably higher sums than they had initially paid for them, to Mozambican distributors (e.g. the Rodrigues family) for six months out of their five-year licence period<sup>39</sup>. In all areas of colonial cinema capitalism a small group of white, male colonial settlers predominated.

The Rodrigues cinema empire in Mozambique outlived the demise of Portuguese colonialism and was only dismantled in 1978 when Frelimo seized four of the Rodrigues cinemas after Frelimo claims of «economic sabotage»<sup>40</sup> against Cesar Rodrigues (by then aged 71 and living in South Africa)<sup>41</sup>. The «serious financial irregularities» discovered by Frelimo in 1978 in the books of these cinema theatres seemed to symbolise the monopolistic and exploitative capitalist relations of colonial cinema<sup>42</sup>. If «national production» (processed in South Africa) did take place in Mozambique during the last two and a half decades of colonial rule then it was to glorify and fixate the colonial state in the national colonial imaginary or to advertise and sell a vast and expanding array of consumer «novelty» goods that would situate the colonist in the latest round of western petty-bourgeois ownership. The idea for a *cinema ambulante* scheme (which was later linked to Portugal's «psycho-social action» plan) originated with advertising agents who applied to the colonial state in the late 1960s for permission to screen short advertising films to the indigenous populations of the regions of Manica, Sofala, Gaza and Lourenço Marques<sup>43</sup>.

As a result the newsreels represented only the spaces of the colonial state through the (rigorously censored) images of its national political activities, ceremonies and festivities. Remarkably little filming and exhibition took place outside the offices, administrative posts, industrial and commercial

38. J. REBELO, «Discurso de abertura de Sua Excelência o Ministro da Informação da República popular de Moçambique», in INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE CINEMA, *Documentos: Conferência Africana de cooperação cinematográfica*, Maputo, INC, 1977, 9-21: 18 (emphasis added).

39. Interview with Pedro Pimenta, former INC Director, 12 September 1995.

40. According to one newspaper report, Frelimo had accused Rodrigues of «practising acts which seek to install in Mozambique a climate of economic and social insecurity and to slander externally the structures of the party and of the state». Frelimo argued that Rodrigues was making strenuous efforts to get an international boycott of films produced in post-colonial Mozambique and was involved in the illegal withdrawal of taxes paid by patrons of his theatres before their nationalisation in 1978. «Quatros cinemas sob controlo estatal devido a grave sabotagem económica», *Notícias*, 28 January 1978: 2.

41. *Ibid.*

42. «Estas são as armas»: um documento histórico», *Notícias*, 24 September 1978: 3.

43. Arquivo Histórico de Moçambique, Fundo do Governo do Lourenço Marques, *Agência da Publicidade Africana* (IMPA), «Correspondência entre Inácio Matsinhe e o Centro de Informação e Turismo (CIT): Tipo do estabelecimento - Projectos de filmes no regime ambulante», 1971.



organisations of colonial rule and the white settlers and settlements that ran them. As Camilo da Sousa, a film-maker in post-colonial Mozambique, has observed:

«The common aspect of all these documentaries was the settlers point of view: how he perceived himself and how he perceived Mozambique. No attempt was made to portray Mozambican reality or how its particular social and cultural character could be distinguished. Nor was any attempt made by the producers of these images to go deeply into the geographical context, except for its "curiosity" value. Hence the "Negro" and "traditional African society" were also portrayed as something "exotic" and hide-bound by "folklore"... The fundamental causes of social stratification were never tackled. Colonialism was never questioned and its full impact never considered»<sup>44</sup>.

In colonial cinema, the kinds of geographical settings depicted made a limited number of associations with Mozambican territory. The limited territorial outreach of Portuguese colonial power was vastly inflated and exaggerated in colonial film-making. As Dagron<sup>45</sup> has pointed out, the «filmic spaces» of colonial cinema were constructed almost in inverse proportion to the realities of colonial power:

«The space of colonial cinema was dominated by the colonial bourgeoisie, as if the Mozambican public did not exist or was somehow temporarily absent. The Portuguese occupied filmic spaces in inverse proportion to the reality of colonial power. This was a reality in which for every Portuguese there were ten Africans whereas in films like the *Actualidades* we see at least ten Portuguese for every African. The images could have been of Lisbon or of any other European capital».

After 1975, the spatial imaginaries of cinema in Mozambique and the spaces of cinematic representation changed considerably. Though in many cases colonial cinematic footage still predominated in early post-colonial cinematic production, the filmic portrayal of truth from the centres of colonial power was dislodged and re-ordered in a number of important ways.

### The Emergence of Anti-Colonial Cinema

«Some of us have had the opportunity to see documentaries filmed following the orientation of Frelimo to serve the people. These films show us episodes of the struggle for the national liberation of the Mozambican people and of the life in the liberated zones. These films are effectively at the service of the people and are the first examples of a truly Mozambican national cinema»<sup>46</sup>.

From the earliest phases of the struggle for national liberation, Frelimo encouraged the production of films which documented nationalist perspectives on anti-colonial war. Frelimo invited *cinéastas* or film-makers from around the world to detail the modalities of their struggle against the

44. C. de SOUSA, «State initiatives and encouragement in the development of national cinema», unpublished paper presented to the National Film Theatre, London, 30 June 1990.

45. A.G. DAGRON, «Africa: El Cine...», *op. cit.*: 46.

46. *O Brado Africano*, November 9, 1974: 4. *O Brado Africano* was a newspaper which became an important centre of nationalist resistance to colonial power after its establishment in the 1930's. For careful and insightful discussions of this journal see A. SOPA, «Liberdade de imprensa e regime de censura prévia: O caso moçambicano (1854-1975)» in A. JOSÉ & P.M.G. MENESES (eds), *Moçambique - 16 anos de historiografia: Focos, problemas, metodologias, desafios para a década de 90*, Maputo, Painelel Moçambicano, 1991: 251-266. See also J.M. PENVENNE, *African workers and Colonial Racism: Mozambican strategies and struggles in Lourenço Marques, 1877-1962*, London, James Currey, 1995.

Portuguese, particularly in the esteemed «liberated zones». Few of these films were widely seen in Mozambique before Independence as their glorification of the liberation struggle was achieved only in post-colonial retrospect and they frequently served the nationalist movement instead as a means of rallying international support for Mozambican nationalism<sup>47</sup>. The films produced for Frelimo during the anti-colonial war reflected the idea that colonial cinema had completely denied Mozambicans the opportunity to disseminate images of Mozambican realities outside colonial social space<sup>48</sup>.

One of the first films produced during the armed struggle was *Venceremos* produced by Dragutin Popovic, a Yugoslavian film-director in 1966. The film attempts to illustrate the organisation of daily life in the liberated zones, focusing on the military education of the *continuadores* and on the ways in which news was transmitted by the guerrillas across areas under anti-colonial contestation. The histories put forward in the liberation cinema of Mozambique were closely sponsored and organised by Frelimo. *Dez dias com os guerrilheiros de Moçambique livre* produced by Franco Cigarini for Italian Television in 1967 and *Viva Frelimo!*, produced for Dutch Television in 1968 are both important examples of this trend. Both films begin their accounts of the history of Mozambique with the beginning of the armed insurrection taken up by Frelimo in 1964 and both provide an idealised image of everyday life in the liberated zones.

The conditions for cinematic production in a Mozambique divided by anti-colonial war were obviously very limited and this is closely mirrored in the thematic approaches of liberation cinema itself, which in turn became a reflection of the partial and restricted territorial sovereignty Frelimo had secured in the North. The conflicts we see played out in these films are the actual and perceived struggles and dilemma's facing Frelimo itself at this time. The filmic balance between these struggles differed according to the demands of Frelimo (nationally and internationally) and according to Directorial preference. The Chinese production team that filmed *O Público de Moçambique Avança* (1970) relegated the themes of health, education and production to second place behind a fascination with a detailed exposition of the military developments and methods of anti-colonial war. The majority of directors who produced films during the liberation struggle however subordinated themselves more often than not to the pressing needs of the nationalist movement itself. Frelimo had little or no experience of cinematography in the earliest stages of the *luta armada* as remarkably few Mozambicans were ever trained by the colonial production companies<sup>49</sup>. If Frelimo did impose its own image on the filmic representation of Mozambican nationalism to international audiences then it was partly because it had been precisely this kind of capacity to represent resistance

47. A national tour of the USA was organised for the INC (Cinema National Institute) and its productions by «Positive Productions Inc. which was based in Washington and organised by Haile Gerima. An optical printer and other materials were purchased for the INC as a result of the commercial success of Mozambican cinema in the US (see figures four and five). African-American film director Robert Van Lierop who recorded several pieces of liberation cinema for Frelimo raised US\$48,000 in the USA during 1981 screenings of Mozambican films which was then sent to Mozambique for the building of a hospital. G. CROWDUS & U. GUPTA, «A Luta continua: An Interview with Bob van Lierop», *Cineaste*, IX (1), 1978: 28-33.

48. Interview with Jorge Rebelo, Minister of Information, 12 August 1995.

49. Interview with Gabriel Mondlane, INC sound technician, 23 October 1995.

audio-visually that Frelimo had been denied for so long under colonialism. The involvement of foreign *cinéastes* in this process<sup>50</sup> is not to be viewed as entirely detrimental but as an important part of the process by which cinematographic skills were introduced to Mozambicans:

«In that time [of the armed struggle] some groups of foreign film-makers came here from various countries... [working] by our side informing people about our struggle. Films were borne that we considered our own. In spite of the fact that these teams came from overseas really they were always assisted and oriented by the people of Frelimo, because they were divulging information about our struggle... we consider these films as a part of our cinematographic development» (Interview with Pedro Pimenta<sup>51</sup>).

The example of Robert Van Lierop, an African-American film director who worked with Frelimo in the late 1960s, is a useful case in point. *A luta continua* (Robert Van Lierop, 1971) and *O Povo organizado* (Robert Van Lierop, 1976) both commanded large international audiences (particularly in the US) and were widely screened in post-colonial Mozambique. Van Lierop first made contact with Frelimo when he met Eduardo Mondlane in Kenya and later in Algeria in 1967 from where he was invited to a Frelimo delegation in Dar-Es Salaam later that year<sup>52</sup>. Lierop's film, *A Luta continua*, was finished in 1972 and had its premiere in New York in the same year where it was seen by an audience of around 2,500 people<sup>53</sup>. Just over twenty minutes long the film attempts to portray the realities of daily life in the liberated zones, examining the relations between the populations of these areas and Frelimo, illustrating the new educational and health services organised by Frelimo there and depicting in strongly negative terms the forces allied to the defence of Portuguese colonial power in Mozambique. *O Povo organizado*, Van Lierop's second film was recorded shortly after Independence and came about partly because:

«I thought it was necessary to show that, in reality, the revolution in Mozambique was only entering into a different phase and, in many aspects, this was much more difficult than anything that had gone before. We thought then that it was necessary to show how a revolutionary organisation had assumed state power and the contradictions that this entailed, contradictions inherent in the taking of power. In general, we wanted to focus on some of the transformations through which Mozambican society would inevitably come to pass with this taking of power»<sup>54</sup>.

The final section of this paper deals with the production of «national» cinema in Mozambique after Independence, primarily through a discussion of the extent to which post-colonial cinema in Mozambique confronted these «contradictions inherent in the taking of power».

50. In Guinea-Bissau the PAIGC invited film-makers from France, Italy, Sweden, Cuba, Holland and the UK. Basil Davidson's *Terrorists Attack* (covering the Portuguese invasion of the PAIGC HQ) was produced in 1968. In Angola Guadeloupean film-director Sara Maldoror produced one of the best examples of liberation cinema in Portuguese Africa with her *Sambizanga* which traced the struggles of anti-colonial movements in Angola.

51. Interview with Pedro Pimenta cited in INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE CINEMA, «Instituto nacional de cinema: perspectivas 1980», Maputo, INC, 1980: 23.

52. Interview with Jorge Rebelo, 19 August 1995.

53. «Sobre o cinema de mobilização: entrevista com Robert Van Lierop», *Tempo*, 348, April 1977: 28-32.

54. *Ibid.*: 30-31.

### «Revolutionary» Cinema in Mozambique

«Through cinema we can see what is happening in other provinces and what people are doing in other countries... The cinema has an extremely important function in the revolution, in the reconstruction of our country»<sup>55</sup>

«It was clear to our leaders that cinema would be very important for the new nation's development. That is why some months after Independence and in a moment when Mozambique was facing very difficult problems – for example, all the Portuguese were fleeing the country and for twelve million people there were only forty doctors – the government decided to found a Film Institute, just after it started a literacy campaign»<sup>56</sup>.

«In a rare convergence of ego and talent»<sup>57</sup>, Ruy Guerra (*Cinema novo*), Jean Rouch (*Cinéma vérité*) and Jean-Luc Godard (*Nouvelle vague*) converged<sup>58</sup> in the production of Mozambican cinema in 1978 creating a further degree of distinction in the specificity of Mozambican cinema and its origins. In 1975 the Department of Information and Propaganda held a conference at Macomia at which Frelimo encoded a series of resolutions reflecting the priorities of the new nation. Declaring the need to regulate the classification of all films screened in Mozambican cinemas, the conference also concluded that cinema did not correspond to the political realities alive today in Mozambique and was a residue of colonial obscurantism and ignorance<sup>59</sup>.

At Macomia, certain kinds of films were identified as «negating Mozambican realities», namely «the exhibition of pornographic films, of gratuitous violence and of markedly reactionary ideologies<sup>60</sup>». Frelimo also recognised that cinema exhibition was «dominated by capitalism, operating exclusively with lucrative ends in mind [and] being shown at the cost of the alienation and corruption of our people»<sup>61</sup>. A National Cinema Institute (*Instituto nacional de cinema*) was also established in 1975 with a view to the «creation of a truly Mozambican cinema... which gives to all the people a knowledge of the national liberation struggle and of colonial aggression negating through this objective the vestiges of war and of our recent past»<sup>62</sup>. In addition, the INC was to ensure that a higher proportion of film production took place in the provinces and that a mobile cinema campaign would increase cinematic exhibition in the rural areas of provincial Mozambique.

With respect to the importation of films from outside Mozambique, special priority was given to films documenting the revolutionary

55. Editorial, *O Brado Africano*, November 9, 1974: 4.

56. P. PIMENTA, quoted in M. DIAWARA, «Film Production in Lusophone Africa: Toward the Kuxa Kanema of Mozambique», in *African Cinema*, Bloomington, Indian University Press, 1992, chap. 6: 88-103.

57. C. ANDRADE-WATKINS, *op. cit.*: 25.

58. Jean Rouch left Mozambique in somewhat acrimonious circumstances in 1979 after a series of disputes with the INC, Frelimo and in particular with Ruy Guerra. He was severely criticised by the INC after his departure for his concentration on productions in Super-8 which was deemed to be prohibitively expensive and a part of Rouch's marketing strategy for selling production hardware in Mozambique. Ousmane Sembene also once described Jean Rouch as «depicting Africans as insects» in some of his films, O. SEMBENE, «Jean Rouch – Sembene Ousmane: comme des insectes», *Ciné-Action*, 17, 1982: 77-78.

59. FRELIMO, Departamento do Trabalho ideológico, Primeira conferência nacional, November, «Resolução sobre o cinema, o livro e o disco», Maputo, Frelimo, 1975: 77.

60. This description of films which was widely used by Frelimo officials and became a kind of standard descriptive reaction to any type of film of which Frelimo did not approve. Frelimo, «Resolução sobre o cinema...», *op. cit.*: 78.

61. Frelimo, «Resolução sobre o cinema...», *op. cit.*: 78.

62. *Ibid.*

experiences of other countries, particularly «socialist» countries. Between 1975 and 1979 some 75% of the films screened in Mozambique were made in «socialist countries» (USSR, Bulgaria, East Germany, Yugoslavia, Cuba)<sup>63</sup>. In several aspects of its organisation, including the structures for cinema censorship operated by Frelimo, the Cuban experience<sup>64</sup> provided a critical «reference point»<sup>65</sup>. The INC itself was modelled on the ICAIC (Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Art and Industry) where many Mozambicans trained in the application of cinematic techniques. Before 1975, an average of 500 films were shown in Mozambique every year, the majority of which came from the USA, Italy, France and India<sup>66</sup>. In 1980, 162 were screened in Mozambique, 79 of which were of «socialist» origin and a fifth of which came from the USSR. Very few of these films were widely attended and some even held their premieres in Maputo with as few as twenty people present.

#### NEW NAMES GIVEN TO MOZAMBICAN CINEMAS IN 1981

<i>Province/city</i>	<i>Original name</i>	<i>New designation</i>
Maputo/Maputo	Cinema San Miguel	Cine-Teatro 1 de Miao
Maputo/Maputo	Cinema Dicca	Cinema Matchedje
Maputo/Maputo	Cinema Camoês	Cinema Kanema
Maputo/Matola	Cinema S. Gabriel	Cinema Matola
Inhambane/Inhambane	Cinema Manuel Rodrigues	Cine-Teatro Tofo
Sofala/Inhaminga	Cinema Império	Cinema Inhaminga
Manica/Gondola	Cinema Preciosa	Cine Gondola
Tete/Tete	Cine S. Tiago	Cine Zambeze
Zambézia/Gurue	Cinema Rodrigues	Cine-Teatro Independência
Nampula/Nampula	Cinema Almeida Garret	Cinema Nampulense
Nampula/Namialo	Cinema Imperial	Cinema Namialo

Source: adapted from *Notícias da Beira* (May 21 1981) «Novas designações para alguns cinemas: determina despacho ministerial»: 7.

In the arena of film production (which employed 70% of INC staff), the INC immediately set about providing training courses for its workers in animation, camera work, laboratory and sound techniques and processing skills. Problems began to arise however as a consequence of the important assistance of foreign *cooperantes* in (every stage of) this process. Salaries for INC staff were the lowest of any state media agency<sup>67</sup> and the considerable disparities between INC wage rate rates and those of the foreign workers contracted by the INC disrupted an otherwise productive atmosphere of co-operation between these two groups<sup>68</sup>. The lack of qualified projectionists was also a persistent problem for the INC however which meant that it was still not possible to operate a daily service in cinemas across the country and

63. «Louvor á programação do Instituto do Cinema», *Notícias*, 21 August 1981: 11.

64. For ANDRADE-WATKINS, Cuban influences helped Mozambican cinema to become «the most powerful centre of politically engaged and economically innovative indigenous cinema on the continent of Africa», 1995: 36.

65. Z. LAÏDI, «The Third World and the Soviet Union», London, Zed, 1988.

66. Interview with Maria de Lourdes Trocato, Director of CECC, cited in *Tempo*, «Que Filmes assistimos?», 540, 15 February 1981: 50-53.

67. INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE CINEMA, «Como se deve aumentar a produção do Instituto», Maputo, INC, 1981.

68. Interview with Gabriel Mondlane 23 September 1995. According to one INC report produced in 1982 «in the sector of production there are significant internal salary disequilibria that create professional conflicts... The salary question is a factor of disturbance, demobilisation and discontentment». INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE CINEMA, *Relatório sobre as actividades do INC no ano passado*, INC, Maputo, 1982: 3.

also that «the films are not treated with due care and so a film acquired for a five year period will last little more than two years»<sup>69</sup>. Changing the names of Mozambican cinemas to reflect the realities of the «new nation» proved to be considerably easier than re-organising the ways in which they had been run under colonialism.

### «Post-colonial» Cinema?

The production of films in the earliest years of Independence was limited to a number of short documentary newsreels which, as in the late colonial period, focused attention on the Frelimo strategy. *Do Rovuma ao Maputo* (Dragutin Popovic, 1976) was one of the first short films produced by the INC which follows the National tour around Mozambican provinces made by Samora Machel shortly after Independence. The film is narrated (partly due to the lack of skilled sound technicians) and the only other voice recorded on the soundtrack is that of the President himself as he rallies a crowd in Nampula with the words: *Abaixo o racismo!* (Down with Racism!). The strong personal style of President Machel radiates through *Do Rovuma ao Maputo* and is constructed as firmly rooted in a popular base of public approval. In the final stages of the film, we see the President triumphantly enter the new capital city to take up office amidst mass public rallies of support.

The massacres and «aggressions» perpetrated by the colonial state figure prominently in *Estas são as armas* (INC Collective, 1978) which was presented as an «authentic historical document... filmed for the occasion of the occurrence of important events in the life of our people»<sup>70</sup>. This history centres on the moment in which President Machel (accompanied by a translator into local languages) brandishes aloft a rifle and proudly declares to a crowd gathered in Cabo Delgado during the liberation struggle that «these are the weapons with which we initiate the struggle for national liberation». The notion of an original founding moment is important here (as is the centrality of weapons) and this is reinforced in the film through the interspersed usage of (black and white) footage drawn from colonial *Actualidades*. The experience of Portuguese colonialism is granted considerable attention here (more so than in many later productions) but this was partly a consequence of the limited resources available to the INC to produce alternative images after Independence. In these stretched and difficult circumstances the colonial filmic archives were the very tools upon which a «postcolonial cinema» cinema would have to depend.

*Mueda: Memoria e Massacre* was produced in 1979 by Ruy Guerra producer of many radical Brazilian *Cinema Novo* films in the 1960's and can be read as «a complex mixture of documentary, propaganda and powerful myth-making»<sup>71</sup>. The film follows the re-enactment of the massacre of 600 (primarily «Makonde» people) in the town of Mueda in 1960 and explores the subtle and confusing divide portrayed (through theatre) between fact and fiction. The historical progression of the liberation struggle meant that the geographical position of Mueda added to the significance of these events in the process of national liberation (and in its recollection). A different

69. INC, *Como se deve aumentar...*, *op. cit.*, 1981: 7.

70. «"Estas são as armas": um documento histórico», *Notícias*, 24 September 1978: 3.

71. «Massacre in Mueda», *West Africa*, 1 December 1980: 2422.

process of positioning the national is at work in the later *O Vento Sopra do Norte* (José Cardoso, 1987) (The gust around the North) and *O tempo dos Leopardos* (The Time of the Leopards, 1987). *O Vento Sopra do Norte* premiered in Cine-Africa on July 3 1987 where it was integrated into the celebrations organised by Joaquim Chissano and Marcellino dos Santos to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Frelimo. This was the first film produced entirely by Mozambicans and some 8,000 people saw it in the first four days<sup>72</sup>. The film begins, as we might have expected, with the liberation struggle and deals primarily with the threats of «tribalism», «regionalism» and racism». Ethnicity is portrayed as something through which only manipulation and division emerge and these «dangers» to Mozambican society are constructed as borne of colonialism and not of Independence.

*O tempo dos Leopardos* (Camilo da Sousa & Zdravko Velimirovic, 1987), a Mozambique-Yugoslavia co-production, again continues this process of reflection upon the history of the liberation struggle following the search for Pedro, a Mozambican (Frelimo) nationalist desperately wanted by the colonial state<sup>73</sup> for the successful incursions of his organisation in the North. The Portuguese eventually catch up with Pedro (using information from black Mozambicans interned by Pide) who is summarily executed and the film follows the successful attacks made by the liberation movement, inspired by the memory of Pedro's sacrifice. A form of national allegory emerges as the film focuses on a number of private individuals whose destiny becomes a kind of history of the nation itself<sup>74</sup>.

The public cultural life of Mozambique was portrayed in a number of films which documented the national musical traditions of Mozambique. *Musica Moçambique!* (Fonseca Costa, 1985) and *Canta meu irmão, ajuda-me a cantar* (José Cardoso, 1982) were some of the most important examples of this kind of cinema. The second of these two films follows the Festival of Song and Traditional music held in Maputo in 1980. The film's director José Cardoso argued that «for the large part of the public this was the first approach they had had to traditional music from various different parts of our country»<sup>75</sup>. The emphasis here is on the representation of «the different parts of our country», stressing the individual contributions each province could potentially make to the national musical archive, suggesting a «national» sound and stressing the collective unity of all contributions (despite the multiple languages other than Portuguese used to articulate them). Interestingly the film is interspersed with a series of images of work which reinforce this preoccupation with the reproduction of the nation, linking Mozambican national consciousness to colonialism in suggesting that the various musical traditions began with colonial work experiences.

The collapse of Mozambican cinema in the early 1990's is also an important episode in the history of «national» cinema in Mozambique. After years of leadership changes (culminating in the appointment of Mozambican playwright Ungalani Ba Ka Khosa, as Director-General) a mysterious

72. «Cinema nacional numa nova fase», *Noticias*, 4 July 1987: 11.

73. The film follows the development of anti-colonial response to Pedro and his nationalist «terrorist» friends. The Portuguese military and police forces are represented by white Portuguese actors born in Mozambique.

74. F. JAMESON, «Third World Literature ...», *op. cit.*

75. «Canta meu irmão, ajuda-me a cantar: primeira longa-metragem colorida», *Diário de Moçambique*, 29 April 1982: 3.

electrical fire hit the INC in 1991, destroying filming equipment, the sound depot, the editing rooms and processing labs of the INC<sup>76</sup>. The PRE (Structural Adjustment programme) in Mozambique denied the logic of even the minimum state involvement in Mozambican cinema and as elsewhere in Africa international co-productions and joint cinema-TV ventures have been encouraged.

The remaining demoralised staff of the INC saw their salaries decline drastically in relative terms from about 1991 and the organisation had amounted debts of US\$200 million by 1994<sup>77</sup>. A liquidating commission was established in 1995 to wind up the INC's affairs and much of the organisation's office space and equipment have been leased out to RTK, the new privately-owned TV network<sup>78</sup>. Additionally, the statutes of the organisation started to become obsolete after the revisions of the constitution in 1991 to include a multi-party system<sup>79</sup>. The majority of Mozambican cinemas were in a «generalised state of neglect»<sup>80</sup> following the decline in the fortunes of the INC, ticket price capping and falling numbers of *spectadores*<sup>81</sup>. Many cinema theatres were leased out by the INC to the *Igreja Universal do Reino do Deus*<sup>82</sup> (Universal church of the kingdom of God) a «Multinational church» that emerged from the abject poverty of the Brazilian *Favelados* who used the theatres as places of worship for their Mozambican congregation.

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### Post-Socialism and the Media in Mozambique

Since the break with Marxism-Leninism and the beginning of structural adjustment in Mozambique, increasing private sector involvement in national communication has resulted in an escalation of Portuguese media ownership. Indeed neoliberal reforms have allowed foreign media corporations to gain a powerful hold over electronic media sources in Mozambique. The objectives of this programme of deregulation and privatisation were initially closely tied to the beginning of multi-party democracy in Mozambique, as it was suggested that a more relaxed media

76. INC, Interview with Gabriel Mondlane, October 23, 1995.

77. «Multinacional, comerciante da fé parasita de Deus ou profeta de espírito?», *Savana*, 7 November 1994: 10.

78. «Reorganização muda INC de rosto», *Diário de Moçambique*, 25 February 1995: 10.

79. Interview with Francisco Essau Cossa (Ungulani Ba Ka Khosa), Director-General INC, 2 November 1995.

80. «Instituto Nacional de Cinema: A crise em "longa-metragem"», *Savana*, 18 November 1994: 1-3.

81. Part of the reason for this trend is the emergence of video-clubs in Mozambique which offer discrete, informal screenings (often of illegally imported videos) to audiences without any restrictions and at much lower prices. «Síndrome de video abala casas de cinema», *Domingo*, 19 April 1992: 4.

82. In a somewhat bizarre twist of fate (given Frelimo's incredibly hostile relations with Churches in the immediate aftermath of Independence), the IURD established their Headquarters (and private radio station) in Frelimo Headquarters on 7 October 1994. *Radio Mira-Mar* began broadcasting from Frelimo HQ shortly after this time but Frelimo officials have repeatedly denied that they received any contributions to their election campaign from this organisation. «Multinacional, Comerciante da fé parasita de Deus ...», *op. cit.*; «Multinacional da Fé», *Noticias*, May 5 1995: 11.



environment with foreign private investment would ensure greater media impartiality, more choice and improved infrastructure. As a consequence of constitutional revisions in 1990 and new media legislation in 1993, government commitments to state broadcasting agencies were scaled down, the scope of the *Ministério da Informação* was reduced and foreign and private sector investment has been substantially encouraged. A very different set of ideological criteria for successful media development are now in place in Mozambique to those defined in the earliest years of independence where ambitious plans were sketched for expanding the accessibility of national cinema or national broadcasting agencies. In the new climate, private companies like Ebanó Multimedia (co-founded by Licínio Azevedo) are beginning to dominate film production and have continued the tradition of documentary film with films like *Night Stop*, *Tchuma Tchato*, *Marracuene* and *Disobedience*. The government have also continued to encourage the use of mobile cinema campaigns<sup>83</sup> in order to bring information and entertainment to rural areas.

The emerging presence of the Lusomundo media group in Mozambique provides a useful example of the recent prioritisation of large-scale, foreign capital over indigenous medium and small scale investors and of the inequalities of access that this has produced<sup>84</sup>. Formed in 1953 primarily as a film distribution company, Lusomundo has since expanded and diversified into exhibition in the 1980s<sup>85</sup>. Now the biggest communications group in Portugal and with a considerable presence in Spain as a result of its partnership with Warner Brothers, the organisation owns Portuguese daily newspapers *Journal de Notícias* and *Diário de Notícias*. Lusomundo has also formed «strategic alliances» with distribution groups like Disney, BVI, Revolution Studios, Time-Warner, Spyglass, Columbia and UIP (which includes Universal, Paramount and MGM-UA), for cinema exhibition in Mozambique. Lusomundo purchased the *Xenon* theatre in Maputo in 1996<sup>86</sup> and also now leases the *Gil Vicente* theatre in the capital city, enlisting the support of the Portuguese Embassy in Maputo, putting substantial pressure on the Mozambican government and marginalising several Mozambican investors who also submitted bids. Eldorado Dabula, one of the unsuccessful bidders told *Notícias* at the time that the area where the *Xenon* is situated is a «privileged zone» for the Portuguese due to its proximity to the Portuguese embassy and cultural centre and he accused the Portuguese of wanting to turn the area into «a specimen of little Portugal»<sup>87</sup>.

At the time of acquisition Lusomundo reminded competitors with bids for the *Xenon* that rival companies would never receive Lusomundo-translated films since Frelimo had evicted several Portuguese distributors in the early years of independence. According to Paulo Cavalheiro, Lusomundo's Director of Operations, «Lusomundo has a heritage at the

83. Nello FERRIERI & Raffaele RAGO, See *Mozambico dove va il cinema/Mozambique where film goes*, 2002.

84. M. POWER, «21st Century Foxed: global media broadcasting and the reconfiguration of *Moçambicanidade*», *South African Geographical Journal*, LXXXII (1), 2000d: 47-55.

85. «The Groups Assets», copy available at: <<http://www.lusomundo.pt/grupo/corpo.html>>. Accessed *Lusomundo*, 9 January 1999.

86. «Kanimambo Moçambique!», *Boletim*, Lusomundo Cinemas, 3, 1998: 5.

87. «Mais línguas nacionais e novos emissores na RM», *Notícias*, 21 September 1996.

level of films that nobody else in the Lusophone communities has...»<sup>88</sup>. This «heritage», Lusomundo's support from the Portuguese state together with the organisations established capacity to generate Portuguese subtitles meant that the market for the *Xenon* and for the privatisation of other cinema theatres in Mozambique was never as «open» or «free» as neoliberal analysts have suggested. Prices at the two cinemas varied reflecting the added Lusomundo investment in the *Xenon* theatre and despite relatively low prices to begin with, ticket prices in two of the largest theatres in the capital city are rapidly becoming unaffordable to the majority.

As in many other areas of the Mozambican media these developments signalled a significant departure from the popular revolution in social communication that began with Socialist transformation after independence. The objective of increasing national production which reflected «national» cultural priorities and historical identities have given way to a promotion of foreign private sector involvement and investment which has not always delivered enhanced access and participation. Mozambican investors bidding for one of the countries more prestigious cinema theatres never really stood a chance against the pressure to recreate a «specimen of little Portugal» in central Maputo. These investors have been marginalised by Lusomundo and the strategic alliances it has established in Southern Africa and North America whilst the INC has become a peripheral figure fighting bankruptcy and attempting to adjust to complex new relationships with global capitalism<sup>89</sup>.

As the mediated spaces of identity formation in Mozambique have become increasingly transnational, problematic notions have resurfaced of the «deculturated» and «deterritorialized» African subject, bombarded by a neo-colonising foreign culture. These changes do not however represent a «unidirectional movement» from one country to another since Brazilian culture and Brazilian Portuguese are also very much a part of contemporary spaces of identity in Mozambique. Much further audience research is needed before confident assessments of the impacts on Mozambican audiences can be assessed. Cinema still occupies important positions in the spaces of *Moçambicanidade*, in the making of what it means to be Mozambican and so the globalisation of broadcasting in Mozambique suggests that new influences, ideas and languages are reconfiguring the construction of national senses of identity.

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88. «Kanimambo Moçambique!», cited in *Lusomundo*, 1998, *op. cit.*: 6. Paulo Cavalheiro of Lusomundo estimated in 1998 that Lusomundo had a library of some 3 000 films (P. CAVALHEIRO, cited in *Lusomundo*, 1998, *op. cit.*: 6).

89. «INC deve morrer como nasceu», *Notícias*, 10 September 1993: 5, and «Gil Vicente alugado á dois interessados», *Notícias*, 9 February 1994: 13.