

## OBJECTIFICATION OF THE CHOPI MUSIC IN THE “FIRST PORTUGUESE COLONIAL EXHIBITION” (PORTO, 1934)

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### ABSTRACT

The cultural objectification process is selective, as it implies the recontextualization of certain cultural objects in a different context than the one that generated them, attributing them new significance and meanings (Handler, 1984, p. 62). During the First Portuguese Colonial Exhibition (Porto, 1934), this attitude was related to the discourse of invention of the “other”, where the relations between societies are governed by certain hierarchies. Mudimbe (2013, pp. 15-16) designates them as settlers, those who establish a region and dictate the rules; the colonizers, those who explore a territory under the control of the local majority, with a tendency to organize and transform non-European zones into fundamentally European constructions. At the end of this hierarchy, I would add the colonized, that is, those who obey. In the context of the colonial exhibition in Porto (1934), the Chopi music was recontextualized, and new meanings and significance were attributed, becoming a symbol of Portuguese national identity. Therefore, the Chopi music during the colonial exhibition of Porto was transformed into practices of surrender and submission of Mozambican communities, and its meanings and significance were reduced in acts of folk representation through Western performance models and the imposition of the respective aesthetic and moral models, including vertical communication from top to bottom.

### KEYWORDS

exhibition; objectification; Chopi music; recontextualization; *Estado Novo*

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## OBJETIFICAÇÃO DA MÚSICA CHOPE NO QUADRO DA “PRIMEIRA EXPOSIÇÃO COLONIAL PORTUGUESA” (PORTO, 1934)

### RESUMO

O processo de objetificação cultural é selectivo, pois, implica a recontextualização de determinados objectos culturais num outro contexto diferente daquele que os gerou, atribuindo-lhes novos sentidos e significados (Handler, 1984, p. 62). No quadro da Primeira Exposição Colonial Portuguesa (Porto, 1934), esta atitude estava relacionada com os discursos de invenção do “outro”, onde as relações entre as sociedades são regidas por certas hierarquias. Mudimbe (2013, pp. 15-16) designa por colonos, aqueles que estabelecem uma região e ditam as regras; os colonizadores, aqueles que exploram um território pelo domínio da maioria local, com uma tendência para organizar e transformar zonas não europeias em construções fundamentalmente europeias. Acrescentaria no fim desta hierarquia, os colonizados, ou seja, aqueles que obedecem. No contexto da exposição colonial do Porto (1934), a música chope foi recontextualizada em Portugal, sendo-lhe atribuídos novos sentidos e significados, tornando-se em símbolo de identidade nacional portuguesa. Portanto, a música chope, durante a exposição colonial do Porto, foi transformada em práticas de rendição e submissão das comunidades moçambicanas, e os seus sentidos e significados foram reduzidos em atos de representação folclórica através de

modelos performativos ocidentais e da imposição dos respectivos modelos estéticos e morais, incluindo uma comunicação vertical de cima para baixo.

#### PALAVRAS-CHAVE

exposição; objectificação; música chope; recontextualização; Estado Novo

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#### INTRODUCTION

Anthropologist Clara Carvalho, in her work "Ambiguous representation: power and mimesis in colonial Guinea" (2002), says that colonialism, as a domination project, was achieved through various means of influence, which in addition to the domination of local populations, included the control of work, production, time, domesticity, family practices, intimacy of body and soul. The author further advances that this heterogeneity of authoritarian practices broke definitively with the old sociocultural structures. So, European domination cannot be understood as a temporary oppression of the populations, but as an irrevocable process of transmutation in which, life forms were destroyed to emerge others in their place, a history of unprecedented and highly perverse changes (Carvalho, 2002, p. 93).

In this article, we propose to analyze the process of cultural objectification (Handler, 1984) of the Chopi music in the context of the Porto Colonial Exhibition. According to Medeiros, the exhibition was held from June 15 to the end of September 1934, in the Palácio das Colónias in the city of Porto, which in the summer of that same year received the name of Palácio de Cristal (Medeiros, 2003, p. 155). Considered as the "apotheosis of the empire" day, the opening day of the Colonial Exhibition was also classified by the local press, as the day that marks the existence of the Portuguese Colonial Empire by article 132 of the new political constitution of the Portuguese Republic which declared:

1<sup>st</sup> the Portuguese colonial empire is solidary in its component parts; 2<sup>nd</sup> that the solidarity of the colonial empire includes the obligation to contribute adequately so that the ends of each of its members and the integrity and defense of the nation are ensured; 3<sup>rd</sup> that the State will not alienate any part of its colonial territories, without prejudice to the rectification of its borders without appreciation of the congress. (Decree-law n° 22:465)

The event was supervised by the ministry of Colonies, with the involvement of the General Agency of the Colonies, whose technical director was Henrique Galvão and João Mimoso Moreira as head of the advertising division. The purpose of this event was:

document at the proper moment, the enormous colonial effort of the Portuguese. It will teach everyone what our colonies are, what has been done in them and their possibilities for a prosperous future, at the height of our quality as a third colonial power, (...). Our colonial empire is formed by

several colonies scattered around the world, some measuring several times the surface of the continent, one of which is larger than Spain and France combined. And they say that we are a small nation. (A Exposição Colonial do Porto, 1934, p. 1)

In addition to exposing the colonies, the Colonial Exhibition established new ways of representing metropolitan provinces and their popular classes (Medeiros, 2003, p. 156). The popularity of this *Estado Novo* (New State) initiative (1933-1974) can be measured by the number of people who visited the exhibition, more than half a million, and the simulation of indigenous villages (characteristic huts divided into neighborhoods), built inside the gardens of the Palácio de Cristal and the 324 occupants recruited in Macau, Goa, Timor, Mozambique, Angola and Guinea (Carvalho, 2012, p. 5). Music and other performative practices were included in this fictional scenario of Africa (Carvalho, 2002, p. 221).

## METHODOLOGY

The methodological strategy was based on the analysis of correspondence funds from the António Oliveira Salazar Archive (AOS); the Ministry of the Interior (MI); Henrique Galvão (HG), as well as correspondence from the Ministry of Overseas. In addition, I focused the analysis on the documentary funds of the Municipal Libraries of Porto, the General Bulletin of the Colonies, published in more than 45 volumes from 1925 to 1969, and finally, in the bibliography of the field of Anthropology (Cabecinhas & Cunha, 2003; Carvalho, 2002, 2012; Medeiros, 2003); History (Blanchard, Bancel, Boëtsch, Deroo, Lemaire, 2008); Ethnomusicology (Pestana, 2012) and the digital platform Memories of Africa and the East.

From the theoretical point of view, I start from the assumption suggested by Richard Handler (1984), according to which cultural objectification is selective because it implies the removal of certain cultural objects from a set of several others from their generating context – decontextualizing them – to be recontextualized elsewhere. It is in this process of recontextualization that they will lose all the symbolism and meaning that they had in their original context, in order to be assigned new senses and meanings, as signs of national identity (Handler, 1984, p. 62).

The Chopi music is associated with the Chopi people that inhabit the province of Inhambane, in the districts of Zavala, Inharrime, Homoine, Zandamela, and in some districts in the north of Gaza province in Southern Mozambique. The Chopi music in reference is the *ngodo*, an articulated set of practices that includes choreography, the sung word and the performance of an instrumental set called *timbila*, and consisting of several *mbila* (singular of *timbila*), which are lamellophones of complex wood composed of 16 to 18 blades. The *ngodo* is performed by about 20 to 30 people, most of whom are instrumentalists associated with *mbila* (about 10 to 15 players).



Figure 1: *Ngodo* Chopi in the fictional village of Mozambique at the exhibition

Source: Boletim Geral das Colónias, 1934, p. 431

The first written record known in Mozambique regarding the practice of *ngodo* dates from the 16th century and is by Father André Fernandes, a missionary of the Society of Jesus. At this point the missionary writes about *mbila* with some dazzle, clearly associating it with music from, evidently, his own understanding of the subject:

these people are very much given to the pleasures of singing and tingling their instruments with gourds connected with strings and, some large and others small (...). They play songs to the king at night and that gives him something. (Junod, 1939, p. 19)

The *ngodo*, although translated as music by colonial discourses, has always deserved the special attention of external observers, probably due to the complexity of its performance and, above all, of its instruments. For this reason, it was also the practice chosen by the organizer of the Porto Colonial Exhibition, Henrique Galvão, to represent Mozambique. This article is about this process and the consequences that resulted from the choice of the *ngodo* as an expository “object” with propagandistic intentions.

## **THE POLITICAL CONTEXT AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 1934 PORTO COLONIAL EXHIBITION**

The exhibition was held in a context in which Portugal was remodeling the colonial administration, which included repositioning itself in the territories where they had settled, and taking into account the international context of the time. The visible mark of colonial administrative remodeling is well shaped in the imperialist political discourse of the Estado Novo, in the organic bases of colonial administration of 1926, in which the need to remodel the colonial administration is expressed. In this phase, the expression “colonial empire” is used for the first time, thus showing the strategic relevance that this expression was beginning to assume. On October 23, the Indigenous political, civil and criminal statute is approved by Decree nº 12533 and later Decree nº 28570 1930, of July 8 (Rosas & Brandão, 1996, cited in Cabecinhas & Cunha, 2003, p. 10). In 1933 the decree

was constitutionalized in the form of a Colonial Act, thus reaffirming the desire to revalue the colonies in the following terms: "it is the organic essence of the Portuguese Nation to perform the historical function of owning and colonizing overseas domains and civilize the indigenous populations" (art. 2nd of Acto Colonial, 1933)<sup>1</sup>.

For anthropologist Luís Cunha, it is interesting to highlight two points:

for the Estado Novo, the Colonial Exhibition of Porto (1934) and the Portuguese World Exhibition in Lisbon (1940) incorporated two fundamental objectives: (i) the empire's exaltation discourse and (ii) its necessary pedagogical lesson for the Portuguese people. Cunha, states that through the exhibition we sought to captivate interests and vocations, but above all to demonstrate the true dimension and vocation of the country. The exposure of the nation's "geographic vastness" would allow to deny its "European smallness", showing "the value of the Portuguese missionary and civilizing soul". (Cunha, 2001, p. 95)

Through its colonies, Portugal intended to create a geographical illusion to convince the Portuguese and the international community about the vastness of its imperial colonial space and to give "a lesson in colonialism to the Portuguese people, to convince the most resilient with quite original processes, to teach the less literate and the illiterate themselves" (Galvão, 1934, p. 6). It was an idea that also resulted from the presence of Portugal in other exhibitions in Europe, and therefore supported by João Mimoso Moreira as follows:

this advertising process has long been recognized (and explored) abroad, which in Portugal has not been properly addressed, although it is more accessible to all social strata, and with easy repercussions to admit in a country where most the population does not read newspapers or magazines, does not visit museums or attend conferences. (Exposição Colonial Portuguesa, 1934, pp. 17-19)

The choice of the place to hold the event was due to its "very strong and impressive aspects of regionalism" (Moreira, 1934, p. 77), that is, the Palácio das Colónias offered the necessary conditions that, which for the organizers, allowed to simulate the African villages and their intended rural environment. The installation in the exhibition hall of "typical" houses in the colonies, small "indigenous" villages and the huts' characteristics divided into neighborhoods and the 324 occupants recruited in Macau, Goa, Timor, Mozambique, Angola and Guinea fit perfectly into the scenario that the Palácio das Colónias offered (Carvalho, 2012, p. 5). Mozambican writer Francisco Noa, inspired by Fernando Rosas' proposals, says that from a political point of view, the Porto Colonial Exhibition was clearly a propaganda event by the Estado Novo and presents us with four fundamentals of colonial ideology in this period:

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved from [https://www.parlamento.pt/Parlamento/Documents/acto\\_colonial.pdf](https://www.parlamento.pt/Parlamento/Documents/acto_colonial.pdf)

the first has to do with the historical mission to colonize, civilize and evangelize; second, the superiority of the white man over the 'indigenous' man or the 'black' man and that stemmed a lot from 'social Darwinism'; third, the historical right to the occupation and maintenance of the empire in the face of the permanent conspiracy of the great powers of the time and fourthly, to defend the colonies as if it were national independence itself. (Rosas, 1995, quoted in Noa, 2002, p. 63)

For the Estado Novo, this event meant the resurgence of Portugal Overseas, reiterating the idea that the life of the Portuguese nation was based on the empire. The geographer Heriberto Cairo, advances that the cartographic representation of the territory constituted a powerful tool in the process of construction of the national identity, since the maps showed the extension of the territory, or when he mentions that "the empire is the nation, therefore Portugal extends from Minho to Timor" (Cairo, 2006, pp. 367). The author also says that "with this policy, Portugal advocated a paradoxical idea regarding the disappearance of colonies, by declaring that in the Portuguese empire there are no colonies – there are only provinces of the unitary country, connected by the sea" (pp. 374-375).



Figure 2: Map of the Portuguese colonial empire with which the Estado Novo sought to show that Portugal was not a small country. Map designed by Henrique Galvão

Source: Serra, 2020

So, by bringing the African peoples from the colonies to the Colonial Exhibition, the Estado Novo wanted to:

teach everyone what our colonies are worth, what they have done and their possibilities for a prosperous future equal to our quality as a third colonial power. Our colonial empire is formed by several colonies scattered around the world, some measuring several times the surface of the continent of the country and one of them is larger than Spain and France combined, and they say that we are a small nation. (Exposição Colonial Portuguesa, 1934, p. 1)

The representation of the African continent during the 19th century coincided, in some way, with the beginning of its active colonization and the proliferation of the photographic image. Colonialism, using violent and symbolic physical domination, where text and image played an important role, therefore contributing to the establishment of an imperial identity within the imagination of the metropolitan European citizen (Carvalho, 2002, p. 3). These images have circulated in the press or on postcards since 1888 in the main European metropolises, seeking to convey their new status as members of a colonial "empire", as well as attracting potential professionals to the colonial project. It was in this context that photographic images created and reproduced stereotypes of social differentiation, reinforced by the colonial ideology (Carvalho, 2012, p. 2), and that in the Portuguese case, postcards were produced, but also stamps and other types of caricatures where the image of the African individual is explored, as attested by the following images.



Figure 3: Collection of stamps produced within the scope of the Porto Colonial Exhibition (1934), with caricature of African women in the exhibition

Source: <https://www.filatelicasaogabriel.com.br/peca.asp?ID=4110802>

In this sense, the organizers of the exhibition took advantage of the human zoos to which they refer (Blanchard et al., 2008, p. 1), with the slogan "see to believe", therefore, for the organizers of the exhibition it was possible for visitors to experience in real time, the fictional African natural environment, and quickly capture people's interest, because the image expressed in the iconography produced in the context of the Colonial Exhibition, thus facilitated the most illiterate in society colonial metropolitan, perceive the message of the photographic image in the framework of the logics of thought and representation of the "other" (Carvalho, 2012, p. 3). The statements by the Portuguese Colony minister, Armindo Monteiro, to the newspaper *O Comércio do Porto* are very informative in this respect:

the Palácio das Colónias which is a miracle of achievement and organization, had the sublime ability to transport our sublime colonial empire to Portugal, to this city; the Portuguese had no possibilities, they could not go to the colonies, they could not see the glorious continuation overseas of their homeland (...). They will make the big trip to our colonies in minutes, in hours, making a magnificent dream come from the cradle, from the past. (A exposição colonial do Porto, 1934, p. 1)

## MOZAMBIQUE'S PRESENCE AT THE PORTO COLONIAL EXHIBITION

The announcement of the presence of the representation of Mozambique in the Portuguese Colonial Exhibition had been made through a telegram sent to the Portuguese authorities by the governor-general of Mozambique, from the then city of Lourenço Marques, current Maputo, the capital of Mozambique (Exposição Colonial Portuguesa, 1934, p. 6). It was an advertisement characterized by some contradiction in terms of the number of people who were part of the Mozambican entourage, led by *LM Guardian* and *O Comércio do Porto*. The *LM Guardian*, indicated the date of arrival of the Mozambican representation as being the May 18, while *O Comércio do Porto* indicated the date of the April 19. The newspaper *O Comércio do Porto* of May 25, 1934 (Embarque da companhia indígena para o Porto, 1934), on its page two, again contradicts itself regarding the number of individuals that made up the "black" troop. The first mentioned that there were 100 individuals, while another article in the same newspaper indicated that the "black" troop was composed of 64 men.

In terms of constituting the representation of Mozambique at the Portuguese Colonial Exhibition, it is worth mentioning that it was made up of a military corps, the 5<sup>th</sup> Indigenous Infantry Company of Mozambique, which had received military, gymnastics and sports games instruction, and a civilian body by 15 men, 10 women and 13 children (Na Exposição Colonial: Moçambique e Índia já tem representação, 1934, p. 1; Boletim Geral das Colónias, 1934, p. 263). The civilian body was divided into five families of *landins*, five indigenous people of complementary race from the group of marimbas (Exposição Colonial Portuguesa, 1934, p. 7).



Figure 4: Company of African soldiers at a military parade in Porto

Source: Boletim Geral das Colónias, 1934, p. 489

The Mozambique Infantry Company was also present at the event in the city of Porto, through an exhibition pavilion that contained elements of the Portuguese presence in the territory, fortresses (São Sebastião on the Island of Mozambique and Sofala), an



itinerary of the places where the fighting took place during the so-called pacification campaigns in Africa, names of the Portuguese military officers who took part in the various military actions and letters representing the occupation of the territory (Boletim Geral das Colónias, 1934, pp. 100-101).



Figura 5: Two guards guarding the entrance to the Pavilion of the Companhia de Moçambique, at the Porto Colonial Exhibition

Source: Boletim Geral das Colónias, 1934, p. 112

The pavilion of the Mozambique Company was manned by indigenous soldiers. In the "indigenous art" section, statuettes and musical instruments were displayed, an ethnographic section consisting of a description of the way of life of the Mozambican populations, and four busts of what would be, in the opinion of the authors of the exhibition, the "original" Mozambicans. From the group of Mozambicans brought to the event, the sources consulted refer to an artisan, a goldsmith, a weaver and a turner and their assistant, as well as a group of *mbila* players who played the Portuguese national anthem with their marimbas, in a warrior tone (Boletim Geral das Colónias, 1934, pp. 100-101).



Figure 6: Huts built in the Colonial Exhibition area of Porto, representing the village of Mozambique and its inhabitants that can be seen in the background of the photograph

Source: Boletim Geral das Colónias, 1934, p. 423

## HOW THE EXPOSITORY DISCOURSE DID OBJECTIFY THE CHOPI MUSIC

The objectification of the Chopi music due to the expository discourse was clearly demarcated by the binomials colonizer *versus* colonized, which brings us to the abyssal logic proposed by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007). The use of descriptive or reducing terminology of the colonized subject, such as “native”, “black”, “indigenous”, or designations such as “gentile” festivals, in reference to Chopi’s musical practices, accentuated the process of “otherness” of the colonized subject in the context of colonial exposure.

We also find objectification practices at the level of the reflective and conceptual universe of the process of building the superiority of one nation in relation to another, through the invention of the “other”, the inferior. Now, this process occurs simultaneously with the cancellation of his voice, making him an object, which is re-signified, both from a cultural and symbolic point of view (Paradiso & Bonnici, 2013, p. 17). In this logic, the Chopi music no longer fulfills its main task, that is, the celebration of Chopi’s life and cultural tradition. The symbolic and identity sociocultural function of the Chopi music, was replaced by the imperial ideology of the Estado Novo, that is, it became the visual “image” of the colonial imperial discourse to persuade the Portuguese of the metropolis to embark on the colonial project of the Portuguese State, thus celebrating the Portuguese race and the greatness of the empire.

Soldiers, who resisted Portuguese colonial domination, were transformed into signs of Portuguese identity in the context of the exhibition. Yesterday’s enemies, the Mozambican leaderships surrendered to colonial power, their spears celebrate an ambiguous Portugal, only valid for the purposes of subjugating the Mozambican populations, integrated in a process of cultural objectification that in all aspects proved to be perverse.

The 5th Indigenous Infantry Company of Mozambique, performed, in choral and instrumental form, four Portuguese songs in the Mozambican languages entitled “Sia joina” (Torments); “Ingue ya ngonhama”, (The lion); “Khongotani ku yehova”, (Pray to God); “Massotchwa ya Moçambique”, (Soldiers of Mozambique); “Hina hi ma africano”, (We are Africans). He also performed, in its choral version, three other Portuguese songs with four voices: “A Portuguesa”, “Maria da Fonte”, and “Romeiros que passam” (Noticias de Moçambique: companhia indígena, 1934, p. 2). The songs “Torments” and “Pray to God” are associated with the Catholic religion, which highlights the need to christianize Africans, and thus civilize them by faith. The songs transcribed below were arranged by conductor Tomás Júnior, and the submission of Mozambican populations to the colonial system is remarkable in the lyrics, assuming in that expository context and symbolically the Portuguese identity:

we are Africans  
We are children of Portugal  
Salute Portugal  
Let’s sing happily  
We are children of Portugal. (Júnior, 1934)

In the second song transcribed here, entitled "Ngonyama" (The lion), a name that in terms of resistance to occupation was associated with the emperor of Gaza, Ngunghana, also known as the Lion of Gaza, now shows his submission to the former adversary:

you see the soldiers  
Government soldiers, come from Mozambique  
President Carmona, President of Portugal. (Júnior, 1934)

As we have already indicated, the objectification of African populations and their socio-cultural practices in the colonial context was also carried out using reductive terminologies and descriptions. The Portuguese conductor José Belo Marques clearly expresses this descriptive and reducing attitude, showing the way in which the look and ear of the colonizer effectively refused the right to differ from the cultural practices performed by the Mozambican populations:

this race has a very strange psychology and sometimes a different feeling so different from the European, that it escapes the most experienced observer (...) Black people have an absolutely different way of expressing joy and sadness (...), that is, in a song, in a sentence or in a gesture, everything is as vague and incomprehensible as the night. (Marques, 1943, pp. 18-19)

In this excerpt, the conductor assumes the universality of the concept of music coined in Europe, thus denying the existence of other songs, ways of feeling, composing, listening to and, why not, dancing. Therefore, maestro Belo Marques, starts from the hegemonic principle according to which music is one and universal when in fact it reveals an eminently "unstable" character, when applied to non-European contexts (Africa, Asia, Latin America). As the photograph illustrates, the Chopi music and its protagonists are part of the imperial narrative, associated with the construction of an exotic setting staged by the indigenous villages built in the colonial exhibition grounds, as well as their exotic instruments and music, which were displayed to the colonizer with musical practices with Western repertoires (Pestana, 2012, p. 9).

The "gentile" festivals, held in auditoriums in the city of Porto, gave a civilized air to the "exotic" aspect of the players on stage, inserting aesthetic and other Western canons into the music. On the one hand, he renamed and cut out a set of performative practices that are inseparable, and excluded in the process of selecting repertoires, performances supposedly out of step with the western musical moral and aesthetic canon. It is evident that during the Portuguese Colonial Exhibition, the performance of these groups was nothing more than a cosmetic effect used by the Estado Novo to carry out its propaganda actions, as attested by a passage in the chronicle of the exhibition's technical director, Henrique Galvão, when writing the following:

the Exhibition itself, in its form, in its color, in its setting has a secondary interest, its real value, it will only be valid for the projection that it has in

Portuguese souls, for the extent that they reach their objectives of advertising and teaching about colonial causes and the subsidies it gives to the formation in Portugal of a sense of our greatness as an imperial people. (Galvão, 1934, p. 27)

Likewise, the comments of a former cavalry captain and governor of Inhambane named Carlos Selvagem about the 5th Indigenous Infantry Company of Mozambique are instructive about the way in which the participation of the Mozambican populations in the Porto Colonial Exhibition showed acts of surrender to which the ancient warriors of the King of Gaza, also known as the Lion of Gaza, Gungunhana, submitted themselves, but which in the context of the exhibition, became only part of the illustration of the propaganda purposes of the Estado Novo:

it was with this race of men that the Portuguese met and fought in the hinterlands of Inhambane, Lourenço Marques, Gaza, Marracuene, Coolela, Macontene (...). Beaten, arms in hand, they accepted the law of the winner and continued to fight, today as yesterday, under another discipline, other leaders and another flag, with the same bravery, the same manly loyalty, the same legendary heroism. (Exposição Colonial Portuguesa, 1934, p. 15)

A scholar of the Chopi people, Amândio Dide Munguambe, in his work entitled *A música chope* (2000), presents us with a quote that illustrates the silencing and reducing character of the entire objective process that took place in the context of the Colonial Exhibition, expressed in a passage of the song of the Chopi composer Katini in which he addresses the fact that he went to Lisbon to play *mbila* in the company of his countryman in 1940 without having had the opportunity to say goodbye to Zavala, his locality in Mozambique. According to the author, in that passage Katini says that "in Lisbon we will have a lot of suffering. They made us dance timbila in the middle of the sea, while we were going" (Munguambe, 2000, pp. 96-97).



Figure 8: Mozambican families on board the ship Angola, about to land in Lisbon to participate in the Portuguese World Exhibition in Lisbon, 1940 with their mbila

Source: Photography Archive of Lisbon

On this trip, the *mbila* players had been taken to Lisbon where they stayed between June and the end of September 1940, to present music and dances of the Chopi people within the scope of the Portuguese World Exhibition. During this period, one of the players died and was buried in Lisbon, victim of pneumonia. Therefore, in the context of the colonizer and colonized relations, the selection process does not confer spaces for dialogue with the colonized subject, since it is the colonizer who decides which practices should be selected, taking into account their objectives. It was in this context that, through a reducing discourse, the Chopi music was decontextualized from its origins in Mozambique and recontextualized in Portugal, with new meanings and roles, different from those that have always been fought in its community in Zavala, Inharrime, or elsewhere belonging to the Chopi community in Mozambique.

Carvalho (2012) says that from the point of view of gender relations in the context of the Colonial Exhibition, it is interesting to understand how the representation of African women was explored by the photographic discourse, by the Colonial Archives in Portuguese Guinea, especially the Photographic Archives of the National Institute of Studies and Research of Guinea-Bissau and the Photographic Archive of Domingos Alvão. The holding of a beauty contest to elect the “Queen of the Colonies”, with a total of 19 “suitors”, was a “laboratory” in which the exploitation of the body of the African woman exacerbated her condition of subordination. Subject to silence, passing through the *redcarpet* of shame, some of the competitors had a bored face for that show. Alvão’s photos denote a dose of artificiality, if we take into account the way the poses are arranged, one can clearly see the objective of exploring certain perspectives of photographers in a vertical communication (Carvalho, 2012, p. 4). The images of the woman elected in that election circulated throughout Portugal with the name of “Black Venus”, also known as Rosinha.

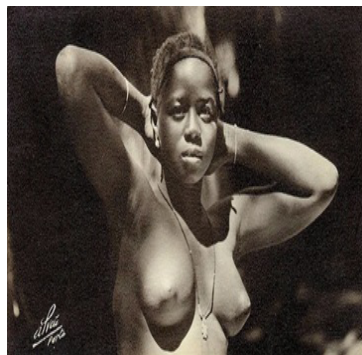


Figure 8: Rosinha, the Guinean woman elected “candidate” for “Queen of the Colonies”, and the perversity in the exploration of the woman’s body and its intimacy

Source: Séren, 2001, pp. 86-100



Figure 9: The woman is dressed in a “miss exhibition”, inserted in the allegory of the subordination discourse

Source: Séren, 2001, pp. 86-100

### REFLECTION IN LIGHT OF OPERATING CONCEPTS

In light of the operating concepts listed throughout the text, it is important to understand what an exhibition represents and how it does it. In this sense, it should be noted that the cultural objectification mentioned in the present study was based on the colonial system, materialized through various mechanisms of influence. These mechanisms, in addition to the control of local populations, included control of work and production, time, domesticity, and family practices, intimacy and the body. This attitude converges with the idea of abyssal thinking, characterized by the impossibility of co-presence on both sides of the line (Santos, 2007, p. 4), which is defined based on the colonial phenomenon and the social class relations that were established and demarcated what Moraña, Dussel and Jáuregui (2008, p. 2) classify as “omnipresent violence” in colonial reality. Carvalho reinforces this position stating that:

iconographic representation helped to create and reproduce stereotypes and social differentiation, reinforced by colonial ideology. This procedure exacerbated the physical and body differences of the individuals represented in the iconographies with their clothing or other type of ornamentation that was peculiar to them. These individuals represented through photographic images were considered inferior in every way, both morally and materially. (Carvalho, 2002, p. 95)

Articulating issues such as identity, ideology, nation, empire, representation and the way in which colonialism (point of intersection between the concepts listed) shaped the power relations between European and non-European societies, colonial exhibitions, and in particular the Colonial Exhibition of Porto played (Karp, 1991, pp. 15-375), an important role as a forum for the construction of the discourse on the “other”. Events that were constituted as instruments of domination through which the main European powers sustained their colonial policies, exposing objects and human beings considered different, and recreating fictitious and considered exotic environments (Blanchard et al., 2008, pp. 8-9).

We believe that this is one of the main aspects that mark exhibitions and museums, as institutions where the imaginary construction of non-European cultures is manufactured. This procedure has been demonstrated throughout this text. The concept of exhibition, as a relevant operative concept in the present study, contains the purposes of the expository action expressed by the way in which it conveys ideologies, nationalisms, as well as the ability to produce images about cultures that are adverse to those of the organizers of the exhibitions. and what they also want to be displayed for their purposes.

The Colonial Exhibition of Porto and the logic that involved its production, aimed, in our view, at a political rather than an economic objective, to be evaluated by its ideological burden. By this we mean that the Estado Novo, using the manipulative capacity of the exhibitions, selected the elements that, from an ideological point of view, could guarantee the achievement of its political objectives, disseminate the imperialist ideology of the Estado Novo among Portuguese society, showing all elements that its producers considered relevant to guarantee its success, namely, the recreation elsewhere of Africa's natural environment and its inhabitants.

The second aspect is that, through the exhibition, Portugal intended to build the imagined idea of a large nation and captivate the Portuguese in relation to the colonies. The third aspect, the exhibition organizers seem to have managed to use the exhibition to their advantage (judging by the number of visitors, more than half a million people), showing the Portuguese and the international community their ability to hold such an event, objectifying the Chopi music and, thus, revealing its superiority through the subordination of the Mozambican populations. The event held in Porto explored the truth that interested him in showing Portuguese society, in the logic presented by Karp and Levine (1991, p. 1), and which is also expressed in the ideas of Handler (1984, p. 64). Making a hierarchical analysis of the objectification process, we would say that the exhibitions constituted the field of production of the discourse about the "other" that is, based on the principle of difference and similarity, it produces the image of the "other", thought or idealized as different. It is from this thought that the exotic is produced, probably the first strategy in the process of building the "other" (Karp, 1991, p. 375).

In addition to being designed to give maximum exposure to the content of the exhibition, they are driven by political motivations, thus constituting places where the apparatus of power is demonstrated. In this sense, they play a historical role as an instrument for articulating national identity, power, and education in society (Karp, 1991, p. 11). Karp (1991) suggests that when putting the other cultural subjects in question, the exhibition reveals who we are, and probably, most importantly, it also reveals who we are not. He concludes by indicating that the exhibitions are places where our image and the image of the other are revealed.

In general terms, in light of the operational concepts and in the framework of the Porto Colonial Exhibition, the Chopi music represented a set of aspects to know: the nationalist and imperialist ideology of Portugal, were used as proof that Portugal was a capable country to own and manage colonies, civilize and evangelize the peoples he had under his tutelage. The objects of the exhibitions are displayed to tell the story of

European imperialism and colonial appropriation and, therefore, its trophy status of the imperial conquest (Karp, 1991, p. 16).

## CONCLUSIONS

The cultural objectification of the Chopi music by the discourse of the Porto Colonial Exhibition (1934) was based on the logic of abyssal thinking, thus building the nation's superiority; in the hierarchy of colonized societies and in the exacerbation of otherness and overlapping of the regime's ideology over the Chopi music. The immediate consequence of this action was that they became the object of study within the framework of the invention of the savage. In addition, it appears that the objectification of the Chopi music was made through its decontextualization of its place of origin in Mozambique and taken to Portugal. The "musicians" and their music were recontextualized in space-time, symbolically and in meaning, by representing the imperial ideology of the Estado Novo and its political agenda.

This situation dramatized the authenticity of the Chopi music, denying it its own cultural identity, giving them designations such as: "black musicians, exotic instruments, black, native, "landim", indigenous, or even, drumming" (Pestana, 2012, p. 7). All songs performed by *mbila* players were made based on European musical notation and also directed by European conductors and composers, demonstrating Portuguese superiority. The 5th Indigenous Infantry Company of Mozambique performed Portuguese songs ("A Portuguesa", "Maria da Fonte") in the Portuguese language, and the group of *mbila* players performed the Portuguese national anthem in *mbila* according to the rules of western musical notation. Eventually, the practice that is verified in the current Mozambican of executing the national anthem of Mozambique, in *mbila*, is a colonial legacy. Other songs sung in Mozambican languages from Southern Mozambique were also arranged to fit the European musical canon. The *mbila* was tuned according to the Western tuning so that the Portuguese national anthem could be performed on them, exploring yet another element considered exotic, when under normal conditions the hymn would be performed by a military band in the European fashion.

In the political and ideological domain of the Portuguese State, the objectification was based on the proposals presented by the Estado Novo, which according to Medeiros, intended to bring the knowledge of the empire to the Portuguese people, transforming this purpose into an "authoritarian exercise of imperial and nationalist pedagogy", based in allegorical transfigurations of the ways of life of Mozambican populations (Medeiros, 2003, p. 155).

The expository discourse, in the service of the ideological interests of the Estado Novo, transformed Mozambican performative practices into practices of surrender and submission, restricting their social meanings in acts of folklore representation through the imposition of Western performative models (case of the company's music band indigenous to Mozambique and Angola) as well as social subordination, characterized by the imposition of western aesthetics and morals and the promotion of vertical



communication, from top to bottom, as referred by Pestana (2012, p. 9) and Cabecinhas and Cunha (2003, p. 12). The Chopi music and the players were denied the right to narration, dialogue, and imposed the uniqueness of Western aesthetic and performance models.

Translation: Ilídio Machava

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