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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

Wits School of Arts

ADAPTATION OF MAPIKO ELEMENTS TO EDUCATIVE THEATRE

Research report presented in partial fulfillment of requirements for the Masters Degree in Arts at the University of the Witwatersrand

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ADAPTATION OF MAPIKO ELEMENTS TO EDUCATIVE THEATRE

Evaristo Abreu

KEY WORDS:
MAPIKO
ADAPTATION
EDUCATIVE

DEDICATION

To my wife, Rosa and my kids, Evaro, Wika and Luana with love.

DECLARATION

I declare that this document "*Adaptation of Mapiko elements to educative theatre*" has come from my own research and it is the first time that it is being submitted to a higher educational institution in part fulfilment of a Master's Degree in Arts.

[Signature]

January, 2013

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I would like to thank the many people who have helped me with this work; those mentioned in this list, the theatre artists, and all those who helped me in other ways.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HIV/AIDS - Síndroma de imunodeficiência adquirida

CNCS - Conselho Nacional de Combate ao Sida

TEUM - Theatre of University Students of Mozambique

TALM - Amateur Theater of Lourenço Marques

FRELIMO - Frente de libertação de Moçambique

DSTV - televisão por satélite

FMI - Fundo Monetário Internacional

CNCD - Companhia Nacional de Canto e Dança

Misau - Ministry of Health

ABSTRACT

ADAPTATION OF MAPIKO ELEMENTS TO EDUCATIVE THEATRE

Mapiko is a dance that is practiced in northern Mozambique. This dance is usually associated with the rites of passage from youth to adulthood. Over time Mapiko has undergone several mutations according to the social, cultural and economic changes in the community. The adaptation described in this paper came out of many years of theatrical practice and research into the traditional values of Mozambique. The aim was to produce a theatre experience which had cultural elements that could be recognized by Mozambicans and which would link them to modern, contemporary and perhaps post-modern theatre techniques. The resulting play made use of elements of Mapiko dance, playback theatre and the text 'We Killed Mangy-Dog' written by Luis Bernardo Honwana.

Clearly the work is far from finished however a start has been made with the study of a theatre form which is directed to a Mozambican audience in a language that will send a clear message. Here we have worked on the elements of Mapiko; I believe that in the future other students and researchers will improve or adapt other aspects of culture and Mozambican art practices to better convey messages to communities.

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ABSTRACT

ADAPTAÇÃO DE ELEMENTOS DO MAPIKO PARA TEATRO EDUCATIVO

MAPIKO É UMA DANÇA QUE É PRATICADO NO NORTE DE MOÇAMBIQUE . ESTA DANÇA ESTÁ GERALMENTE ASSOCIADA COM OS RITOS DE PASSAGEM DA JUVENTUDE PARA A IDADE ADULTA. COM O TEMPO MAPIKO SOFREU VÁRIAS MUTAÇÕES DE ACORDO COM AS MUDANÇAS SOCIAIS , CULTURAIS E ECONÔMICAS DA COMUNIDADE. A ADAPTAÇÃO DESCRITA NESTE TRABALHO FOI O RESULTADO DE MUITOS ANOS DE PRÁTICA TEATRAL E ALGUMA INVESTIGAÇÃO SOBRE OS VALORES TRADICIONAIS DE MOÇAMBIQUE, A FIM DE FAZER UMA EXPERIÊNCIA DE TEATRO COM ELEMENTOS CULTURAIS QUE POSSAM SER RECONHECIDOS POR MOÇAMBICANOS E VINCULÁ-LAS AS TÉCNICAS DE TEATRO MODERNO, CONTEMPORÂNEO E, TALVEZ PÓS-MODERNOS.

ESTE TRABALHO SOBRE A ADAPTAÇÃO DOS ELEMENTOS DA DANÇA MAPIKO AO TEATRO INCORPORA PLAYBACK THEATRE, E UM TEXTO: " NÓS MATAMOS O CAO TINHOSO ", ESCRITO POR LUÍS BERNARDO HONWANA .

DESTA CONJUNÇÃO DE DIFERENTES ELEMENTOS RESULTOU UMA PEÇA DE TEATRO COM LÓGICA E COERÊNCIA. É EVIDENTE QUE O TRABALHO ESTÁ LONGE DE TERMINAR PORÉM É UM COMEÇO DE UM POSSÍVEL ESTUDO DE UM MODELO DE TEATRO DIRIGIDO A UM PÚBLICO MOÇAMBICANO COM UMA LINGUAGEM QUE VAI PASSAR AS MENSAGENS DE UMA FORMA CLARA. AQUI TEMOS TRABALHADO SOBRE OS ELEMENTOS DA MAPIKO, CREIO QUE, NO FUTURO, OUTROS ESTUDANTES E PESQUISADORES VÃO MELHORAR OU ADAPTAR OUTROS ASPECTOS DA CULTURA E PRÁTICAS DE ARTE MOÇAMBICANOS PARA MELHOR TRANSMITIR MENSAGENS PARA AS COMUNIDADES.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The study of Mapiko dance arose from the need to understand how to adapt Mapiko dance to applied theatre performances which focused HIV/AIDS education without it losing its meaning and aesthetics. Traditionally, Mapiko dance has been used in ceremonial rites of initiation. It is also now used in ceremonies like weddings and other celebrations of the Makonde community in the northern region of Mozambique.

During the colonial period the Makonde community used Mapiko dance with its songs, movements, gestures and masks as a response to Portuguese colonization. After independence in 1975 the aim of Mapiko performance changed; performing artists mobilized communities and created awareness about different situations such as corruption and prostitution. More recently it has been used to confront the spread of HIV/AIDS which is affecting around 12% of the Mozambique population (INSIDA, 2009).

Mapiko dance is also practiced by non-Makonde communities in the central and southern regions of Mozambique, especially by artists who follow folkloric and the different cultural practices which have been appropriated by Mapiko.

I have been fascinated by Mapiko dancing since my teenage years. I have sought to understand the secrets around Mapiko practices in general because I found them both impressive and extraordinary.

My passion was re-awakened when I became a Master of Arts student at Wits Drama for Life. I went to Maputo to hold informal meetings with some practitioners in order to get a better understanding of the dance. My informant was Atanasio Nhussi[1].His reaction was one of surprise with an element of rejection. He insisted that the dance had a whole ritual that should be followed only by dancers who had been initiated and trained in this cultural form of expression. But, despite this initial reaction, he agreed to provide me with information about the dance. I realized at that time that

the movements and gestures as well as the dance masks were not created haphazardly; they actually have several meanings not easily understandable to those unfamiliar with the symbols specific to the Makonde community.

That conversation motivated me to work on Mapiko dance. I wanted to know how its dramatic elements could be adapted to Applied Theatre specifically for HIV/AIDS education. The fact that I had previously worked with Mapiko dance also influenced my research choice. I was aware that attempts to adapt Mapiko dance could raise resistance because it is a specific secular cultural practice.

1.2 Problem Statement

The persisting shortcomings in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic have convinced international development agencies that every successful means of communication should be seen as a highly valued tool in preventing the further spread of the disease.

When the disease was first recognized in 1986, the Ministry of Health of the government of Mozambique sought to address it institutionally through the establishment of appropriate bodies such as Programa Nacional de Combate ao Sida (CNCS) in 1988. In 1990 the government put in place the first surveillance system to monitor the progress of programs and the spread of the disease. Ten years later the first strategic plan was in place and it has been revised and updated regularly to meet the ongoing challenges in the fight against the disease. One particular feature of these government initiatives was the focus on prevention among certain demographic group's namely young people, girls, highly mobile groups and those involved in commercial sex work (Government Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS, 2005-2009).

Prevention research and national-level experiences over many years strongly indicate that prevention strategies are "likely to be most effective when they are carefully tailored to the nature and stage of the epidemic in a specific country or community" (Bertozzi et al, 2006). In a high-level epidemic country, such as Mozambique, prevention efforts should focus on broadly based population-level interventions

that can mobilize an entire society so as to address prevention and care at all levels (ibid.).

1.3 Research Questions

This research investigates the relationship between theatre and HIV/AIDS prevention education in Mozambique specifically. At how elements of Mapiko dance can be used in educational theatre to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. .

1.4 Hypotheses and study objectives

In this study the main hypothesis, which is commonly found in art education theory, is that art is essential to community health education especially with regard to the prevention of HIV/AIDS. However, some studies have disputed this linkage stating that it is specific elements which should be taken into consideration when creating a link between education and art form.

The aim of this practice-based research is to explore some specific elements in the Mapiko dance, such as masks, movement and gestures, to see how these can be adapted and in order to bring theatrical expressivity into HIV/AIDS education performances.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

The limited funding available for this research affected the amount of fieldwork which could be done especially in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, where Mapiko dance has its origins. Most of the information was gathered in Maputo from key informants. Literature on the subject is limited and almost non- existent.

1.6 Key Concepts and Theory

One key concept driving this research is the concept of adaptation. According to O Connell and Yamin in the Encyclopedic Dictionary of Administration "Cultural adaptation is the process by which a person becomes able to perform well in another

culture." (O'Connell, 2003:27) Mo Yamin (2003:28) defines adaptation as a cultural product that is "...the opposite of standardization and involves the idea that [dance] companies can prepare programs, according to the specific conditions of [the] different countries in which they operate". Both authors see and interpret adaptation in ways that suit the notion of adaptation which I intended to use in this research namely that elements of Mapiko dance can be used in Education Theatre without jeopardizing the originality of the former.

The first definition of cultural adaptation suggests that, even though I belong to a certain ethnic group in Mozambique, I can appropriate another's cultural elements and arrange adapted performances which express my sentiments without endangering the aesthetics and sense of the original form. This should be done in a manner appropriate to the context and is essential for an urban audience (Dortier 2006). Here I want to bring up a proposal by Dortier (2006:98) that suggests that there are class cultures and subcultures that arise from the subdivisions of a national culture. Its variants are linked to particular groups, social classes, and ethnic communities and marginalized groups within the same society.

In the second case, if we change the keywords we will have the following result, which agrees with the concept described above: adaptation of the elements of Mapiko involves the adaptation of aesthetics which is the opposite of standardization. It includes the idea that artists can make changes according to specified conditions.
Making an analogy of the above concepts with the intended adaptation, I decided to make the logical inference that I could take Mapiko to a different geographical space without changing its key features which are dance and the exclusion of strangers. It would be seen to be a cultural practice which would mean that audiences would appreciate that each movement, each gesture, each mask had a meaning and a specific message for them. At the same time the viewers would find something familiar in the movements, the gestures, and the masks.

Helam (1980: 1) defines semiotics as a science dedicated to the study of the production of meaning in society. Dortier (2006: 635) defines semiology as the general science of signs. He is concerned with bringing all forms of discourse and all kinds and forms of

expression - design, gesture, film, text and dressing - onto the stage.

The concept of ' element' is defined as a part of a whole system, plan, and piece of work etc., especially one that is basic and important to the whole (Dictionary of Contemporary English, new edition 2009). This definition is not exhaustive, but fits well with the assumption behind my research, in that it fully defines what I intended to do, which was to take Mapiko and incorporate the dance elements into the play in a logical manner so that the intended message should remain fully understandable. Thus, I removed some Mapiko dance moves and kept others that would meet the objectives of each scene or moment and send a clear message.

1.7 Structure of the Study

Chapter 2 will look at the Mozambique HIV/AIDS pandemic and the approaches employed by government and different government policies. Chapter 3 will examine existing literature linking the arts (theatre specifically) to community health education (HIV/AIDS prevention). Chapter 4 explains what is Mapiko, what is playback theatre and refers to the history of Mangy- Dog. It also explains how this triad was crafted to be a homogenous group. Chapter 5 refers to the development of applied theatre in Mozambique, linking these developments to difficulties in the education sector. The sixth chapter is the conclusion.

CHAPTER II: THEATRE, PERFORMANCE AND EDUCATION IN MOZAMBIQUE

2.1 Introduction

In this Chapter I will argue that the European concept of theatre dominated the stage for a long time. For instance in colonial Mozambique existing forms of local theatre were reduced to insignificance. Portuguese colonizers did not ignore local practices but they never considered them to be art. Local art practices were viewed as the indigenous practices of the black population groups. Also in this chapter, I will briefly describe how theatre evolved over the centuries. This historical description will demonstrate how the different forms of adaptation were influenced by religion, politics and social aspects. In addition I will show that theatre in Mozambique has always had educational and interventional dimensions and how, based on economic, political and social determinants, it became the domain of the elite and then evolved into the current stage of applied theatre.

2.2 Theatre a global overview

Although the central point of this study concerns theatre in Mozambique, it is still relevant to briefly provide a snapshot of theatre globally because all over the world there is evidence that the concept of adaptation has been present throughout the different stages of theatre evolution.

Moussinac (1957) points out that theatre practice is as old as the existence of the human being. At first it was associated with magic and animism and was part of the development of rituals and ceremonies and myths. Later, with the emergence of religions, rituals were created that were linked to all areas and situations of human life, from agriculture, health, and emotional states to the rites of passage. These were carefully prepared and accurately repeated. This was the first form of performance and it evolved into theatre both in Europe and around the world.

The medieval period was marked by the spread of Christianity and consequently the

break with the pagan theatre. All authors and those who participated in pagan practices were excommunicated. The church introduced new forms of performances. A new theatrical order and dramatic liturgy was consolidated in the twelfth century by developing forms of solemn celebrations for the church. This constituted a revival of theatre (Moussinac, 1957).

A form of popular theatre emerged out of the practices of medieval theatre during the renaissance period. Its theories and models came out of the social, political, economic and religious norms of the times. However it must be noted that the lower classes were losing the hegemony of the theatre to the upper classes.

In his final remarks, Moussinac concludes that Italy contributed substantially to theatre as it exists today integrating art with the public life of the classes of power while the church included the working classes. Europe, as a whole, followed the same pattern and country after country was inspired by the emergence of new adaptations and additions.

2.3 The Theatre in Africa and Mozambique

The power of African theatre resides in its strong oral tradition where teaching and history are passed on from generation to generation. African theatre also had its genesis in animism and later in religious rites and social rituals and in agriculture, health, political and economic conditions. As in Europe and other parts of the world theatre in Africa came from the instinct to improve the quality of life.

I strongly believe that, as in other cultures around the world, dances and songs inspired Africans to make performances either to protect themselves or to effect a change in the course of events that were threatening them such as war, adverse social conditions, rain, drought and others. So, the notion of adaptation is intrinsically related to the evolution of theatre throughout history.

Indeed, Jean Pierre Guingane (Notre Librarie, 1990) and Francoise Grund (Notre Librarie, 1990) draw an interesting picture of theatre in Africa. When I first read the Théatre Thétres (Notre Librarie, (1990) I thought that that reading of African theatre

could have come out of the Mozambican context given the fact that Mozambique also went through the colonization process, although with a different colonizer. There were other significant similarities. For instance, acculturation and the liberation wars in Africa had a huge impact on the liberation movement in Portuguese colonies. Mozambique, for instance, took its inspiration from movements in countries as far apart as Algeria, Libya, Ghana, and others in West Africa. From this analogy I was able to make the link to Mozambican theatre in its different forms during the liberation war. At that time it used music, movements, masks and gesture to fight the colonizer and to get a message across.

Guingane (1990) points out that the evolution of modern African theatre is divided into three parts. The first part corresponds to the first years of African independence with all the excitement and enthusiasm around freedom affecting everyone from politicians to civil society as well as those in power. In this period, also regarded as the era of euphoria, all actors shared a similar viewpoint denouncing colonialism, and praising the heroes of independence.

Guingane (1990) describes how after the sixties there was less enthusiasm as African governments began to assume positions that many of their supporters could not agree with. Followers started to reject their own government and leaders and this had implications for the shape and form of theatre. The key features of the discontent among the population were reflected in the plays written by the artists. This time round, instead of insulting the colonialists, the actors began to be more critical of people and events closer to home (Guingane, 1990).

Censorship led to a massive exodus of authors and actors as government censorship, especially in francophone countries, focused on initiatives of representation rather than the written word. Guingane (1990) argues that censorship was more interested in representation than in texts because the editing capabilities, allied to widespread illiteracy, minimized the impact of the written word on the population. On the other hand representation was an authentic platform for those without a voice.

Clearly the description above simply highlights the flexibility of drama and its ability

to adapt to different contexts with different aims. In fact Françoise Grund (1990) considers drama the most interesting of the arts because of its lack of a permanent model. African artists use dance and music and other means of expression such as body and face, to fill any gaps. Following this principle I attempted, in this study, to explore the flexibility factor and develop a piece where spectacle is narrated and also illustrated by movements and gestures. In this case these are used to pass on the message of rejection to the audience. In my work gestures and movements would be used to indicate a state of mind.

In the eighties in spite of repression African theatre triumphed. Guingane (1990) finds three reasons to explain that. The first reason is related to the visionary character of the theatre. It was at the forefront of collective awareness, and made the authors, directors and actors embrace the causes of the oppressed. This point is particularly relevant to the Mozambican context where possibly, in the aftermath of independence, there was no oppression consciousness due to 'the euphoria of the moment' (Guingane, 1990). The post-independence period was followed by theatre leaning towards raising awareness around social problems and was marked by the emergence of various theatrical pieces and groups most of them working specifically on raising social awareness around HIV/AIDS.

The second reason was the visit of a few African groups to Europe. The Inter-African Radio France International Theatrical Contest, the Limoges francophone festival, Gabriel Garran's theatre festival and others have helped to promote theatre in Africa. They gave the artists a chance to meet each other and to benefit from media coverage which protected them when they returned to their countries (Guingane, 1990).

The third reason why African theatre triumphed is its ability to adapt to social realities. Because Applied Theatre and the Theatre of Intervention use local languages to draw attention to social problems that affect different population groups these forms of theatre are being claimed by the lower social strata and this is very difficult to combat (Guingane, 1990).

Theatre in Africa developed markedly in the eighties and nineties. This period saw an

increase in the number of groups and theatre-makers who came from the disadvantaged. They could be found amongst students, associations of women, youth, and workers with militant policies and others (Guingane, 1990).

Guingane (1990) also points out that the topics discussed at that time were essentially political. The intention of playwrights and directors was to send a message to the holders of power while sending a message to society to stop passively looking at the degradation in their lives and consequently in their societies.

Despite all the problems and crises of growth African theatre today has its peculiarities and its own identity. The introduction of different languages in the same spectacle, the dance, music, rituals and the masks give African theatre, its own aesthetic, its own rhythm, dynamics and atmosphere. These can only be found in Africa (Guingane, 1990).

In line with Guingane (1990), Grund (1990), suggests that the most rewarding development in African theatre comes not from their potential for creativity or appreciation of ancient syncretism, the contents of which are merely visual, but from the fact that it is, in essence, a community game that recognizes the codes and dimensions of symbiosis. This development is taking place gradually.

Therefore, Grund (1990) says, theatre must have a precise function and at the same time be playful. It should inform, educate and draw attention to issues but at the same time it should be playful with music, dance and other accessories giving character to a theatrical performance.

The literature about Mozambique theatre is scarce. Most written documents are limited to minor descriptions and generalizations. In attempting to trace the history of theatre in Mozambique I will draw mostly on Machado Da Graça's article in the French magazine Notre Librarie (1993).

During the colonial period, conventional theatre was common in colonial communities, and during the thirties some institutions were linked to theatre, in

particular the railway club, the radio club and the art associations.

During the sixties two important groups appeared that remained active until the eve of independence in 1975. TEUM[1] was similar to theatre groups found in Portuguese universities and was composed of children of settlers and some young Mozambicans.

TEUM produced an avant-garde theatre without any reference to indiginous Mozambican society which, in any case, was unfamiliar to the majority of its members; it too was subject to censorship by the colonial government.

The other group was TALM[2] which had similar characteristics to that of TEUM only with the difference that the participants were not college students. The repertoire was identical but they also presented European classics (Graça, 1990).

However there was one important exception in this context, the presentation of a piece rooted in Mozambique: 'The Lobola' [3], written by Lindo Lhongo [4]and staged by Norberto Barroca[5]. It was the first time, during the colonial period, that a theatrical presentation used a local theme. This marked the beginning of theatre in Mozambique moving from being just an element of the landscape to being a space with its own cultural identity (ibid.).

Later, Lindo Lhongo wrote another play, 'As trinta mulheres de Muzelene' [6] which exposed the clashing of African and European cultures. In addition, in 1973, another piece rooted in the Mozambican culture and religion came from Joao Fumane[7] which exposed the problem of 'conflict of interest' among black Mozambicans. This was staged in liberated areas where, as part of the national

[1] Theatre of the Mozambique University Students
[2] Amateur Theater from Lourenco Marques
[3] The Betrothed
[4] Mozambican scriptwriter
[5] Portuguese director and actor
[6] The Thirty women of Muzeleni
[7] Mozambican Scriptwriter

liberation movement FRELIMO[8], the guerrillas practiced the arts including theatre.

After independence came the moment of euphoria. It eulogized FRELIMO and spoke out against the colonizers and all who were connected to them. This was the Theatre of Combat, and the combat was against all forms of colonialism, racism, regionalism and corruption (João Manja[9]).

This period was marked by the emergence of The Scenic Group of the popular forces of liberation in Mozambique, a group which presented many pieces of a political nature and some popular ones (Javali Javalismo[10]). Later the group was subjected to censorship and eventually was dissolved. Most members left the army and became civilians. Later, another group emerged. This was the Casa Velha Association[11] created by a group of friends. It included journalists, architects and artists, mostly brown and white, but it also had some black members. This group was dedicated to producing plays by classical authors and also theatre for children based on texts by authors of various nationalities. Later the Casa Velha picked up momentum with the inclusion of some young Mozambicans.

During this period other groups emerged such as IV Congress of the railway company of Mozambique. This group travelled to the various provinces of Mozambique and in each province helped to create local theatre groups. The created groups were composed mainly of interventionists and were spread around Mozambique.

At the same time, theatre in Mozambique gained impetus with the emergence of the experimental theatre group currently named Txova Xita Duma created by Martinho Lutero[12]. This group produced shows like 'Gota de agua' from the Brazilian author and musician Chico Buarque de Holanda[13]. 'Xiluva' was a Mozambican collective creation

[8] Mozambican front of liberation
[9] Mozambican actor
[10] The Holy Family
[11] Hold House, was one of the first theatre groups in Mozambique
[12] Brasilian musician and composer
[13] Brasilian author and musician

marking the introduction of research theatre in Mozambique. The show was created from a piece of research and depicted the social aspects of Mozambique at the time, more specifically problems arising from urban life in the city of Maputo.

This group was the spring board for the emergence of school theatre which began at the Francisco Manyanga Secondary School in Maputo city where Antonio Vaz [14]created the ZOMOLA theatre group. The group was responsible for awakening in young students their political awareness as well as a consciousness of themselves as individuals and their right to freedom of expression. They also took on the task of combating corruption and bullying in schools in Maputo city.

School theatre quickly spread to every city, as well as the whole country. Plays such as 'Adriano o professor', [15] 'Quinita' [16]and others were presented during this period. At the same time, some actors decided to embrace a professional theatre project and, led by Manuela Soeiro[17], founded Mutumbela Gogo[18].

Interest in the theatre was on the rise as there were no alternative sources of amusement in Maputo. Movies were not being shown in Mozambique because of the civil war. They could not be imported and in any case most of the equipment was broken.

The Mutumbela group adopted a new form of theatre that combined aesthetics and education; a kind of symbiosis of Applied Theatre and Conventional Theatre. In their performances the messages were presented in the form of metaphor and the pieces were full of symbols.

Gilberto Mendes[19], a member of the Mutumbela, left the group and established his own group called Gungu[20]. This group chose to portray day to day issues, and quickly the

[14] Mozambican director
[15] Title of a theatre piece
[16] idem
[17] Mozambican Director
[18] First professional theatre group in Mozambique
[19] Mozambican director
[20] Mozambican theatre group

group built up a following among Mozambican audiences.

Their plays are political in nature, especially with regard to criticism of politicians, corruption and social affairs with a special emphasis on marriage and marital affairs. The Gungu brought a new dimension to Mozambican theatre - direct criticism, either of the state or a general criticism of society.

Other groups emerged in other provinces. Many of them came out of the International Theatre Festival D'Agosto[21] created by the group MBEU[22] during the late nineties and the early twenty's. Some of the groups that participated in the festival showed great skill in their treatment of drama and also in the staging and performance of their productions.

The end of the civil war led Mozambique to change course. Economic reforms began in this period that forced the state to take a new stance that favored the private economy.

During this period the shops began to stock new products, new television channels were opened and new companies provided communication services such as DSTV, South African and some European TV channels. All of this increased the range of available entertainment and theatre started losing its hegemony. At the same time there was a shortage of performance venues mainly because cinemas and theatre houses were sold to agents in the private sector who had no interest in theatre. To some extent this situation led to the marginalization of theatrical groups and many of those which were state owned were jettisoned. In order to survive many groups changed their focus to Community Theatre and Applied Theatre became a form of survival in almost the whole country.

2.4 Applied Theatre in Mozambique

By definition Applied Theatre teaches community members to teach others, and helps communities to process issues which directly impact them. It can also raise awareness

[21] This festival was born out of the theatrical movement against corruption based in Uganda and members came from Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Quenia and Mozambique.
[22] Mozambican theatre group

of issues, pose alternatives, heal, challenge contemporary discourses, and voice the views of the silent or marginalized (Philip, 2003). Mozambique inherited from its colonial masters a precarious educational system marked by high levels of illiteracy, a minimal network of educational infrastructures and few qualified public sector employees. There were marked regional and gender disparities. In short the system was not designed to serve the majority of Mozambican citizens. Thus, the expansion of educational services became the key priority of the post-independence period (AfriMAP, Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, 2012).

Just as the country was attempting to build its infrastructures the economy was faced with the rise in the price of oil threatening the country's independence. The Mozambican government had to accept Structural Adjustment Programs initiated by the IMF and World Bank in order to solve problems arising from an inefficient economy and a public budget deficit. The social implications of these policies are widely documented: the rise in unemployment, a general decline in living standards for the poor and an alteration of the distribution of income in favor of non-poor (Nevis, 2002). These challenges, coupled with a broken educational system and the emergence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic worsened the social conditions of the majority of Mozambican citizens. In urban areas such as Maputo, people were confronted with typical urban problems such as the management of organic waste, malaria, cholera, robbery and corruption.

It was under those circumstances that Applied Theatre emerged in Mozambique. By definition Applied Theatre teaches community members to teach others, and helps communities to process issues which impact them directly. It can also raise awareness of issues, pose alternatives, heal, challenge contemporary discourses, and voice the views of the silent or marginal (Philip, 2003).

Theatre has always been perceived as a lifeline for the dissemination of messages and community mobilization. It has been used widely by politicians during their campaigns to get votes and in various ways by NGOs and other civil society organizations. In practical terms, all theatrical groups in Mozambique are at present working with Intervention Theatre and Community Development Theatre. These two

forms of theatre (interventions) are processed in different ways but are the foundation of theatre for civic education, industrial theatre, theatre of intervention, theatre of the oppressed, and finally theatre for development. It seems that finally stakeholders have realized that theatre is a very important channel for community mobilization campaigns. Nevertheless, they do not seem to be capable of applying scientific models when processing and using intervention through theatre. Invariably, stakeholders asking for theatre as a resource for community mobilization impose how the show should be conducted.

With this background in mind we can see that theatre in its different forms has played many roles. It has worked, and still works, as a gauge of the social temperature. In the case of Mozambique, it moved from being censored to being given a political function. At one time the upper classes attempted to silence the voice of the oppressed by banning theatre precisely because they realized that it was a very strong weapon for mobilization.

Overall dance is perceived to be one of the earliest forms of representation. From Asia to the Americas we find many similarities in terms of mysticism and the use of props and other accessories.

My perception of dance in Africa is that it is a theatrical performance particularly in the case of the Mapiko dance in Mozambique. Therefore I decided to look for elements in Mapiko dance which could be used to teach about HIV/AIDS particularly in relation to stigma and discrimination. Theatre has survived because of the efficacy of its playfulness and artistic expression. These can be found in both conventional theatre and in applied theatre and encouraged me to use dance, together with transforming stories, in a new way.

Mozambique is a very large cultural mosaic and the differences found as we go from south to north and vice versa are vast. The signs are different, the dances, the clothing, and even the way people talk. This mosaic has been studied by many anthropologists and other scientists. I realized that these differences could be used to pass on messages in many different ways. I'm not currently in a

closed methodology or a specific model so I took dance as a universal standard...

My travels too to many different districts and communities opened my eyes to new forms of intervention and an understanding of the role of ethnic dances in the theatre. I tried to find ways of appropriating the signs of these dances and giving them a theatrical language that could be clearly understood. I wanted to simultaneously use the aesthetics of dance, community theatre, and theatrical expression to educate and mobilize. This common ground could be the place where all the players could find the way to form a better society. I believe this is the true role of theatre.

In the various stages of its journey, in the various places where it has adapted to the specifics of the region theatre has had the support of everyone, including its detractors. Its political function, its social and recreational qualities will always be a part of our human experience. As responsible citizens, we are now using one facet of this art form to educate.... ethnic dance.

In this essay I attempt to show how I used the elements of Mapiko dance to add value to Applied Theatre practice. First I explored some symbols of Mapiko, such as masks, movements and gestures and finally combined them to make a spectacle which had lucidity and plasticity. In this case, contrary to the ideas of Grund (1990), I staged the piece in playback which helped me not to lose the original text or the form of theatre making.

My varied experiences with drama, my travels, and my drama studies gave me the confidence to experiment with all the elements which I had seen being used over the years. I hoped that this blending of the education-factor, the aesthetics of the spectacle and the dramatic elements of the text would create an animated spectacle that would be educative and would call attention to the stigma and discrimination related to HIV/AIDS; for example the oppressed would find themselves relating to the mangy dog. The adaptation of these elements I decided would be done by using movements and gestures that could pass on a message; and those movements and gestures had to be consistent.

I realized that this would not be an easy task. I strongly believed though that movements or gestures could be transposed as would be the case here. The history of creative theatre confirms this assumption. My work on the adaptation process was based firstly on the way the Mapiko dance is conducted in general. This was not on the dance in it is entirety because, according to Nhussi, the steps of Mapiko dance are many and each dancer has his own style and each performance is different. I used the basic steps of the dance to underscore the text and the message I intended to pass on in each stage of the piece.

For instance, with the drawing back step, I incorporated the message of rejection or of walking away; this is why there are actors in the scene related to the killing of the mangy dog. The step which moves the leg to the side and then lowers it was given to the character that challenges the others. These steps appear mainly in the final scenes when the boys discuss whether or not to kill the mangy dog.

As can be seen, these applications were not randomly applied. There was always a clear motive and reason behind the application. This process will not be understood by everyone in the audience nevertheless I intend to give the public a chance to explore alternative forms and languages of theatre.

CHAPTER III: EXPLORING A NEW HYBRID: MAPIKO, STORY OF THE DOG AND PLAYBACK THEATRE

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the linkage between the elements and resources I used and the engagement I did to achieve the result. I also present the origin of the Mapiko community to give an overview of that community and their cultural practices and rituals.

3.2 About Mapiko

The Makonde plateau is about 40,000 square kilometers in extent and includes the districts of Mocimboa da Praia, Palma, Macomia, Moeda, Nangade and Quissanga. Its limits are the Rovuma River in the north, the river Lugenda and the District of Marrupa in the west, the Indian Ocean to the east and the river Montepuez, and District of Montepuez in the south.

According to Dias: (1964), the parties associated with the rites of puberty are the center of Makonde life. These are the great social bond that unites the various population groups within the closed world of their local interests. The Mapiko represents the sacred and the mysterious and is a playful comment on those very aspects of human life which tormented Job, misery and diseases. These gatherings end on a joyful note the occasion facilitating numerous human contacts.

The dance is gender biased. No women are present. In rare circumstances women may appear in the group as dancers but their identity is kept secret by the group. Mapiko is also seen as a magical and mysterious rite. In the past Mapiko was related to the human sacrifices that had to be offered to the gods and ancestors. Basically, one of the dancers was sacrificed to revitalize the power of the village and to maintain contact with the ancestors. The sacrificed person could not be recognized, and the reason for his disappearance was kept a secret. A Mapiko dance group keeps this mysterious characteristic by making use of their own masks and drums during the ritual. The dance in its present form has been modified. The contours are more recreational with religious connotations (Ferrao, 2012: 12).

Because I have over the years seen this dance being performed in many different ways and at many different times I believed that, when performed on a stage significance could be given to the movements and gestures, the dress and even the songs and that it could be used to pass on different types of messages. It was my intention, in my research, to explore how I could effectively adapt Mapiko dance to speak to the deeper, underlying issues of sex, HIV/AIDS and discrimination.

Originally the dance targeted feminine hegemony and was intimately linked to the male rite of passage. Already at that time Mapiko was perceived as a form of social intervention related to complaints and reactions to adversity.

This is referenced by Ana Fresu and Mendes de Oliveira (1982) who point out that during the colonial era Mapiko was also used as a weapon of war denouncing the excesses of the settlers in relation to Mozambicans. This is seen in the masks of the women and the white men, who were made to look ridiculous. Similarly in the piece 'We Killed Mangy-Dog' the character depicting the white teacher wears the mask of a woman with ugly long hair.

3.3 About Mangy-Dog

It is noteworthy that the 1964 and 1972 editions of the book 'We Killed Mangy-Dog' by Luis Bernardo Honwana (1964) have no preface or prologue. The first has some reference to "Dori" [23]and the other edition has some reference to "Jose Craveirinha" [24] and the cover design was drawn by Bertina Lopes[25].

This brevity in the preface, leads me to think that the book was too dangerous for the times since it was written while the author was in jail. The excerpt from the book, below, clearly describes the mood at that time and the conditions under which the author wrote it:

"I do not know if I really I'm a writer. I think I just write about things that are happening around me and are related to me; or that I translate facts that seem decent. This book

[23] Name of a women relative to the author
[24] Mozambican writer
[25] Mozambican artist

and its testimony tries to portray a series of situations and procedures that may interest others." (Luis Bernardo Honwana 1964. trans. de Abreu E, Hall D.)

His stories, and particularly the mangy dog story, were seen by many people, including his friends, to depict the collective consciousness of the struggle and so they encouraged him to publish. That sensitivity inspired the Frelimo in the struggle for independence and it was the book was used in speeches during the years of the armed liberation struggle. Coincidentally or not the book was first published in 1964, the year Frelimo began the armed struggle for national liberation.

The character, Mangy-Dog, was referenced by my school mates during my school time in Mozambique in different ways. Some looked at Mangy-Dog as the victim and others thought that Mangy-Dog referred to the colonials who abused Mozambicans and who should die by force of arms. I remember that the author of the book warned me to not portray Mangy-Dog as a victim when I interviewed him.

To my thinking the story, as told by the author, has an omnipresent narrator which sees itself as the land and its legal representative. The settlers are represented by all the white characters in the story, and others represent the Indians and the Chinese people living in Mozambique who, at least, have a long relationship with the land. These form the bridge between the people of Mozambique and the settlers.

"...Under the metaphor the reader is, from the beginning, in solidarity with the dog. Its weakness, its senility, its decaying body and nasty appearance do not repulse. The reader approaches him through the narrator who represents love. Through the eyes of Windlass (boy - narrator) we see that "Itchy" is the banished one, the abused, the downtrodden and the misunderstood. Windlass tells the story of that dog (half human, half dog). "Itchy" is chased. He is a weak metaphor for the black stretching back to the dawn of history. He is a metaphor for the whole of Africa in the drama of colonization. This "Itchy" dies, and Windlass who loved him and who reflects affection for a brother collaborates in this death. He does not want to do so, but he does so and here is what he says: he confesses, as if in an open court, that he committed the crime and reveals the purest remorse. Thus, this novel takes on a full confessional character. It is intimate in style, and sadly is a novel that reveals to the reader the speech of a child who has been aged and matured by suffering the

hardness of the experience ..."
(Luis Bernardo Honwana 1964 trans. de Abreu E, Hall D.)[26]

I am in agreement with the view presented above. For me, Mangy-Dog is an ambiguous character, and can be viewed from different perspectives. It is a character that bridges the gap between good and evil, and between evil and good making it therefore a target to be killed by both parties before it contaminates the whole society. It only finds refuge in the character Isaura[27] and perhaps Windlass. The narrator is undecided about whether or not he likes the dog and whether he has the courage to show his true love. This is particularly relevant when an analogy is made to HIV/AIDS infection. The attitude of society towards HIV/AIDS infected people is one of pity and affection. Many are not sure whether or not they should accept it, or should they just show compassion for the individual.

I wanted to take the text in its original form and to use the story being told by the actors to highlight the stigma and discrimination that people with HIV/AIDS experience. My play tells the story of a young HIV-positive who decides to tell his story at a session of 'Playback Theatre'. He begins by saying he is HIV-positive and from the moment we are aware of his status we begin to look at him as the 'mangy dog'. He draws an analogy between what he is experiencing and what happened to the mangy dog. Everything that is happening to him is very similar to what happened to the mangy dog. This is the essence of story of the piece 'We Killed Mangy-Dog'.

[26] (We Killed Mangy-Dog. In Infopédia [online].London: Publisher, 2003-2012. See 02.09.2012). Available at www: <URL: http://www.infopedia.pt/$nos-matamos-o-cao- tinhoso>. Trans
[27] Isaura in the story represents the hope.

3.4 About Playback Theatre

"Often Playback Theatre performance takes place in chosen settings, with a trained company of actors enacting the stories of audience members. Or the occasion may be the meeting of a private group, where members become the actors for each other's stories.

There is a clear format, though it is constantly being adapted in a variety of ways. Any life experience may be told and enacted in Playback Theatre, from the tragic to the triumphant - and some stories may be all of these. The process is effective at almost any level of skill on the part of the actors. All that is needed is respect, empathy, and playfulness. On the other hand, especially for those working with playback performance there is also room for great sophistication and artistry "(Jo Salas 1993).

I adapted the Playback Theatre techniques to fit to my play. In Playback Theatre, the actors hear the story for the first time from a member of the audience. But in my case the actors were told the story before hand and the public were not given any background details. Wellness, the narrator, was relegated to the position of a mere observer.

This could perhaps be seen as a perversion of Playback Theatre; this was not my aim. I simply wanted to show that it is possible to use Playback Theatre, mixed with conventional theatre, to pass on a given message to an audience. Playback Theatre is a form of theatre that gives voice to those who find it difficult to open up and talk about their fears, concerns, or problems. This form of theatre functions as a kind of sounding board for the audience and the actors and the person telling his story. The story teller appears as one of the oppressed who sees their situation being spelt out by the actors.

Playback theatre is interactive. It is a spontaneous way of telling stories from real life. The stories are told by the spectators, whether in theatre rooms, or outside the rooms. Playback Theatre does not need a specific room or set to make it happen.

In Playback Theatre there is scope for intervention, especially in the area of education, because Playback Theatre has the ability to bring people together and put them in an intimate environment without constraints. In Playback Theatre a group of professional

actors perform, without any previous preparation. They act out a story told by any one of the spectators, guided by a driver who operates as a spectator, asking questions to get details. The full story is interpreted by the actors and the musicians. Typically, sessions start with small stories and finally two longer stories depending on the duration of the first story. Typically a playback session will not exceed 45 minutes.

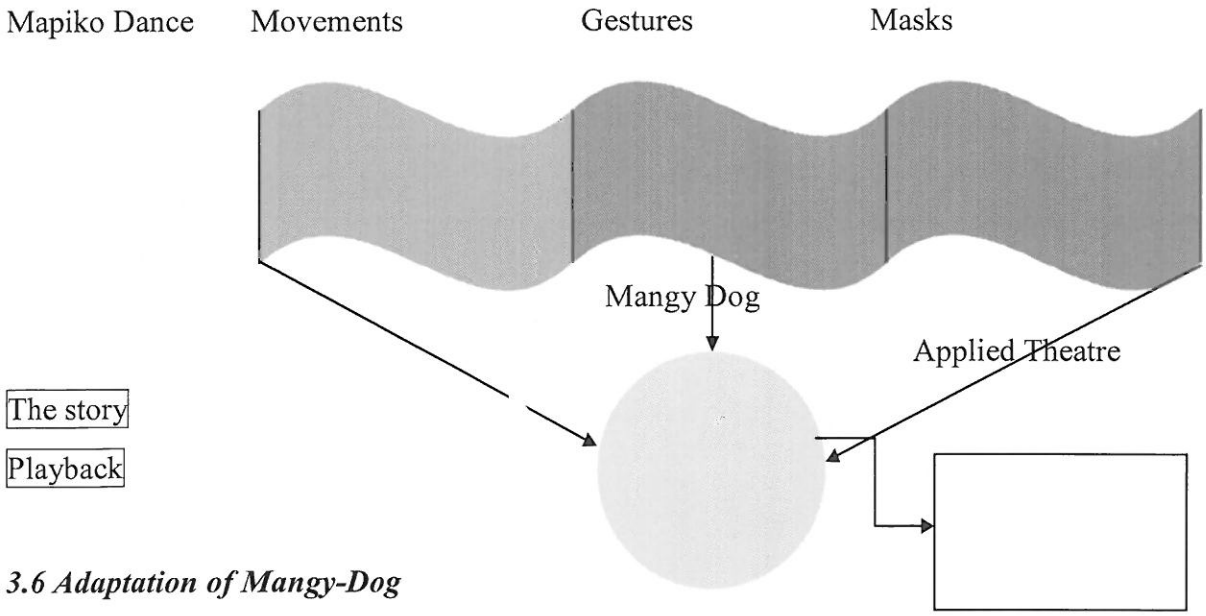
Playback Theatre aims to give the audience a place where they can they share their experiences. This sharing can serve as therapy or a solution may be found to their problem, depending on the story.

This theatrical genre was created by Jonathan Fox and Jo Salas in the United States of America and is being currently used in many parts of the world. I thought Playback Theatre would form a firm foundation for the production 'We Killed Mangy-Dog' and I believe this combination has worked up to a point.

3.5 Adaptation of Mapiko – framework and construction

The framework for the adaptation of Mapiko dance is composed of three main elements as shown in the figure below:

Fig1: Framework for the adaption of Mapiko



3.6 Adaptation of Mangy-Dog

Applied Theatre requires the adaptation and integration of traditional story- telling. The plan was to use Mapiko to create a style and form which would include all elements of Applied Theatre. A major problem in this research was how to compose or adapt the elements of Mapiko to the stage. Each element had to have a logical reason for being there. In the beginning I thought I would write a text which might fit the Mapiko. However as time went on, I realized that this was not the best solution. So I decided to read various stories until I found one that satisfied me. I chose the story of the mangy dog. This choice was due to certain factors the most important being that the story was told by an omnipresent narrator and I sensed that it could be adapted to the playback theatre.

As a theatre professional I had gained some experience in adapting tales because in Mozambique there are not many dramatists. The few that are there are mostly writing texts for their own theatre groups or adapting a tale of an author, as in my case. After the first reading I realized I should keep to the text in its original form as I was going to use it in playback theatre. However, I also realized that I would not be able to use all of the text because the play would then become a stage reading so I took the divisions that the author had used and I divided the story into chapters which I called scenes with a total of 4 scenes. In each of the scenes I tried to find the main argument and the essence of the scene. After that it was easy to give the actors their characters and to work out how the story should be told.

I chose not to change the original story. I just cut parts of the text but not the essence of it. I wanted to keep the story as it was, using it as a metaphor for the main subject.

3.7 Adaptation of Playback Theatre

I first made contact with Playback Theatre as a student at Wits University. The first lesson was somewhat confusing; I did not understand the form or the objectives of the different exercises, so I asked a lot of questions. I also wondered if it was possible to use previously prepared material in Playback Theatre. The answer was 'No' because Playback Theatre improvises stories told by the audience.

With the question still in mind I asked Jonathan Fox the same question, but in another way: Is it possible to use Playback Theatre in the conventional theatre? Jonathan Fox was surprised and replied that he had never done it, but it was not forbidden. That answer sounded to me like a challenge, because at the end of our conversation he said he would like to see it!

I did not change Playback Theatre into conventional theatre, I just used the form of Playback Theatre to tell the story I wanted to tell. I simulated a playback theatre session. In this case the actors knew the stories beforehand and the facilitator was there at different times during the performance. We did not use all the techniques because we had to be practical. My goal was not to perform Playback Theatre but to adapt it and use it as a base for Mapiko and the mangy dog story. However, to give the idea of a Playback Theatre session, one of the actors had to explain its purpose and form to the audience.

I chose to use Playback Theatre in my research because I was very impressed with the full aesthetics of that form of theatre and with the way the facilitator conducts the play. Right from the beginning I saw that I could use this theatre theory because it creates spaces for the use of imagination and stimulates the creative ability of the actor. The actor is not stuck with a text and the rules and pre-set markings of the Director. .

3.8 Towards integration

In this section I show why I used local Mapiko culture to reach the viewer. I have always believed that issues relating to HIV/AIDS should be addressed through the reality of the particular society which is being addressed. Today the focus is mainly on stigma and discrimination and I saw that my work had to be adapted so as to address those concerns.

This work came out of an earlier piece of research in which I wrote the story of a man who wanted to take revenge on another HIV infected man. At that point I realized that what was needed was a totally new angle and a new approach;

After a literature search, I ended up choosing the text 'We Killed Mangy-Dog' by Luis Bernardo Honwana because this story, although about colonialism, could be used to frame aspects of the problems associated with HIV/AIDS particularly stigmatization and

discrimination. Mangy-Dog could easily be compared to a stigmatized HIV-positive person. The story, with a few adaptations, fitted perfectly with our objectives and we appropriated this tale to be the thread of the piece.

I and the group used applied theatre techniques as a technical resource because it is one of the techniques used in HIV/AIDS educational programs. The technique was modified to fit in with the various elements that would be incorporated into my research such as movements, gestures, masks, text, scenery props, etc. The story telling technique used by the narrator, Wellness, kept the text intact and reduced the risk of us getting lost and therefore not achieving satisfactory results.

The challenge was to put these different elements together in such a way that the resulting performance would be educational and have meaning as well as aesthetic value. We reinvented some concepts and adapted them to the text and Playback Theatre.

At each stage, as we incorporated elements of Mapiko we experimented with the new idea to be sure it could work. For three months each day was like the first day since the work on the dramaturgy required that we look at the improvisation and composition of each scene.

All this was supported by different sources of information to be sure of a particular line of approach. We discussed what we were doing with different artists to justify the choice of a certain solution for a particular situation. "Every aspect of the performance was governed by the denotation-connotation dialectic: the set, the actor's body, speech and his movements determine, and are determined by the constantly shifting network of primary and secondary meanings. It is an essential feature of the semiotic economy of the theatrical performance that [it] employs a limited repertory of sign-vehicles in order to generate a potentially unlimited range of cultural units, and this extremely powerful generative capacity on the part of the theatrical sign-vehicle is due in part to excellent connotative breadth" (Elam 1980: 11).

One of the assumptions of this research was that the piece would work with elements that could replace words however we were using a play with a text and we were concerned about those who did not speak or understand Portuguese. We wondered whether we should take the language which was somewhat cutting and make it easier. However the text of 'We

Killed Mangy-Dog' is totally metaphorical and, as I mentioned before, I did not want to tamper with the original text. Fortunately a Mapiko performance is also full of metaphors. Playback Theatre which is a theatrical technique that tells the reality of a particular individual and is also performed realistically seemed to cover both these needs.

Bearing all this in mind the entire piece was slowly put together. We looked at actors, aspects of plasticity, the text, gestures and movements to ensure that the public would understand the vehicles for communication and the transmission of the messages.

We were aware that not all the movements would be recognized by the audience but none could be taken individually as they had to be an integral part of a whole set of elements. So it was also necessary to approach the story according to the sense of the movements or the gestures so that the viewer could at least identify with the story, or all of the scenic game. We believe that to a certain extent we achieved this.

"The audience starts with the assumption that every detail is an intentional sign and whatever cannot be related to the representation as such is converted into a sign of the actor's very reality –it is not, in any case excluded from semiotics" Elam (1980: 9). Each element of the piece we will see that each one was introduced in a specific manner. We were conscious all the time of what we wanted a scene or a sign to convey to the audience. For example, the masks were introduced to highlight some of the characteristics of key characters in the plot. The dance steps, in some scenes, had to show the displeasure of certain characters in relation to the mangy dog. At other times, they had to stylize situations, such as when the boys were about to kill the mangy dog. By using such theatre semiotics I wanted to demonstrate that theatre could be understood even when using elements and sensibilities other than the written word. I believe that there are absolutely no limits of any kind when we want to achieve a certain educational/theatrical goal. This is especially true when we want to communicate with an audience from a different culture, even with one which does not have the same signs. Through imagination and interpretation, people can understand what is meant. According to Balme (1999) "Theatrical elements of the stage offer modes of comparison across cultures. Whatever the author or theatre group ['s] cultural provenience, all have to find idioms for expressive texts conveyed by voice, body and space." Authors such as Balme, Carlson, Schechner, Turner, Barba, Savaresse and others

agree that poetic drama has entered a new phase. It is open to new paradigms and theories and theatrical practices that are leading the authors, directors, actors and other practitioners of this art towards a continuous experiment and the 'marginal countries' (non-Western countries) are the major promoters of these new views that have attracted these new approaches.

My work made use of these new approaches and aimed to achieve a certain academic level and a specific goal. In the case of Mozambique, at least in the conventional theatre there was, especially after independence, the beginning of a new Mozambican language of the theatre. Before independence performances were sporadic and dances in particular were only seen at specific times as they were associated with rituals and practices confined to specific population groups. Only after independence did the conventional theatre-movement begin to take shape. Slowly, over the years, with the need for more elaborate plays and with the support of foreign theatre artists, mainly Brazilian, Swedish, Portuguese and French, theatrical practice in Mozambique began to make use of other dynamics.

The foreigners brought new theatrical forms and approaches, and we got to know authors like Brecht, Stanislavsky, Boal, Ariane Mouskine and Brook as well as other authors, actors and directors of avant-garde theatre. These people influenced our choice of the experimental genre. Many Mozambican directors and actors were strongly influenced by these lines of thinking because those who taught them came from people with a revolutionary background.

In Mozambique, as in other parts of the world, theatre is not just an instrument for fun it is primarily an instrument for popular education. In the case of Mozambique and the countries of sub-Saharan Africa, this instrument needs to be vibrant because the concept of 'wellness' is underdeveloped. These countries have suffered through various crises from civil wars and diseases to natural disasters. On top of this, information and the media are not accessible to all people equally, mainly because of widespread illiteracy. Under these circumstances theatre becomes the only media of communication accessible to all. Besides spreading the 'wellness vision' and addressing current issues theatre leaves room for interactivity and participation particularly when done by local people who speak the local language.

This research is part of the new approach and aims to take its aesthetic plasticity and adapt it to 'theatre for education' in Mozambique. This will be achieved by combining cultural, classical and modern techniques. This will contribute to the development of the post-dramatic theatre according to Lehman (2007). Here the well tried elements of totality, illusion and play will cease to be the basic elements but will give rise to a new set of ideas which, together with experimentation, will prioritize a set of visual elements that will add meaning to the text.

The visual elements will transform the language making it plastic and easily understood by the whole community. When symbolism is combined with text, as in 'We Killed Mangy-Dog', the message we want to convey will be easily understood and the theatre become a popular tool for furthering education and social transformation.

CHAPTER IV: TOWARD AN APPLIED THEATRE MODEL IN MOZAMBIQUE

4.1 Introduction

The theatre in Mozambique is relatively new, whether we're talking about conventional theatre or the theories, techniques and methodologies needed to create a more elaborate theatre. In this chapter I'll do a roundup of the circumstances in which the theatre in Mozambique has developed, and how the actors and theatre directors in Mozambique create their pieces, as well as develop their creative work to present to the public.

4.2 Process, Metaphor, Form and Culture

Historically, the tendency of the Mozambican is to deal with serious issues through metaphors which have to be read and translated. The metaphor is not only the meaning of the sentence itself but it also includes a set of information, a reminder, a lesson, a warning, irony, etc. These can all be found in the multitude of proverbs that exist from the north to the south of the country.

Over the years I noticed that when we send a message about HIV/AIDS in a serious manner the audience becomes disinterested, especially the men. In some cases it is because the messages are repeated or staggered and in other cases it is because the pieces are too didactic and the people are not having fun. In Mozambique people laugh at their own misfortunes but that does not mean that they have no sense of disaster. Mozambican society lives for the moment. Misfortunes in the theatre in Mozambique are processed and displayed in a light and beautiful way, as for example in the show from the National Company's song and dance piece, "ODE A PAZ" (ODE TO PEACE) which tells the story of the 16 years of civil war, the peace agreements in Rome and ends with the first general elections. This piece was done throughout with great humor and joy so that when the show ended the audience still wanted more. It was aired in all 128 districts in Mozambique and that is why I take it as an example of the Mozambican's appreciation of humor.

Another example is the show 'We Killed Mangy-Dog'. Although it is a drama, the show has

a lot of joy and a large component of metaphorical material. The issue of stigma is not treated in a direct way. Direct speech was given a more cheerful slant by the use of dance moves that have significant overtones for those within that culture and who will recognize the meaning in the movements.

When it comes to applied theatre in Mozambique, I believe that, because the majority of black Mozambicans have not had direct contact with the classic theatrical model, we have to create a theatrical form which comes out of traditional dances. These are influencing actors and directors who are working in theatre in Mozambique today. In fact, when it comes to theatre in Mozambique, although there is a distinction between conventional theatre and applied theatre, all Mozambican groups perform both types, each doing their best to use local cultural norms in order to make the audience understand the message. This attempt to use a different form of theatre came out of the need to attract audiences who had had no contact with the classic theatrical model.

There is little knowledge of other theatre techniques especially different types of Applied Theatre. For example, Playback Theatre, Drama in Education, Drama Therapy etc. are still unknown in Mozambique. A curious factor in Mozambique is that, although there is a paucity of drama schools and prior learning of the theatre, up to a certain level all are capable of assembling material and writing or acting. The trend so far has been to slapstick so now, in Mozambique, people tend to associate theatre with common slapstick to such an extent that when actors go for interviews, or are at family parties, they are asked to present a farce or tell a joke!.

In Mozambique the actor has to be prepared to play the part of actor, director, author, playwright etc. because there is nobody else to do it for them. We often see in the Mozambican groups a director who manages everything.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATION

CONCLUSION

Globally and in the African or Mozambican context we see that the major objective of

the theatre was, and still is, to be an art form that appeals to the collective conscience. Theatre has always been used as a weapon to draw attention to social ills so, like Plato, at some point, politicians have felt the need to use or dismiss the theatre and its makers.

The theatre has however always resisted attempts by the church, the politicians and other groups any attempt to take from it its true nature. This resistance c a m e o u t of the struggle of weaker groups to share their pain or their concerns with others who had similar concerns. This could be done because the theatre vehicle is accessible to anyone at no great cost!

With the evolution of alternative ways of making theatre, theatre turned out to be a vehicle which could be used to educate children and adults both in and out of school so that today both are able to learn through dramatic games which can be played anywhere and at any time.

The decision to use Mapiko in Theatre for Education was precisely to show that the theatre has no limits, and it is possible to use anything and everything to give messages to the viewer. As actors our task is to pass on what we perceive to be the truth so that the learners can use it later in their lives.

The aim of this research is to bring to the fore cognitive tools which can be used in the creation of better theatre, a form of theatre that will make all more aware of the realities of the world around them so that audiences stop being mere spectators and pass on to being pro-active and inquisitive human beings. I believe that by using the elements of their culture people can be awakened to the potential that exists in themselves and their society. They can be empowered to make use of this potential so that it is recognized and admired by others.

My specific aim was to contribute to a better understanding of ways in which theatre can be used in HIV/AIDS education. I also hoped it would be seen as a means of helping the Mozambicans to appreciate their culture and to seek, in their roots, elements that can help develop a Mozambican theatrical language. Only when this is in place will we be able to make our mark in communities nationwide.

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