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Art in a State of Emergency: Figuring Angolan Nationalism, 1953-2007

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Art in a State of Emergency: Figuring Angolan Nationalism, 1953-2007

By

Delinda Collier
M.A., Arizona State University, Tempe, 2004

Advisor: Sidney L. Kasfir, Ph.D.

An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
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Abstract
Art in a State of Emergency: Figuring Angolan Nationalism, 1953-2007
By Delinda Collier

This dissertation is a genealogy of a book about the Chokwe wall murals in Angola,
Paredes Pintadas da Lunda. Written in 1953 by Portuguese anthropologist José Redinha,
the book compiles a set of images taken from Chokwe habitations in the Lunda North
province of northeastern Angola. The globally disseminated book compiled three years of
Redinha's research on the murals, just one subject of his extensive research among the
Chokwe in his long tenure at the diamond company Companhia de Diamantes de Angola
[Diamang]. Redinha copied the wall murals in the Chitato district of the Lunda province
in watercolor and then signed each of his prints. Within the book, each image
accompanies a description and interpretation of the murals' forms and composition.
Since its publication in 1953, various artists have used this body of images in new artistic
formats and under new political regimes. The dissertation begins with the Lunda
Tchokwe project of the first Trienal de Luanda (2006-2007), which scanned every plate
from *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda*. In order to contextualize the triennial's use of *Paredes
Pintadas da Lunda*, I revisit the moment of the book's publication in 1953 by the
mammoth diamond interest Diamang. I then discuss the use of Chokwe symbols by post-
Independence Angolan artists, particularly Vitor Manuel "Viteix" Teixeira. I situate each
of these three iterations within their ideological and material contexts in Angola.
Specifically, I argue that an important component of the assertion of biopower in Angola
has been the visual reification of the Chokwe murals and their component pictograms.
The three projects I discuss all mobilize the Chokwe images for the nation-state, whether
Portuguese or Angolan. I ultimately argue that these projects were not mere negotiations
over the semantics of the Chokwe images, but more accurately, over their transmition
through materialized networks.

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This dissertation is dedicated to my sister, who passed away during the last stage of the dissertation process, and whose sudden absence changed my relationship to my work. May you have peace. We miss you. It is dedicated to my parents, who held it in when I told them I might have to couch surf in Luanda, who have never waivered in their support and love for me. To my siblings for their similar unwavering support and love.

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Introduction

What follows is a genealogy of a book about the Chokwe wall murals in Angola,

Paredes Pintadas da Lunda.[1] Written in 1953 by Portuguese anthropologist José

Redinha, the book compiles a set of images taken from Chokwe[2] habitations in the Lunda

North province of northeastern Angola. The globally disseminated book compiled three

years of Redinha's research on the murals, just one subject of his extensive research

among the Chokwe in his long tenure at the diamond company Companhia de Diamantes

de Angola [Diamang]. Redinha copied the wall murals in the Chitato district of the

Lunda province in watercolor and then signed each of his prints. Within the book, each

image accompanies a description and interpretation of the murals' forms and

composition. Since its publication in 1953, various artists have used this body of images

in new artistic formats and under new political regimes.   I will situate each of these

iterations within their ideological and material contexts in Angola. Specifically, I will

argue that an important component of the assertion of biopower in Angola has been the

---

[1] My use of the term genealogy is used strategically to discuss the relations of power in the production of *Paredes*, a theory of historiography set forth by Michel Foucault in "Nietzche, Genealogy, History." In that sense, the term helps me to deconstruct the process of scholarship and art criticism itself in relation to *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* and its subsequent reception and reproduction. On the other hand I subscribe to the anti-genealogy in Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome described in *A Thousand Plateaus*, as they assert genealogy is associated with a conservative method of historiography that assumes origins. Nevertheless, I risk constructing a "tree-like" model of history in order to focus my narrative on one object, its materiality, logical underpinning in various "plateau" moments, relations of power inscribed onto real bodies, and even psychological states.

[2] Throughout this dissertation Chokwe is a shorthand term for a large and heterogenous population in northeastern Angola. Variations on the spelling include Cokwe, Quioca. The common Portuguese spelling is Tchokwe, and the English spelling is Chokwe. The population is also commonly referred to as "Lunda-Chokwe," which indicates the two major subsets that came together under the Lunda state in the 18th century. As my dissertation mostly deals with Portuguese and post-colonial conceptions of the Chokwe, the labeling, I will use the English version while also referring to the project of the Trienal de Luanda as the "Lunda Tchokwe" project.

visual reification of the Chokwe murals and their component pictograms.[3] The three

major projects I will discuss all mobilize the Chokwe images for the nation-state, whether

Portuguese or Angolan. However, these projects were not mere abstract negotiations

over the semantics of the Chokwe images, but more accurately, were transmitted through

materialized networks.

I first encountered Redinha's book in an online project for the first Trienal de

Luanda (2006-2007), a contemporary art exhibition that I studied as part of a larger

project on Angolan art since 1975, the year of Angola's independence. The organizers of

the triennial, Fernando Alvim and his rotating team of artists, digitized the plates from

Redinha's book and manipulated them to remove his signature (see figs. 1 and 2). The

images were then printed for a gallery exhibition, displayed on billboards all around the

city, and exhibited on their website. The triennial then donated a set of prints to the

Ministry of Culture as part of their petition for permission to reproduce the images under

Angola's intellectual property laws. The exhibition was the key exhibition to signal the

nationalistic intent of the triennial and its commitment to healing Angola after forty years

of protracted anti-colonial conflict and civil war.

In the accompanying essay for the Lunda Tchokwe project on the triennial website,

they explained, "the Luanda Triennial will thus propose a cultural correction, to try and

account for work previously done by José Redinha, and other errors in relation to the

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[3] See particularly Michel Foucault's discussion on the "Right of Death and Power over Life" in *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: The Will to Knowledge* (London: Penguin, 1976) where he asserts that power is exercised at the level of life. I also refer to the shift that Gilles Deleuze traces from discipline societies, characterized by asylums, factories, schools, hospitals, and books, to control societies, a more pervasive and flexible control of bodies and minds. I will argue that aspects of this shift can be read in the various administrative regimes in Angola from 1953-2007.

collection, and will finally repair an injustice related to the omission of the original names of the Chokwe creators."[4] The triennial claimed that this project would begin to right the wrongs of colonialism, insofar as Redinha's signature indicated the theft of Chokwe genius and the collective Angolan corpus of art. The website displayed each and every image from Redinha's book in the same order as they appeared in the book, over a hundred in all.

Paredes, both as a collection of images and as a book, function throughout this genealogy as a nexus of relations, subjectivities, ideologies, and protocols of information transmission. As a collection of images, they have become floating signifiers that are adapted to various semantic functions in constructions of Angolan or Portuguese nationalism. Understood as a book, however, *Paredes* encourages analysis of how the Chokwe image adheres to various objects. A careful analysis of the book should also illustrate the impossibility of considering the images as detached from their material underpinnings, as they have been reproduced in formats that range from a museum wall to canvas painting to billboards and the internet. In some cases the reproduction was exact, a mechanical reproduction that preserved the colors, composition, and forms. Therefore, the material medium, such as the museum or the computer, acts at the level of nationalistic content, as it evidences infrastructural and institutional stability. Medium materializes the appearance of component pictographs and the play of meaning, as artists

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[4] Trienal de Luanda, "O Resgate, a Absorção e a Visibilidade." http://www.trienal-de-luanda.net/?page_id=101, accessed March 8, 2007. Website no longer available. All translations from Portuguese in this dissertation are the author's.
This particular version of the essay was featured on the website for what was to be the first triennial launch in 2005-2006. In a subsequent version for the 2006-2007, this portion of the essay that discusses Redinha's "theft" is removed, and the "visibility" by distribution of the images is instead emphasized.

used these formal elements not necessarily for their content, but to indicate the aspect of

symbols that assumes public consensus in meaning creation. Functionality itself is the

key indicator of nationalist content. It suggests a functional civil society and a shared

logic based on democratic consensus. Concerning African art, V.Y. Mudimbe calls for

scholars to analyze the "structure and logic of cultural and artistic values, the rules of

their social and institutional production and, finally, the relationships between symbolic

value and economic value in the exchange process."[5] In my formal analysis of the

artwork in this dissertation, I relate its logic to the larger geo-political situation in which

the Chokwe images became part of a flow of information capital.

I focus on three individuals who have translated Chokwe art and situate them

subjectively within a complex and changing web of politics, economics, and ideologies.

They are Fernando Alvim, José Redinha, and Manuel Vitor "Viteix" Teixeira. Each of

them were well-positioned, holding official cultural positions in Angola, each were artists

and interested in the form of the Chokwe images, and each theorized about the Chokwe

image and its value within a construction of Angolan identity and subjectivity. At the

same time, each was an outsider to Chokwe society who came to the images with the

intention to instrumentalize them for a future Angolan society. They were, to use a

metaphor from computer science, agents of protocol. That is, they enacted points of

contact across a complex territory, defining and carrying meaning from one space to

another. Importantly, their instrumentalization of Chokwe art was a compensatory action

born out of both their (however suppressed) awareness of their outsider status within their

immediate surroundings and also their experience of rapid and violent societal changes.

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[5] V.Y. Mudimbe, "African Art as a Question Mark" *African Studies Review* (March 1986), 4.

In particular Redinha and Viteix were faced with the interpretive decision over whether to read the murals' individual symbols (their semantics) or their composition (their syntactical arrangement). I will use *Estampa 9A* (Figure 9A) from *Paredes* as an example the possibility and pitfalls of doing either of these interpretive acts. In his close analysis of the wall murals, Redinha was faced with the choice to understand the execution of the murals as emanating from either a collective Chokwe mind or the individual artist's subjective mind. As each of the three writers was invested in a social rehabilitation project to reform minds and bodies on an individual and mass scale, neither could be abandoned. *Estampa 9A* will highlight how a particular interpretive hermeneutic becomes a prescription for mimetic reproduction as component of social reform. Enacted primarily by Redinha, this prescriptive mimesis relied on the fetishization of visual signifiers—the opticality of the Chokwe murals. Though each of these interventions depended on the extraction of the optical from its material production, I will show that materiality—body, infrastructure, or physical environment—haunted these three men's desire for a smooth transmission of cultural signifiers.

My dissertation focuses on the rhetoric of social rehabilitation associated with the creation of culture, which all three men deployed in one way or another. At the same time, I suggest that the strength of their rhetoric was inversely related to the weakness of the state. In these "states of emergency," per Walter Benjamin, these interlocutors responded and ushered in the "emergence" of a Chokwe art that was based on their striving for order and control.[6] I pay close attention to how the particular logic nation formation coincided with the emphasis each character placed on the formal logic of the

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[6] Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History." In *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968).

Chokwe murals. Thus, the Chokwe wall murals began to circulate as cultural "information," or cultural capital claimed by either the Portuguese or Angolan state but never really secured. Indeed, this opticality was a major factor the flow of cultural information between media and discourses. It crossed the disciplinary boundaries of art history and anthropology but always materializing according to a specific protocological configuration.

I follow *Estampa 9A* as being deployed within a discipline society, that of Diamang, to a control society, that of the Angolan state and strong geopolitical neoliberal intervention. The format of *Estampa 9A* demonstrates the shift particularly in its format, the apotheosis being the digital Lunda Tchokwe project. Gilles Deleuze explains,

> "[d]isciplinary societies have two poles: signatures standing for *individuals*, and numbers or places in a register standing for their position in a mass. …In control societies, on the other hand, the key thing is no longer the signature or number but a code: codes are *passwords*, whereas disciplinary societies are ruled (when it comes to integration or resistance) by *precepts*."[7]

Thus the removal of Redinha's signature in the Lunda Tchokwe project was, on the surface, an anti-colonial gesture—a reappropriation of authorial agency for the Chokwe. However, with any serious consideration of its digital medium, Lunda Tchokwe did not free the images from the constraints of colonial authorship. Rather, they became even more instrumentalized within a system of informatics governed by a geopolitical set of protocols. Authorial agency within the Angolan nation was left altogether unanswered as the larger "precepts" of the geopolitical control associated with neoliberalism weighed

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[7] Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 179-180.

down on the project.

Reinforcing this link between geopolitics and the state of Angola, my genealogy has the benefit of following the history of the diamond industry in Chokwe territory, what is generally called the "Lundas." *Estampa 9A*'s journey links up with its three transcribers not only through their subjective decisions but also through their relationship with an extraction industry that exacted nothing less than Chokwe "life," that is, the body and soul of the Chokwe population. The diamond industry in the Lundas provides a crucial link between the detached capital liquidity to its inscription onto bodies. Its examination contextualizes the epistemological and physical violence involved in creating Chokwe art. While the relationship between the colonial state and the native body has been thoroughly elaborated in the past thirty years, it has been underplayed in the scholarship on African art outside of analyses of contemporary artwork that has violence as its theme.   Likewise, when critical digital theorists talk about the body in contemporary art from the global north, they usually do so in terms of the cyborg and fully mediated bodies. The way that the mineral extraction and e-waste disposal of technological proliferation inscribes new traumas onto the individual and social body is all but silent.

My own analysis of *Estampa 9A* and its embeddedness in these larger social initiatives is caught between a project of visual cultural studies and the classic concerns of art history, namely form, opticality, and mimesis. Recent scholarship has been heavily weighted towards culture studies in order to account for the identity of the artists and their own theorizing of identity and nationalism. Africanist art historians are keenly aware of the long history of misrepresentations and misreadings of African cultural

production. My study turns attention precisely o that moment of misidentification through formal analysis by its examination of the moment that each interlocutor introduced form as a unit of study in Chokwe art in each of the three historical moments. I argue that we can join formal and cultural analysis by understanding various modes of artistic production, or mimetic perpetuation of form. The vast literature on mimesis has been brought to bear on African art, from the social analysis of Fritz Kramer who discusses behavioral imitation to the fusion of African and Western symbols and media. A large component of this dissertation investigates how the Western philosophy of verisimilitude caused a mistranslation of the Chokwe murals, but crucially underpinned the implementation of a larger social system—where the "rational" in Western art justified "rationalized" labor practices. This mistranslation, locatable so neatly in Redinha's work, had consequences and a deep impact on subsequent Angolan nationalist art. For those reasons, it receives the most attention in my study.

My genealogy of *Paredes* does engage in the discussion of how Chokwe "art" was deployed in the creation of Chokwe identity by the Choke in either the pre or post-colonial context. Scholars throughout the twentieth century have debated whether Chokwe art has distinct characteristics from its neighboring populations, particularly the Lunda. Recently Boris Wastiau argued that Chokwe art history must account for Chokwe state expansion and the instability of a purely "Chokwe" producer of art. The Chokwe successfully integrated neighboring populations in large part by spreading Chokwe culture and language as well as absorbing others. Instead, I am interested in the *formulation* of Chokwe art within the colonial state, the post-independent state, and the recent state—defined as a state of mind as well as a regime of logic and governance. I

am interested rather in three "outsider" interventions into Chokwe art that resulted in

productive mistranslations and, in any case, a much wider transmission of Chokwe form

by radical changes in its media. If Portuguese anthropologist Nuno Porto is correct in

claiming that Chokwe "art" did not exist as a conception before the 1950s publications of

key anthropologists,[8] I interrogate how exactly those anthropologists, and later Angolan

scholars, defined art and visual form.

Nor is my study a survey of Angolan art history. It does not chart a comprehensive

view of cultural policy in the post-independence and colonial eras in Angola, what is an

ongoing project of Adriano Mixinge.[9] Instead, my study takes several key colonial and

postcolonial texts as they formulated two-dimensional Chokwe images. A few key case

studies can act as nexuses for internal and external issues. I inject *Paredes* as a type of

ink into a vast system of geopolitics, state politics, and capitalism. Rather than

presenting all of these as merely coexisting with art production, I show an intimate and

causal connection among them. Among others, I looked to Andrew Apter's study on the

1977 Festival of Black and African Arts and Culture [FESTAC] and its structural

relationship to the Nigerian oil boom of the late 1970s.[10] However, my study goes one

step further to examine the actual formation and instrumentalization of form within the

construction of national culture.

Angola's position within contemporary African art has only recently begun to be

established outside of Angola, as scholars are just now able to maneuver around the

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[8] Nuno Porto, "The Spectre of Art." *Etnográfica* (2002), 116.
[9] Adriano Mixinge, *Made in Angola: Arte Contemporânea, Artistas, e Dabates* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008).
[10] Andrew Apter, *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

information that is available after the 2002 ceasefire. In general, English-language studies of Luso-African art are all but absent in the field of contemporary African art. The full story of art policy in Angola is yet to be told, however, as the MPLA still holds many records that they will not release and archives are just now beginning to be reconstituted.

This dissertation will add the much-needed perspective of Luso-African art to the increasingly rich discourse of contemporary African art. We benefit from the thorough studies on postcolonial African art by Sidney Kasfir, Elizabeth Harney, Okwui Enwezor, Chika Okeke-Agulu, Salah Hassan, Olu Oguibe, Silvester Ogbechie, John Peffer, Sue Williamson, and many others. Their work has compiled lists of important artists, traced trajectories of cultural policy in post-colonial states, and examined thematic issues in the art itself. My study adds to this discussion in its careful focus on form in African art. Moreover, I highlight some exceptional characteristics of Angolan art and cultural theory. For one, Angola's colonial and postcolonial identity formation occurred within a network tied to Portugal's own peripheral status in relation to global superpowers. For Angola, the "metropole" varied between Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro. As far as the politics of culture, Angolans conversed with anti-colonial activists from Brazil, Portual, Cuba, East Germany, and the USSR.   They were influenced by the tenets of antropofágia in Brazilian modern art as well as theories of cultural superstructure formulated in Marxist scientific socialism. While some Angolan artists and writers were drawn to the Francophone negritude movement and pan-Africanism generally, they also had strong ties with Latin American activists who held a more pragmatic view of anti-colonial activism.

This study sets aside the mandate to define modernity, postmodernity, and

globalization in African art, and instead locates the moments of disjuncture as Angola

collided with these variegated locations of a global network. I am not as much interested

in how to characterize the synthesizing of African and Western culture, medium, and

symbols, as that conversation inevitably turns to "origins" of the forms and/or the media,

which seems to be a tautology. Not only was the content of Angolan art always in a state

of flux, but also the methods available to the artists for its transmission through material

media. I attend to the instability of Angola as having deep consequences on art making

generally, to the extent that medium determines the content of art. James Ferguson warns

that some scholars, "in their eagerness to treat African people as (cultural)

equals…sometimes too easily sidestepped the harder discussion about the economic

inequalities and disillusionments that threaten to make any such equality a merely ideal

or sentimental one."[11] I attempt to carefully balance remembering the inherent violence

of colonization and geopolitical conflict while also closely attending to the imaginings

and productive fantasizing that the realm of art production offered to Redinha, Viteix,

and Alvim.

The term "network" also specifies the power relations within the monolithic terms

"modernity" and "globalization." Describing modernity as mediated through global

networks allows a greater flexibility for a more nuanced analysis. It assumes adaptation,

indigenous movements, and antagonism of power. It also allows the admission that a

complete characterization of a network is impossible and that in our characterization we

are only highlighting a small number of contact points and their power relationships. To

describe a network is to describe one moment of that network and its characteristics and

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[11] James Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006), 34.

to let go of the impulse to periodize one universal watershed switch to modernity, postmodernity, or postcoloniality. To historicize networks is to follow constantly shifting power relationships and adaptive tactics in the face of an equally powerful resistance. This was true in the colonial period and it is true today.

Throughout my analysis I will use language borrowed from network theory and computer science, such as interface, protocol, algorithm, and networks. I am aware that in doing so I risk coming at my study from a point of view that assumes that structure to be applicable to the situation of Angola. Such a structure, Ferguson explains, is not "global," as in universal, but skips over "non-usable" areas of the world and creates enclave areas of connectivity. This study addresses the cultural aspects of those enclave economies and politics, their characteristics during and after decolonization. This language of networks allows me to link up the micro aspects of the transactions of form: culture, political ideology, *and* materiality. My use of these terms also highlights process, in various historical characters' attempts to project meaning onto Chokwe visual forms. Finally, these terms reveal the truth of how I came to this topic, as I browsed the website of the Trienal de Luanda in the early stages of my research.

Within each chapter, I will highlight the distinct cultural and structural conditions of Portuguese colonialism and its effects on post-Independence Angola. In the 1950s, Portugal, a peripheral power in Europe, attempted to re-assert itself on the global stage. Its colonies in Africa were the major point of contention in deteriorating relations between Portugal and the United Nations. Against the international community's calls for Portugal to end its imperial activities, Portugal insisted that it was exceptional in the colonial project, propagandizing Brazilian writer Gilberto Freyre's theory of

Lusotropicalism. Freyre, and subsequently Portuguese president António de Oliveira Salazar, argued that the Portuguese more successfully integrated native populations through miscegenation. They attempted to apply what they saw as a racially harmonious Brazilian culture to the African colonies, and specifically to Angola. Salazar reacted to the rapid escalation in anti-colonial mobilization by increasing Portugal's stranglehold on the economy and the physical population of Angola.

Salazar's public relations stunt was largely unsuccessful as it thinly veiled Portugal's ruthless tactics for control over the colonies. On February 4th, 1961, violence erupted in Angola, Guinea, and Mozambique. The colonial war was devastatingly violent and lasted thirteen years, when Portugal capitulated to its military losses and a military coup in Lisbon. Part of the violence and chaos of the independence struggle of those thirteen years stemmed from the factionalized anti-colonial efforts. The colonial war was much more successfully fought in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, as their resistance fronts were united. The Angolan groups were from the beginning riddled with infighting, jealousies, and ethnic tension.

When Portugal withdrew from Angola, it made no attempt to organize a peaceful transition of power, leaving the power to a "coalition" government of the three anti-colonial parties. The method of Portugal's exit from Angola only exacerbated the volatile situation, as the Portuguese nationals, who controlled virtually all of the major industries, abandoned them and even took with them every machinery item that could be exported. This exodus amounted to a near complete collapse of the Angolan economy at the beginning of its independence. By then, three major factions of the anti-colonial struggle fought for leadership of the newly independent Angola: Movimento Popular de

Libertação de Angola (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), and Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (National Front of Liberation of Angola). Their divisions were based on ideology, ethnicity, region, social class, and race.

On November 11, 1975, the MPLA's Agostinho Neto declared victory and the independence of Angola. UNITA and FNLA in turn declared their own joint republic on November 24th 1975. The divisions erupted into civil war that escalated in violence and resulted in an incredible destruction of life, land, and infrastructure. Soon after independence the FNLA, severely weakened by attacks and weak leadership, dissolved into UNITA. The war developed into a proxy war of the major superpowers, with the United States clandestinely supporting UNITA with the help of South Africa and the MPLA supported by Cuba, the Soviet Union, and East Germany.

The official ceasefire was not until 2002 when UNITA's leader Jonas Savimbi was killed in battle. Estimates vary as to the death toll of the civil war, from 750,000 to one million. An untold amount of Angolans were injured by landmines, which, at the height of the conflict, numbered one to two for every person in the country.

One outcome of the collapse of the industrial and agricultural sector in Angola is the increased importance of the mining sector to the Angolan economy. After independence, oil and diamond extraction became the only source of income for Angola. Accordingly the majority of the war was fought to control those industries. Endiama, the state-owned (thus MPLA controlled) diamond company that took over from Diamang, held most of the major diamond fields that were developed by Diamang. UNITA gained control of surrounding fields, and increasingly profited by taxing the *garimpeiros*, or

artisanal miners. In many ways the political divide in the Lundas echoed the rural/urban

divide in the demographical and ideological makeup of the two parties.   The MPLA

took over the urban areas of the "formal" diamond industry territory, while UNITA

focused on informal extraction in more remote places. UNITA also practiced an informal

guerilla strategy, faced with its relatively weak position in the territory.

Chapter One will provide the setting for the Lunda Tchokwe project of the first

Trienal de Luanda. I will situate the triennial generally within the contemporary Angolan

state—political, physical, and psychological. The triennial's aims were nationalistic. Its

director and conceiver, Fernando Alvim, spoke about the exhibition as a way to heal from

the devastating violence of both the civil war and of the colonial period. In his many

promotional interviews and speeches delivered about the triennial, Alvim spoke about the

emergence of Angola onto the world scene, claiming Luanda as a place where

possibilities are endless and life is vibrant. In many ways, the triennial follows the logic

of contemporary international biennials, most notably Documenta. In both of these

enterprises, the trauma of war propelled the project to reconnect to the world and to boost

the morale of the citizens. Both countries used the shows to connect artists with the

international art scene. Documenta's inception straddled a line between being

antagonistic to power structures and being altogether celebratory.

Therefore this chapter places the triennial in context of neoliberalism and the state

in Angola. At the outset Alvim insisted that his operation demanded autonomy for artists

and that he partnered with businesses under the mandate that he control the content and

design. His eventual partnership with the Sindika Dokolo Foundation problematized his

claims of autonomy. This chapter will enter into the fraught issue of Dokolo's business

interests and his marriage to the daughter of Angolan President Eduardo dos Santos. As is the configuration today in Angola, Dokolo's business interests are intimately connected with his position in the small nepotistic enclave that runs the country and its economy. Because of these connections, Angolans, as well as the international art circles that know the situation, call into question the triennial's claims of nationalism, exemplified by the Lunda Tchokwe project.

Chapter Two historicizes the moment that José Redinha's book *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* was published in order to closely examine the Lunda Tchokwe project's claim of Redinha's aggressive appropriation of Chokwe art. Redinha was the director of the Dundo Museum that was sited on the Diamang company compound in Dundo, Lunda North province. Diamang was at the height of its power in Angola in the 1950s and was making huge profits from its mining operations in Lunda North. As Portugal was under fire from the international community for its colonial practices, Diamang and Portuguese officials alike attempted to use the company to hail the merits of what they called "Scientific Colonialism." Its secularist version of the civilizing mission dovetailed neatly with the company's pervasive control over the territory of Lunda North. Scientific research was synonymous with the precise company control over all of "life" in Lunda. Redinha's formulation of Chokwe art was logically aligned with Scientific Colonialism in its construction of a Chokwe "symbology." The control over signification was a key aspect of Diamang's biopolitics—one aspect of "life" in its company fief.

After describing this watershed moment of Redinha's formulation of Chokwe art, **Chapter Three** examines its subsequent mimetic reproduction in relation to Diamang's biopolitics. In this chapter, I carefully attend to how *Paredes* embeds ideas of

subject/object relations within his analysis of the Chokwe murals. The subject of the murals was particularly significant to Redinha, as they were composite images of many types of Chokwe, executed within a non-hierarchical practice. Redinha interpreted the overall corpus of the Chokwe wall murals as being intellectually immature, based on 1) his own limitations on interpreting the images and 2) his subscription to Enlightenment theories of art that make a conceptual distinction between form and matter. For him, mental skill was evidenced in the artist's ability to observe and represent nature exactly. When he studied the Chokwe murals, which used dynamic perspective and not verisimilitude, he surmised that they trailed behind Europeans in mental capacity. Evidence of his projection of this belief about Chokwe art appear in his analysis of *sona* figures in the murals. *Sona* is a sytem of drawing that Chokwe elders practice as a part of the *mukanda* initiation in order to teach young boys about the Chokwe worldview. Formally, it is based on a recursive logic in which the Chokwe learn to master certain algorithms and expand upon them. The finished pictograms were also featured in the murals, which were generally painted by women and children, a less "official" art practice. However, this logical and performative aspect of their mimesis is overlooked as Redinha focuses on their finished status as pictograms, embedded instead in his symbology I discuss in Chapter Two.

As a Diamang administrator, Redinha's "scientific" practices expanded into his implementation of a labor system of art, wherein the Chokwe were to mimic his own mimetic copying of Chokwe art. At the Dundo Museum, he established a system in which Chokwe artists were encouraged to preserve their own tradition by observing themselves as an object, as nature, just as he did. Along with the educational mission of the Dundo

Museum, the mechanical reproduction of Chokwe was a conceptual container for information and a control on the implied innovation within a system of art such as the *sona*.

Post-Independence Angolan artists studied *Paredes* and in some cases were tutored by Redinha himself. In their formulation of a new Angolan art, they attempted to resuscitate the Chokwe logic of art marking, particularly its populist ethos. **Chapter Four** analyzes those romantic primordial constructions of Angolan art as they were applied to the cultural policies of the newly independent government. I will discuss how MPLA administrators interpreted Chokwe art's role in the new nation. As the MPLA adopted Marxist-Leninist ideas of the cultural worker, cultural administrators were hesitant to prescribe an art practice that could be as aesthetically constrictive as socialist realism. Instead, they attempted to structure post-Independence museums as open systems wherein the various ethnic groups of Angola could stage their own exhibitions. Their only constraint was their mandated praise of the triumphant MPLA, which by then was consolidating its power by increasing violence.

Vitor Manual "Viteix" Teixeira was a key figure in the implementation of a visual arts program for the newly Independent Angola. He was both an artist and a scholar who took his PhD at the University of Paris. His dissertation, *Theory and Practice of Angolan Plastic Art* (1983), was a heroic attempt to circumscribe and reclaim "Angolan" art from what he termed fascist Portuguese colonial rule. Throughout his dissertation he describes certain logical affinities among the various ethnic groups of Angola. He concludes, via his largely secularized analysis of Angolan art, that its unifying logic is populism.

Viteix's art during the 1980s illustrates his theories on building a new Angolan

culture. Having studied Chokwe art in texts and research trips to Lunda North, Viteix

incorporated elements of the Chokwe pictograms into his two-dimensional work. In his

images, the basic formal components of the pictograms—cruciform, spiral, triangle, dot

grid, etc.—frame the edges of the paper or canvas, a modernist reflection on medium.

The internal register contains expressionist scenes of contemporary "life" in Angola,

particularly of bodies in peril and in various states of flux. Viteix's images, particularly in

the 1980s, contain textual and paratextual elements. With immanence suggested by the

scenes of everyday life, he also figures the universal in the inclusion of symbols as

such—visual forms made meaningful through consensus. This configuration, an

"intraface," echoes the theme of *Theory and Practice*, as he stresses the importance of

both describing the current condition of Angola and prescribing new (primordial) logics

of democratic governance. For him, this dialogue of structure and expression was echoed

in the theory of scientific socialism, the MPLA's stated method of governance.

Chapter Five explains how this dialogical configuration of the intraface has

intensified in the online Lunda Tchokwe project. Where Viteix's structural configuration

is a formal dialogue that *represents* something, even if self-reflexively, the internet-based

Lunda Tchokwe *does* something. As computer scientists explain, the iconic legibility of

what is seen on the screen is a visual effect of computer protocol—the set of instructions,

technological operations, and, ultimately, the meta-structure that controls information.

Now digitized, Redinha's images circulate by a code language that is actually a massive

collage of electric pulses and transmissions. Ironically, what is basically a wide

dispersion of the author in digital information has proliferated debates over intellectual

property. In Angola, the crisis of access and ownership of intellectual property is even

more pronounced given the dearth of telecommunications infrastructure.

Finally, where many critical digital theorists have studied the effects of digital culture on the connected body, the inscription of digital culture onto non-connected bodies is silent. Much like the biopolitics of Diamang silenced the body while constructing a "clean" Chokwe culture, digital interfaces risk occluding contemporary configurations of biopower and exploitation. At the same time Alvim initiated the online Lunda Tchokwe project that was sponsored by the diamond mining company CATOCA, he published a similar project for the diamond-mining consortium ITM. Both companies operate in the "Lundas," Lunda North and Lunda South, and both professed to produce the projects out of a concern for the Chokwe community in the mining region.   I will discuss the various repressions of the present and recent history in order for their idea of culture to be forwarded. Finally, we return to the question of the signature removal in Lunda Tchokwe, and the various meanings its absence might communicate.

Chapter One

"Lunda Tchokwe" and the Contemporary Angolan State

The Trienal de Luanda was an exhibition and an institution created to "take a pulse" of the Angolan nation.[1] Fernando Alvim and his curators were interested in the current state of Angola, Africa, and the world; a concern with the present that many biennial art exhibitions share. However, the Lunda Tchokwe project was part of a goal to make the triennial nationalistic and not solely concerned with global art. They addressed both the state, by their donation to the Ministry of Culture, and the nation, by their imbued symbolism as the perpetuation of "Angolan" creativity. Their nationalist re-appropriation of images collected from Portuguese anthropology was, for them, a tactic. The triennial's progressive fantasizing of the Angolan nation contradicts some common theories that biennial exhibitions, characterized by contemporaneity, have "no contract with the future."[2] Indeed, the triennial's claim that they created "systems that can impact on self esteem" indicated the desire for a self-perpetuating Angolan cultural production.[3] Notwithstanding the nationalist language of Lunda Tchokwe, the triennial, in its curatorial program and included art, reflected the logic of enclave economies and a largely dysfunctional state from which its sponsors benefit.

This chapter begins the work of this dissertation: to understand the Lunda Tchokwe project as a performance that operated by and within various material and

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[1] Interview, Fernando Alvim, March 13, 2006.

[2] Terry Smith, "Introduction" in Smith, Enwezor, and Condee, eds. *Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaneity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 8.

[3] Trienal de Luanda, "English Information" www.trienal-de-luanda.net. No longer available online.

social networks.[4]   That is, while the Chokwe symbols symbolizing nationalist intent for

the triennial, they materialized within a specific configuration of politics and hardware.   I

explain how the triennial as a whole negotiated Angola's political, conceptual, and

physical state by first sketching the current configuration of political power in Angola

and the related physical condition of Luanda.   I will then discuss how the rhyzomatic

"territory" of Angola posed enormous challenges for the triennial to create cultural

infrastructure. The triennial's self-appointed mission to establish a "new humanism"

harkens to the conceptual platforms of nationalistic biennials of the 19th century, postwar

socially minded exhibitions like Germany's postwar Documenta, and politically

"oppositional" 1980s exhibitions like the Havana Biennial.   The triennial used strained

rhetorical devices to preserve all three sentiments, while having to operate in the volatile

contemporary politico-economic condition of Angola.

I end the chapter by describing the triennial's most painful rhetorical contortion:

its explanation of its support by the diamond industry. The history and nature of the

diamond industry constricted the possibility for a truly populist nationalist movement

enacted by the triennial.   Its sponsorship and direction has in fact led some critics to

claim that it had "occult and sinister objectives."[5] In particular, the sponsorship of Lunda

Tchokwe, reflective of a closed system of politics and economics, questions whether the

triennial can autonomously retain its ability to be antagonistic towards power.   As Rose

reminds us, "if the modern state is a fantasy—if it relies on fantasy for an authority it can

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[4] See H.U. Gumbrecht and K.L. Pfeiffer, *Materialities of Communication* (Stanford: Stanford University Press), 6.

[5] Adriano Mixinge, "A trienal de Arte de Luanda: Evento real ou fantasmagórico?" in *Made in Angola: Arte Contemporânea, Artistas, e Debates* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009), 204.

ultimately neither secure nor justify—then fantasy will always be there to one side of it…calling its bluff, knowing better, wanting something more, something else…."[6] In this case, it is neither the exhibition nor even the art that calls the bluff of nationalist fantasy, but those Angolan artists and critics left outside of its somewhat hermetic organization.

Throughout this chapter I will refer to the "state" both in terms of the governing body and the locus of power in Angola, and in terms of the present *condition* of Angola—psychological and physical. Such a concept of the state allows us to excavate the layers of the "Lunda Tchokwe" project, from the nationalist interface to the mechanics of its transmission and back again.

The First Trienal de Luanda

Lunda Tchokwe was the one project of the triennial that best characterized its aims, according to Claúdia Veiga, an artist and one of the Trienal organizers.[7] It was a way for Angolans to reassert themselves after colonialism and a debilitating thirty-year civil war. They declared a body of images under the sovereign control and ownership of the Angolan state through the Ministry of Culture, reclaiming thereby Angolan art history and the practice of art "for the people." For the first triennial, Alvim and Veiga decided to focus primary attention, both in the art exhibited and the curatorial conception, on Angola for several reasons. The immediacy of the environment posed obstacles, both conceptually and physically, in establishing a regular exhibition. In fact, Angolan artists had been struggling for more than thirty years, as material and educational networks were

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[6] Jacqueline Rose, *States of Fantasy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 10.
[7] Interview with author, October 5, 2008

highly volatile during the civil war.   In addition, Alvim was eager to secure specifically Angolan sponsorship and counted on the willingness of an increasingly wealthy elite to support a local initiative and to advertise Angola's presence on the global cultural and financial scene.

Before all of Alvim's work, however, the triennial was a government initiative. In 2003, shortly after the 2002 official ceasefire in Angola, the Ministry of Culture conceived of a major exhibition of art. They asked Fernando Alvim, an Angolan artist who was living in Brussels, to return to Angola and head up the project. He had been working on many of his own projects, including the Camouflage in Brussels, a precursor project to the Territorios de Arte e Cultura Contemporânea Africana (TACCA). While in Brussels Alvim termed TACCA a satellite operation, while he looked forward to the time that he could open a contemporary art center in Luanda. Alvim saw the invitation by the Angola Ministry of Culture as a way to bring the TACCA and his ideas for a major project on contemporary African art to Luanda. Shortly after his return, he sketched out the general parameters for the first Trienal de Luanda.

Alvim's own art at the time actively addressed the trauma of the Angolan civil war and the history of South African interventions that perpetuated various border conflicts in southern Africa. In particular, his five-year project *Memórias, Íntimas, Marcas* brought together Angolan, Cuban, and South African artists who returned to the repressed traumas of the southern African military conflicts of the 1980s (see figs. 4, 5, 6). The major iteration of the project in 1996 saw Alvim, Cuban artist Carlos Garaicoa, and South African artist Gavin Younge staging their own interventions into the landscape of Cuito Cuanavale, the site of the bloodiest battle of the South African Border War in 1988.

Among other places, *Memorias, Intimas, Marcas* was exhibited at the 2nd Johannesburg Biennale in 1997, an exhibition heavily invested in mourning and memory in post-apartheid South Africa. TACCA was Alvim's move to curation as art. His work since has gone beyond addressing the war and Angola's history to urging Angola to move from a militaristic to a civil state (fig. 7).

The triennial officially opened in December 2006, after three full years of preparation and ante-projects. Its first major exhibition was the "Lunda Tchokwe" followed by four other visual art exhibitions in various Luanda-based galleries. Three of the next exhibitions, Cosmos Dipanda Forever, Cosmos África Forever, and Cosmos Mundo Forever manifested the tripartite exhibition of visual arts: the first exhibiting only Angolan artists' work, the second African, and the third global. Throughout the run of the triennial, from December 2006 until March 2007, there were weekly cinema programs, conferences, and theater and music performances. Additionally, there were periodic radio and television shows devoted to the triennial.

The triennial missed its first official planned opening in 2006 because of logistical challenges posed by the readiness of various galleries, transportation of visiting artists and their art, and the triennial's volatile sponsorship. For Alvim, this was not a problem. He insisted the triennial was a cultural "movement" and not principally an exhibition. Because of his constant presence in Luanda and his intimate involvement in all affairs, he saw the exhibition and future exhibitions as periodic upsurges of activity within a long-term "cultural movment." The Trienal de Luanda, he explained, was more of an

institution than a periodic exhibition.[8] Later, his partnership with Sindika Dokolo, a

wealthy Congolese art patron, would allow him to create a foundation from which to

produce the triennial, an issue I address in more depth below. The first organization

listed as the producer of the triennial was "Soso/Lax," what Alvim called a "cultural

software" project. As Alvim explained, Soso/Lax would function as software, performing

functions of culture in line with his emphasis on systems. In relation to the triennial,

cultural software places a premium on process over representation.

The project statement to the Trienal de Luanda best expresses the territories Alvim

traversed. "Culture should be thought jointly with the political world and the economic

and social world, analyzing the phenomenon and creating systems that can impact on

self-esteem."[9] That is, the triennial and its staff researched contemporary conditions with

an eye to improving the condition of Luanda, and of Angola in general. They did this

through cultural "systems," or essentially networks of individuals and corporations who

were interested in the psychological and infrastructural rehabilitation of Angola. In this

sense, they followed a tradition of large-scale exhibitions that addressed the state of a

nation after war, such as Documenta and the 1995 and 1997 Johannesburg Biennales,

important precursors to this triennial that I discuss in more depth below.

Alvim conceived of the triennial as a collective art project and boasted that it was

the first of its kind to be run by artists.[10] Artists were responsible for each phase of the

"system's" inception. He and his team created computer-rendered images of before and

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[8] Fernando Alvim, interview with author, March 13, 2006.

[9] http://www.trienal-de-luanda.net/2007/?cat=5 (page no longer available).

[10] Interview with author, March 13, 2006.

after renovations of spaces around Luanda for galleries and went to various Angolan

corporations to ask for support in exchange for naming rights. Alvim insisted, however,

that he and the triennial maintained control over the conception of the project, and that

their overall aim was to create a situation wherein art would be autonomous and

profitable in Angola. He maintained that though he partnered with various entities,

governmental and private, he and his cadre of artists retained the ultimate decision-

making power. He operated from a stated belief that artists should not beg for money

from sponsors, but propose situations that would be profitable for both parties.

Overall, Alvim, and not the cadre of artists that made up his team, had final control

over the triennial. His curatorial work was his artistic work and his flow of ideas for the

triennial were first painted on canvas, which were transformed into the proposals and

actions of the triennial.[11] As a matter of course of curation as artistic work, the triennial

was essentially "his." In fact Alvim's copyright to the intellectual property of the

triennial was displayed on the triennial website. His studio figured prominently in the

triennial offices, and his film on the Angola/South Africa conflict *Gela Uanga/ War and

Art of Elsewhere* (2001) was shown to me as I began my investigation of his project. It

was clear through my interviews with the staff that Alvim was a type of guru to those

who worked with him.

Angolan art critic and historian Adriano Mixinge saw Alvim's control over the

project as "dictatorial," and also drew parallels between Alvim's ambiguous curatorial

agenda and certain obfuscated financial sources. He questioned the overall sponsorship

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[11] Interview, Fernando Alvim, October 5, 2008.

of the triennial by the private sector, citing a sharp departure from Angola's cultural production made for and supported by the state.[12] Mixinge was alarmed over the privatization of Angolan art and the effects on curatorial selection. Referring to the selection of installation and new media art in terms of anthropologist Marc Augé's "non-place" of globalization, Mixinge criticized the trendiness of art that had no inherent application to Angola. In his article he quotes a government official who stated that he was impressed by the sophistication of the new media shown, but could not pinpoint exactly why the art was good.[13] Though the triennial was initially conceived and supported by the Ministry of Culture, he argued that increasingly it became not a project of Angolans, but of Alvim and his sponsors. For Mixinge, Alvim's curation opposed the values of a nation whose art was born out of a socialist and egalitarian view of cultural production.

Mixinge and Angolan artist Jorge Gumbe both publicly stated that the Trienal de Luanda was a good development for Angola, but disagreed with its administration under Alvim. Mixinge concluded, "A Trienal de Luanda yes, but not just in any manner! A Trienal de Luanda yes, but with more enlarged dialogue and with participation enriched with more diverse sensibilities!"[14] This enlarged participation was necessary, Mixinge suggested, for the triennial to be true to its nationalist claims. His assertion, which bore out in the end, was that the triennial's private status created the necessary networks to pay

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[12] Adriano Mixinge, "Reflexão: As críticas e as razões do desconforto," *Jornal de Angola*, October 12, 2005. Accessed: http://www.jornaldeangola.com/, March 13, 2007.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., n.p.

for the huge production costs of the event.[15] Why, he asked, did a commission or a union

not organize this event, as is usually practiced in Angola?[16]

In his remarks, Mixinge touched on the history of art under the Marxist-Leninist

structured MPLA, which I will discuss in depth in Chapter Three. Today, the status of

the MPLA's cultural policies is manifest in the current state of Union of Angolan Plastic

Artists [Unap]. Unap struggles to find funding, its artists struggle to find exhibition

space, and the building that houses the art school and galleries is literally falling apart.

The war all but destroyed the possibility for Unap artists to procure materials, let alone

for them to keep the building in good repair. It also severely constricted the art market,

and unless artists went to Cuba or other countries, their work was not widely shown.

Alvim limited the involvement of Unap to exhibiting a few artists and the

renovation of one of its gallery spaces. Otherwise, Alvim expressed that his belief that

Unap breeds artistic conservatism, as most of the artists are painters.[17] He focused

instead on fostering younger talent and "newer" media. "New" media needs new social

systems, what Alvim and organizers conjure in this statement:

> Luanda is now at peace and in this city of 4 million inhabitants, imbued
> with will and dynamism, buildings--banks, offices and hotels--are
> springing up, reflecting the desire to rebuild, regenerate and invest.
> National praises are being sung: 2006 was the year in which Angola
> appeared on the world scene in the Soccer World Cup. After socialism the
> country is opening up to capitalism and to business (market economy), the

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[15] The triennial, according to Alvim, started with a budget of $8 million, but has risen over the years since its inception.

[16] ibid.

[17] Interview with author 10/5/2008.

city is being modernised and the aim is to make Luanda one of the

emerging capitals with economic potential.[18]

It would ultimately be their support for African capitalist enterprise that would

bring about the most criticism, both within Angola and from the international art world.

For this study, the triennial's sponsorship raises the question as to where the "state" is

located in Angola, as many of his sponsors, though seemingly private entities, are

actually part of President Dos Santos's inner circle. The producer of the triennial now, in

fact, is President Dos Santos's son-in-law, Sindika Dokolo.

Sindika Dokolo

Sindika Dokolo not only attracted criticism to the triennial, but also the African

Pavilion at the 2007 Venice Biennale. His entire collection traveled there, more or less

the same selection exhibited at the triennial. Among some other complaints, the

exhibition entitled "Luanda Pop" and the collection in general garnered criticism because

of Sindika Dokolo and the source of his great wealth.[19] In the end, both the triennial and

Luanda Pop were judged in terms of collection and patronage, and less according to the

content of the collection.

When the triennial partnered with the Sindika Dokolo Foundation, they tapped into

the financial means for cultural infrastructure, for example internet connection—which at

the time ran about US $500/month—and impressive spaces for their offices and galleries.

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[18] Trienal de Luanda, "English Information." www.trienal-de-luanda.net. Page no longer available.

[19] See Ben Davis, "Art and Corruption in Venice," Art Net News, *Artnet* (February 23, 2007), accessed: http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/news/artnetnews/artnetnews2-23-07.asp; Chika Okeke, "Venice and Contemporary African Art" *African Arts* (2007); and Adriano Mixinge, "Os Mercadores de Venezia" (unpublished text) (find citation)

By 2006, the official year of the triennial's launch, the Dokolo Foundation was listed as the executive producer of the Trienal de Luanda. Dokolo, a Congolese businessman who lives in Angola, purchased the entire Hans Bogatzke Collection in 2003, a collection that Alvim was at the time of purchase curating. Alvim became Dokolo's consultant on the collection and his two roles as consultant and director of the triennial have merged in the years since. Dokolo has been outspoken in his defense of his collection, but also extremely savvy as to who he chooses to speak to about the collection. So far, the majority of his interviews have been given to sources such as airline magazines and people who are inordinately supportive of his activities. For instance, a recent article in *White Wall* magazine describes Dokolo thus: "He is one of those men whom one meets underground while walking through candlelight through the dark foundations of a country. One of those stowaways of history, vagabonds of honor, an anonymous figure in the revolutions of the shadow…."[20] Dokolo regularly gives interviews in which he dismisses the notion that the elites of nations inherently have sinister motives and a disregard for the people.

In the *White Wall* article, Dokolo describes the moment he became interested in art when he saw Basquiat's *Pharynx* in a Parisian apartment he was looking to buy. He was, he recalls, totally transfixed by the piece.[21] From then on, his passion was turned to art collecting. He speaks of collecting in a jarring mix of financial and revolutionary terms. For instance, when speaking of his tastes in buying, he said "…I have to know if the artist can create an impression by taking advantage of a phenomenon on a market or is an artist

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[20] "Guerilla Art," in Young Collectors section, *White Wall* (January 23, 2007).
[21] Ibid.

by necessity but with a real vision." Later in the interview, after being asked about the revolutionary roots of Angola—not his native country—he asserts, "That's why [my collection] is a weapon. I like the idea of my collection exploding in anyone's face at any time."[22] In his manifesto printed on the website of the collection, he speaks with great pride and indignation about his collection.[23] His collection is for him a way of reasserting Africa, of throwing the status of the collection "back in the faces" of Euro-American institutions.

Sindika Dokolo was raised in Kinshasa, Belgium, and France. His mother was a functionary of the Danish Red Cross who, when supervising aid and training in the Congo in 1966, met and married Sanu Dokolo, a friend of Mobutu in the early days of Congolese independence. Dokolo's father, Augustin Dokolo Sanu, was an entrepreneur who made a huge fortune from his inception of the Bank of Kinshasa and many other smaller businesses. The Bank of Kinshasa was the first private major bank in post-independence Congo, and lent money to startup businesses during the Mobutu regime.

Some in Congo have made very complex and politically motivated accusations about Sanu Dokolo's involvement with the fall of the Bank of Kinshasa. Sanu was the so-called "golden boy" of the Mobutu regime, and his businesses flourished until the mid eighties. With his own money he established the Bank of Kinshasa in 1972, the same year Sindika was born. It grew into the major bank in the Congo during the late seventies and early eighties. In 1986, the Bank of Kinshasa was seized and nationalized during Mobutu's talks with the International Monetary Fund. Riley Parfitt explains that Mobutu

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[22] Ibid., 27.
[23] Sindika Dokolo, "African Collection of Contemporary Art," www.trienal-de-luanda.org, page currently unavailable.

nationalized the bank in part to prove his handle on the economy and enemies of the state in order to demonstrate to the IMF his overall control over matters in the Congo.[24] By that time, the bank was losing money and its investors were not seeing any returns. The Bank's assets were liquidated and Dokolo lost most of what he had built up during the Bank's golden years.

Though Sanu died in 2001, the Dokolo family still disputes the terms of the liquidation and is in the midst of suing the state for the real estate holdings that were seized. On the other side, individuals in the Congolese government are attempting to force the family to pay back the money or property that Sanu left them. Sindika has set up an elaborate website dedicated to his father, where he claims that the investors lost money due to the skyrocketing interest of international lenders to the bank, and not because of any siphoning or wrongdoing by Sanu.[25]

After the crisis of 1986 in which President Mobutu seized the Bank of Kinshasa, the family was uprooted and their businesses were in disarray. After Sanu's death, Sindika inherited his father's businesses in the Congo, and reportedly received large cash reserves. The source of these monies is also the subject of a fierce debate between former bank investors and the Dokolo family, including the charge that Sindika had no right to receive money from the Bank of Kinshasa given that he was listed as a shareholder while he was still a minor.

After receiving his inheritance, Sindika has grown the family business and continued to amass fortune both in the Congo and now Angola. In 2002 he married

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[24] Parfitt, Riley, and Haynes, *The African Debt Crisis*, 93.
[25] http://www.dokolo.com/Une%20Vision%20Africaine.html

Isabel dos Santos, daughter of Angolan president Eduardo dos Santos, in a lush and

expensive wedding at the presidential compound in Luanda—what Ben Davis calls a

"classic marriage of state."[26] Their marriage has been mutually beneficial. He was made

an administrator of the Angolan/Portuguese company Amorim Energy in January 2008;

his wife Isabel sits on the board as does the vice president of the state-owned oil company

Sonangol. Though Sindika argues that his wife's business interests are separate from his

own and should be left out of the debates concerning his art collection, it is clear that the

marriage has benefited both of their many business ventures in the Congo and Angola.

Angola's Fractured Political Territory

Dokolo's ventures and his marriage to Isabel dos Santos is indicative of the locus of

power and the state in Angola. Ultimately, the state has failed as an entity to provide

social services and general security for the majority of Angolan citizens and instead takes

care of the President's (and now his daughter's) inner circle. Angola is transitioning

from a militaristic society to a civil society, but the current configuration of power

hampers that transition. In fact, Jackie Cilliers demonstrates that those in power actually

benefit from the political chaos.[27] Angola's current political situation is at best complex.

Most agree that Angola is an autocratic one-party state that still depends on a militaristic

regime to secure power and wealth for the few.

Despite its enormous oil and mineral wealth, Angola's majority lives in poverty and

is still plagued with the myriad conditions from the 40 year civil war. I will just touch on

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[26] Ben Davis, "Art and Corruption in Venice," Art Net News, *Artnet* (February 23, 2007), accessed: http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/news/artnetnews/artnetnews2-23-07.asp
[27] Jakkie Cilliers and Christian Deitrich, ed. *Angola's War Economy* (Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies, 2000).

some aspects of the Angolan state—particularly on the mineral resources that led to its current configuration—most salient to the Angolan "state" represented by the "Lunda Tchokwe" project. Many of the complexities and failures of the current Angolan state are a direct outgrowth of Portuguese colonial administration, an issue I will further explore in Chapter Two.

Angola is extremely wealthy in minerals, the fundamental paradox of the nation. Oil and diamonds make Angola one of the richest African nations with some of the most prolific and profitable resources. If it were managed properly, Tony Hodges explains, "[Angola's] people would be amongst the best fed, best educated and the healthiest on the African continent. The reality is quite the opposite." He goes on to conclude that despite its mineral wealth, Angola is "associated not with development and relative prosperity, but with years of conflict, economic decline, and human misery on a massive scale."[28] Hodges, who has done extensive research on this topic, explains the great paradox of mineral wealth in Angola and other mineral-rich nations, coming to the conclusion that mineral wealth engenders conflict due to corruption and mismanagement. Typically the state alone benefits from profits, and so the states, societies, and even classes are shaped by the types of resources of any given country. Since the state is the sole beneficiary of mineral wealth, the stakes for controlling the state are very high.

Current Angolan president Eduardo dos Santos has been in power since the first president of Independence, Agostinho Neto, died in 1979. As the leader of the MPLA ruling party, he has considerable control over the political machinery of the country.

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[28] Tony Hodges, *Angola from Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism* (Oxford: James Curry, 2001), 1.

More importantly, however, he has sole control over many state-owned companies, the most lucrative being Sonangol. Through Sonangol, virtually all oil wealth is controlled by dos Santos and lies outside of government purview. Patrick Chabal explains that this creates a situation in which the dos Santos regime benefits from any sales and loans from/for oil production and not the state.[29]

The President's level of control is, in fact, one of the distinctive factors that sets Angola apart from other oil-rich African nations. At the time of this writing, it rivals the oil production level of Nigeria, which also has a small ruling elite with control over oil income. Oil production has grown from 748,000 barrels per day to an estimated 1,712,000 (compared to Nigeria's 2 million) barrels per day in 2007.[30] Although Angola is rich in many resources and had a diverse export economy wherein coffee was the major export during the 20th century, by 1973 the oil industry dominated. Presently, it accounts for approximately 90 percent of Angola's export revenues. Considering that Angolan oil earned $41 billion dollars in 2007 over earnings of $30 billion in 2006, there is tremendous pressure to keep control over the oil industry as well as the resources to consolidate that power.

The diamond industry, which supported the Lunda Tchokwe project, is also a critical aspect of Angola's economy and accounts for the majority of Angola's remaining export economy. It is considerably older than the oil economy—diamonds were discovered at the turn of the twentieth century and oil in 1955—and diamond mines have

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[29] See Patrick Chabal, *E Pluribus Unum:* Transitions in Angola." In Chabal and Vidal, eds. *Angola: the Weight of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).
[30] CIA government website. At the time of writing, Angola was projected to reduce its production to 1.65 million b/d to comply with new limits set by OPEC due to rapidly falling oil prices at the beginning of 2009.

changed hands at a dizzying pace since independence. In the 1990's UNITA and rogue

"artisanal" miners controlled nearly all of the diamond industry. UNITA's ability to

contend with the MPLA, in fact, came from its control over diamonds.[31] Diamond

production in Angola has risen from sales of $267 million in 1996 to around $1.1 billion

in 2006. Again, the main factor of sales increases is the control the MPLA government

has secured since the end of the civil war in 2002. They have undertaken a campaign to

rid the diamond fields of "artisanal" miners and secure those concession areas for large

companies who partner with the state-controlled Endiama. This campaign has been

undertaken by police action whose activities have come under great scrutiny by human

rights groups, particularly in Lunda Norte. Isabel dos Santos is a major player in the

diamond industry and has partnered with Israeli investors over the years. She has

successfully influenced the creation of laws that restrict movement in the Lunda region to

those in the diamond business.

In short, Angola is a country "cursed by its wealth."[32] The vacuum of power and

infrastructure that resulted from the civil war was filled with a mono-economy and one-

party state, both of which continue to grow in dominance and exacerbate the incredible

socio-economic divide. With the President's consolidated power we may safely consider

him the "state" and, in turn, point to many factors that indicate the failure of the state as it

was conceived of at the time of Angola's independence. The President's cadre holds

ultimate power but generally does not use it to the benefit of the majority of the

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[31] Hodges estimates that from 1994-1997 UNITA marketed around $600 million in diamonds to finance its army. "Economic Foundations of the Patrimonial State" 178.

[32] Philippe Le Billon, *A Land Cursed by its Wealth? Angola's War Economy (1975- 1999)* (Helsinki: United Nations University/WIDER, 1999), 6.

population. While Max Weber asserted that the state is the only legitimate body to use force, his model has in recent times been undermined by states that use ad hoc reason of force, usually based on their need to sustain their own power. This is certainly the case in contemporary Angola. Though the civil war has ended and the leadership of Angola professes to foster democracy, the regime marshals the military and police to their ends and not to the furthering of civil society. Angola is still in many ways in a militaristic state—both politically and psychologically.

At any point during its history, Angola has neither been a unified nation, nor been in a state remotely close to equilibrium. It did not enjoy a short-lived period of national euphoria, as did nations such as Nigeria and Ghana. Because of the policy choices of Portugal as it left Angola, it was from the beginning destined for fracturization. Through the years, this fractured state was used for monetary gain by internal and external forces. Jakkie Cilliers has called Angola's war "the instrumentalisation of disorder," and goes on to offer a recent consensus among scholars that the ruling elites "view disorder not as a state of dereliction, but as a condition that offers more opportunities for leaders and their followers than would peace and order."[33] Cilliers agrees with Chabal and others that the primary beneficiary to the diamond and oil trades is the state, and that control over resources equals control over the patronage system that upholds it. Wartime conditions allowed this system to operate without public consensus, as most of its activity is kept secret, and the system seems to perpetuate itself despite the end of major conflict.

The one visual element that is a constant in Luanda is MPLA propaganda,

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[33] Jakkie Cilliers, "Resource wars—a new type of insurgency." In Jakkie Cilliers and Christian Deitrich, ed. *Angola's War Economy* (Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies, 2000), 5.

particularly during the 2008 parliamentary election cycle. Several billboards on the Ilha have quotes by dos Santos that speak of patriotism together with his airbrushed visage, and half the population on the street wears MPLA t-shirts or caps. These were handed out during the recent 2008 parliamentary election, where the MPLA won over 80% of the vote, significantly enhancing their power. The inordinate amount of money spent by the MPLA dwarfed the allocation of campaign funds to the opposition parties. One reporter cites a provincial government official as saying "we've been giving them cars and houses and motors for months. Months! Even people who never thought the MPLA could buy them have been bought. Everyone wears those caps now, and those t-shirts—even die-hard Unita members."[34] The MPLA has become media savvy—the visual brand of the MPLA party has become, for all intents and purposes, the visual brand of Angola.

The Spatial Fragmentation of Luanda

With all of the chaos and fragmentation of the city, the triennial had to conceptualize a functional Angolan society, but to "[draw] its effects from a place not above the media but within their system of relationships."[35] Luanda, a typical overpopulated African city, had become a conglomerate of creative and unofficial spatial practices. Emerging from over thirty years of civil war, the city is just now starting to re-establish rules of law that incorporate the use of space; including zoning, city planning, and the provision of basic amenities such as electricity and water. During the civil war, the city experienced unprecedented violence and chaos. Political chaos caused

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[34] Anonymous commentator quoted in Lara Pawson, "Angola's Elections: the Politics of No Change" in *Open Democracy* (September 23, 2008). Accessed: http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/angola-s-elections-the-politics-of-no-change

[35] Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism, Or, The Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1991), 162.

psychological fragmentation and can also be traced in the physical condition of the city. Fernando Alvim identified a need to repair and re-establish "humanity" in the city, and in some ways *through* the city.[36]

Visitors to the Luanda triennial, of which there were very few from the international community, almost all remarked on the chaotic and labyrinthine space of Luanda. Sonangol has the biggest and most pristine building in the city center, with shiny glass curtain walls and a giant animated signboard atop the building. The De Beers building looms high on the other side of the city center, up the hill near the foreign embassies, equally pristine but less ostentatious. Between these two buildings, it is hard to describe the chaos and physical condition on the streets. Though the government has made some improvements, manholes remain without covers, stoplights are hardly seen, whole buildings are on the verge of collapse, and there is hardly an inch of ground not inhabited by something or someone. "Lost boys" orphaned by the war wash cars with water drawn from potholes, amputees pull themselves around by using slippers on their hands, and cars sit in half-mile queues for gasoline stations.

Adjacent to scenes of abject poverty, new stores that sell high-end brands such as Gucci, Prada, and Mercedes are creeping up in random areas of the city. Near the Banco Nacional de Angola, businessmen and women enter and exit buildings dressed in the best suits and clothing wearing expensive watches and jewelry. They step over the green fetid water that steadily streams out of the the apartments adjacent to the bank. The famous "Ilha de Luanda" is home to posh clubs like "Chill," where the cover price on Friday nights tops $100. War veterans in wheelchairs beg to guard Landrovers for small change

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[36] Alvim, ibid.

in the parking lot and women struggle to walk in high heels on the dusty uneven roads.

The "Lunda Tchokwe" project was featured in the triennial's "outdoor project" that reproduced artworks on billboards all across the city throughout the run of the triennial. Again, their claim was that by using the outdoor structure of the city, the maximum visibility of Angola's "heritage" would be seen. It was an egalitarian claim, and one that they backed up with anecdotal stories of the interest of Luandans in the billboards. The images were also integrative, providing a visual continuity through the city. These went along with the triennial's claim to create a physical network of creative spaces and habits of culture. Implied in that statement is that the triennial aims to change society on the level of behavioral habits and the way citizens inhabit the city.

"Luanda is a city of the present, where everything is happening, an experimental laboratory," reads the English Information section of the Trienal website, "a mix of feelings and emotions, a city of movement where many people coming from the provinces fight for survival, not old and worn out like many other cities but re-inventing itself each day." The essay portrays the triennial as taking the reins of Luanda, a vibrant and emerging city.

Angola's history is written into the cityscape. Luanda is the capital of Angola, but has never been an uncontested capital. It has been the seat of power for the MPLA since its inception in1956 and was accordingly a source of contention for UNITA, who professed that the MPLA members were elite city dwellers who had no sense of life in the hinterlands. They were, for UNITA, not "authentic" Angolans. One aspect of this criticism had to do with racial politics in relation to the civil war, as most of the members of the MPLA in Luanda were *mestiços*. Another was that, like many other African

colonial cities, white Portuguese merchants mainly inhabited Luanda from the beginning.
Its white population went from 9000 in 1900 to 290,000 by 1970. Though almost every
Portuguese citizen left Angola after independence, the general consensus outside of
Luanda is that the city is not "authentically" Angolan.

Luanda is not exceptional in its status as a cosmopolitan, and thus removed, area
of the country. This is a global phenomenon. Angola has been exceptional in the way
that these divides were politicized and militarized in the years after independence. The
MPLA was formed by educated Africans—Agostinho Neto, Eduardo Mondlane, and
Amilcar Cabral—who came together in Paris in 1957 to form the Movimento Anti-
Colonialista. Frederick Cooper explains

> Angolan politics was shaped by the sharp disarticulation of society.
> Whereas urban West Africans were linked by kinship networks and
> frequent movement to rural areas, the elite of Angola's capital, Luanda,
> constituted a small and isolated category—Portuguese-speaking, Catholic,
> educated. They stood in tension not only with Africans who had little
> chance of acquiring fluency in Portuguese, but also with the "new
> *assimilados,*" whose education had not taken them into this social
> milieu.[37]

The MPLA was not initially invested in ethnic identities, which was part of the allure of
adopting Marxist-Leninist ideology. Over time, and with the increased cementing of the
three nationalist factions, Cooper and Messiant demonstrate that politics were
"ethnicized."[38]

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[37] Frederick Cooper, *African Since 1940.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 139-140.

[38] Ibid., 140.

Throughout the war, the ideological conflict often times settled on a rural/urban divide. It was a practical divide and as the civil war progressed, the city became a locus for resources that were not available to UNITA or to rural Angolans. Before the war ended, the divide between rural and urban could also be understood in terms of the two remaining factions, the MPLA and UNITA. This dichotomy, however, papers over a much more complex situation that became apparent after the fall of UNITA's military. As Cristina Udelsmann Rodrigues explains, "the nation, the state, and the modern economy are still under construction, and a marked gap exists between rural and urban contexts, and the only well-established class is the leading elite."[39]

This truth has been manifest in the years since the civil war ended. Rapper MC Kapa, one of Luanda's "lost boys" now in his twenties with a popular following, has been an outspoken critic of the institutionalized perpetuation of poverty in Angola. He explains that despite the great mineral wealth of the country, Angolans die every day from tainted water, crumbling buildings, and low pay.[40] Standing from a vantage point in the city, he points out socio-economic divisions that form the landscape of the city, where those who generally have means to live are found in the buildings of the former colonial Luanda, and those who are dispossessed live in the peri-urban *musseques* surrounding the city.

The *musseques* are "spontaneous districts" that fill with people from the outlying areas. They are, both in structure and in culture, the liminal areas between rural and

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[39] Cristina Udelsmann Rodrigues, "From Family Solidarity to Social Classes: Urban Stratification in Angola (Luanda and Ondjiva)." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 33:2 (June 2007), 236.

[40] MC Kapa in *Angola Saudades de quem te ama*. Directed by Richard Pakleppa, JAR Angola, 2005, original version, 65 mins.

urban. They act as entry points for families and individuals who migrate from war-torn areas of Angola. As Marissa Moorman argues, however, "the *musseques*, while on the physical periphery of the ever-growing city, have always been at the center of urban discourse and life."[41] Moorman goes on to argue that the *musseques* were the center of nationalism during the independence struggle and the site of tension between factions during the civil war.

Today that vibrancy is severely weighed down by the huge influx of people into the *musseques* and their subsequent deterioration. The outlying areas of Luanda have grown exponentially since 1970 and especially in the years since the civil war ended. Since the 2002 ceasefire, the population has shot to between 4.5 and 5.5 million. Since Luanda was built for 400,000 people, it is estimated that 70%- 90% of the urban population live in the *musseques* under harrowing conditions. There is no running water, trash disposal, electricity, or drainage in these neighborhoods. In 2006 there was a cholera outbreak in the *musseques* and in 2008, a rabies outbreak that killed 42 children. The *musseques* present the most challenges for the state, as they are nearly impossible to govern, and perceived to be impossible to aid.

The Trienal de Luanda as Infrastructural Development

The Trienal de Luanda conceived of an outreach program to culturally and physically circumscribe the *musseques*, including a transportation system from the gallery events to the sprawling neighborhoods. Its education outreach program included giving lectures to local schools, teaching groups of children art classes, and including

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[41] Marissa Moorman, *Intonations: A Social History of Music and Nation in Luanda, Angola, from 1945 to Recent Times*. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2008), 28.

their artwork on billboards and in galleries. This was, according to Alvim and Cardoso, a crucial aspect of creating those habits of culture they repeatedly emphasized.[42] Their work in this area was a much-needed gesture towards addressing the crisis that Angolan children face, many of whom have been orphaned by the civil war and face various environmental dangers every day.

Along with transportation being provided around Luanda and its environs, the triennial attempted to create a pedestrian path on the venue map for the triennial. The map was distributed on the gallery announcement cards and posted on the website. Alvim later admitted that the map itself was hard to read, as it was abstract, visually congruous with the overall triennial branding, and favored this visual congruity over information.[43] The conception, however, was that "real" space was integrated with conceptual space. Real space, or the physical condition of Luanda, was inextricable from the overall condition of Luanda (and Angola).

While commenting on the emphasis on the material and logistical work of the triennial, one Angolan artist mused that they were "putting the roof on before the building."[44] This is precisely the point. The Trienal's effectiveness depended on its capacity to transform an infrastucture built solely on oil and diamond profits into a conceptual and physical civic space for Angolans. The triennial itself indicated the importance of recognizing its material resources. Alvim included information about his

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[42] Alvim, Interview with author, March 13, 2006.

[43] Alvim, Interview with author, October 5, 2008.

[44] He states, "O que me parece é que ... se está a construir a casa pelo telhado." António Ole, quoted in Adriano Mixinge, "Reflexão: As críticas e as razões do desconforto," *Jornal de Angola*, October 12, 2005. Accessed: http://www.jornaldeangola.com/, March 13, 2007. See this article for harsh criticism of Alvim and "his" Trienal de Luanda.

funding such as business contracts, graphs, and charts. He explained that in a country like Angola where the state gives considerable latitude to private companies and individuals, accusations of corruption are so common that he wanted to pre-empt any suspicions that his project may also have dubious sources and intentions.[45] Alvim's admitted self-consciousness about funding is all the more curious given the accompanying lack of self-consciousness about the background of many of the specific sources.

Alvim emphasized the business side of the Trienal to the extent that the initial exhibitions of the triennial pertained to the conception of the Trienal itself. Similar to the venue map, he and his staff included in exhibition spaces charts, graphs, photographs, and "branding" concepts along with lectures on the entire project. That is, the conceptual aspect of the Trienal was displayed as synomous with the practical aspects of the production of the Trienal. Alvim repeated the statistics in several interviews—in 2004 he held 485 meetings of which 60% were economic, 30% were political, and 10% were with artists. He explained that this type of work is necessary; especially as the triennal foundation established itself and the necessary partnerships (or networks) of support. Through Mutima's photographs and the serialized charts on the walls of galleries and the triennial office, Alvim emphasized infrastructure to the point of its aestheticization.

Angolan artist António Ole may see the Trienal's project as a backward way of reconstituting cultural production in Angola, but the emphasis on "systems" of culture is inherent in the conception of the international exhibition itself. As one of the first of these events, the Great Exhibition of 1851 in England was meant to strengthen the British

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[45] Fernando Alvim, ibid.

Empire and its hold on the world economy. It was at base nationalistic and reinforced the chauvinism of an expanding empire. Marian Pastor Roces' "The Production of City" connects that exhibition to current international exhibitions, which may enlighten us on Alvim's conception for the triennial.[46]   Making an argument that directly speaks to Ole's concerns about the Trienal de Luanda, she states, "[t]he literal diminution of the art object at that pivotal moment, as art itself compacted around the modern bourgeois subject, was at the same time the enlargement of the promise of social change vested in capitalism and expressed in urban renewal.... This passion persists in contemporary art practice, and its register is turned up very high indeed during the biennials and triennials."[47]   That is, Ole's criticism opens up the entire history of the biennial exhibition structure itself—with its promises of the betterment of the physical and cultural spaces of the city, and, by default, the nation.

A sound infrastructure bolsters the element of nationalism in the Trienal de Luanda, as in many other international exhibitions. Infrastructure is, ultimately, the harnessing of material resources for the betterment of the nation. It is, so to speak, symbolic of Angola's transition from a militaristic to a civilian state. Again, this is built into the biennial/triennial is structure itself, the ability of a few to collect and display eclecticism, not just of art and ideas but of politics, industry, and money. In the case of the second Paris universal exposition of 1867, Napoléon III organized the exhibition as a series of concentric ovals. Heavy industry was at the outer limits and art contained in the

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[46] Marian Pastor Roces, "The Production of the City," in Gerard Mosquera and Jean Fisher, eds., *Over Here: international perspectives on art and culture*, (NY: New Museum of Contemporary Art, 2004).
[47] Ibid., 240.

middle. As the viewer penetrated the exhibition, she was led from the material to the spiritual. The actual physical structure and placement of the Paris exposition, then, bodied forth the "power of capital."[48]

The Trienal de Luanda constructed a similar visual model for its conception, which appeared on their website under the section "Conceitos (Concepts)." Two triangles meet at their apex, each side tagged with a conceptual space in which the triennial operates (fig. 7). One side of this double-sided configuration is tagged art, culture, and city; the other side is tagged with end of apartheid, independence, and geopolitics. Each of these three concepts is further broken down: end of apartheid with "participation, transformation, impact," independence with "past, present, future," geopolitics with "OVA, OMU, SADEC, MUNDO." Though the labels are a bit imprecise as to how they articulate with one another, the two-triangle model clearly illustrates that the philosophy of the Trienal de Luanda is a meeting of macro and micro forces, of cultural, political, and economic spheres.

Systems That Can Impact On Self esteem

The idea that real space should be thought of in tandem with conceptual space was important to political activism in the sixties, articulated by Henri Lefebvre in *The Production of Space*. Lefebvre emphasizes the importance of space to produce commodities, including cultural commodities, a theory that has gained currency in contemporary descriptions of globalization, most notably the work of Saskia Sassen. In their view, the space is a preexisting condition for production of anything, real or

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[48] Ibid., 238.

conceived. He cautions, however, that a true revolution, or the ability for space to be truly transformed—can only be measured by the amount of change in everyday life.[49]   With biennial exhibitions, there is a tendency to display human suffering and physical dilapidation of cities to such an extent that some worry about the aestheticization of violence. At the very least, the ability of biennials to change society, as they often promise to do, is suspect given the lack of penetration into the systems they claim to create. In most instances, change exists on the level of the interface of the artwork.

Angolan artist N'Dilo Mutima's photographs are one example of the type of artwork that collapses "real" and conceptual space. He shot the many gallery spaces of the triennial as they transformed during renovations. His before and after displays of key spaces around Luanda were featured on the triennial website. Mutima's photographs aestheticize both phases of the transformation, in the Baudrillardian sense of the physical space transformed into a sign. The "before" photograph, the space in darkness and dilapidation, is a sign of the sublime, which refers to the spectacular aftereffects of war on everyday spaces. The "after" photo represents a double washing of that space: its transformation into a sign, and in the physical sense, the transformation of dilapidation into a sanctified white cube.

In fact, whiteness permeated the Trienal de Luanda's aesthetic. It not only carried through the traditional white cube gallery structure chosen for the exhibition spaces, but dominated the triennial office that was stocked with Mac computers that hosted the minimalist website (see fig. 8). All of the visuals, from the architecture of the galleries to the website, are minimalist and pristine, in striking contrast to the world outside. When

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[49] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1992).

the world did permeate the triennial spaces, it did so washed clean through the process of photography, digitization, or its projection onto the walls of the white cube. The triennial connected with the postwar condition of Angola, but in a somewhat removed, nearly celebratory way.

The triennial's recuperation of Angola's culture performed by Lunda Tchokwe accompanied a radical overhaul of spaces such as the Unap building and Hotel Globo, which Mutima also documented (fig. 9). Mutima's first photograph shows the Hotel Globo space in shadows, absent of any indoor lighting, objects and dust filling the space. The second shows workers on scaffolding plastering and repairing walls, and the third a view of the finished empty gallery space. In this last photo, the walls are pure white, the floor is polished, and a line of framed artworks by Viteix hang uniformly across the walls. Mutima's wide-angle lens captures the industrial lighting and corridor feel of the gallery. The last photo of the succession shows this gallery populated during its inaugural exhibition of the father of Angolan modern art, Viteix (fig. 10).

The stark difference between the triennial's renovated Unap space and the rest of the Unap building was apropos of the evolution of power and money in contemporary Angolan state. President Dos Santos's picture hung on the wall behind Director General Senhor Bastos' desk in the dark offices of Unap. The triennial gallery, on the other hand, was shiny and pristine, with a clean desk adorned with only a Mac computer (fig. 11). The overt reference to power was in the branding of the triennial, which, to Alvim, was under firm the control of the triennial. To the critics, many of them Unap artists, the heavy-handed branding of the triennial celebrated the ideology of capitalism as did the statement released on the triennial website. Despite the debating, however, the triennial's

Unap gallery made it clear where the opportunities for artists were in 2006.

By the official start of the triennial in 2006, seven galleries either were created or renovated and all of them followed the uniform aesthetic of the triennial: a predominance of white space punctuated by primary colors. The website, the gallery spaces, the press releases, and even the mock-ups of the galleries presented to the sponsors all followed the branding of the triennial. The triennial office was similarly structured, with shiny gray floors and white walls. Alvim's large-scale painting was the sole artwork hung in the office, which was fully equipped with white Mac computers. It is, in fact, useful to note the similarities to the Mac computer's "white" aesthetic that was a powerful aspect of the company's branding of an entire subculture. The subculture in part was unified by simplicity in design and the illusion that the user's personality can be projected onto a blank technological canvas.

The triennial was a space-clearing gesture that compartmentalized Angola's disastrous history in the process of an actual physical transformation of space. In these white spaces were not only the traditional exhibition space, but also an interruption of the chaos of Luanda. In his seminal book *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, Brian O'Doherty argues that the gallery space creates the atmosphere in which objects become art. He writes of the separation of the gallery from the outside world, emphasizing the contrast in terms of the sacred versus the profane. His theory obtains in the Trienal de Luanda where the generous budget for art galleries created a sanctified "clean" environment that radically differed from the chaos and dilapidation of Luanda. In this sense, international, urban, and rural art were assembled together under the same conceptual conditions, a *tabula rasa* for art.

The triennial gallery spaces, aesthetically unified with the entire triennial production, are therefore "conceptual" more than "real" spaces. Rather, the triennial is a process by which the real space of Luanda becomes a conceptual space. Accordingly, the Lunda Tchokwe project was the flagship of the triennial. Being that it was displayed on the website, in the galleries, and on billboards around the city, it unified all exhibition spaces under one aesthetic, with an overtly nationalist content. The removal of Redinha's signature accompanies a larger conceptual removal of detritus, the physical objects of Benjamin's "wreckages" of history—in the creation of cultural infrastructure.

"The Curator's Moment"

In 1998, Michael Brenson wrote an essay about the increasingly important role of curators in international exhibitions.[50] He notes that the role of artist and curator have come together in many respects.   One of the issues that Brenson touches on is the "worlding" that curators do, especially given the conceptual and geographical territories that curators have to account for. Though a typical international exhibition utilizes a panel of curators, it is ultimately the head curator who takes on the function of author. This is played out both in the actual authoring of the lead essays and the ultimate selection of artists and how the exhibition will "world" art. The return of the author in the form of the head curator is one of the great paradoxes of the biennialization of art, given the usual aims of these exhibitions to be open forums.

Alvim gave the example of the 1997 Johannesburg Biennale to illustrate the dangers of cynicism, infighting, and the loss of sponsorship that ultimately brought the

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[50] Michael Brenson, "The Curator's Moment," *Art Journal* 57:4 (Winter 1998).

exhibition down.[51] According to Alvim, the exhibition had become institutionalized to the point that overarching political concerns overrode the content. He believed that this would not have happened had the artists themselves had control of the infrastructural process. Alvim also took great (publically stated) pride in his long-term commitment as an *Angolan* artist. As an Angolan, he explained, he had the type of insider knowledge that a foreign curator would not have had. The triennial was "cultural software," and together with the Dokolo Foundation maintained an ongoing local agenda.

At once grassroots and utopian in its conception, the triennial turned away from the confessionary tone of the Johannesburg Biennales that were held in 1995 and 1997, which were produced during and after South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation hearings. Where the curators in both Biennales focused on themes of trauma, history, and confession, the Trienal de Luanda was instead celebratory of Angola's creative capacities. Indeed, there was a marked contrast between the tones of the Johannesburg Biennale and the Trienal de Luanda. For example, Johannesburg Biennale conferences held sessions where artists were singled out and accused of crimes of representation based on their race. In one particular session, "Speaking of Others," head curator Okwui Enwezor and art critic Olu Oguibe strongly criticized female South African artists Penny Siopis, Candice Breitz, Pippa Skotnes, and Minette Varí for their use of the black female body in their art. Conversely, Oguibe and Enwezor were accused of having no understanding of South Africa and its complexities, as they were outsiders to the country and these artists's efforts against apartheid.[52] The reductive nature of this argument was

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[51] Alvim, interview with author, March 13, 2006.

[52] See Brenda Atkinson, "Borrowed Images," *Mail and Guardian*, Arts and Entertainment

similar to the atmosphere that the Truth and Reconciliation Hearings sometimes came to, as the issues of blame and guilt had to be dealt with at their most basic levels.

Alvim was determined against this type of atmosphere for his triennial. At the 2006 eKapa exhibition conference in Cape Town, Alvim criticized the South African artworld for being too mired in racial disputes. He then claimed that Angolans had long since transcended racial politics in their country, which puzzled many who know the Angolan context. To the extent that war and trauma were unearthed in his triennial, Alvim marshaled them to further his project and cast the exhibition as crucial to the progress of Angola. It was part of his "strategy" of nationalism, but one that carried with it the dangers of suppressing certain traumas in order to instrumentalize others.

In terms of postwar conditions, Alvim's mission for the first Trienal de Luanda is similar to Documenta, an exhibition held in Kassel, Germany every five years. Arnold Bode conceived of the first Documenta in 1955 as a retrospective exhibition to reconnect Germany to global modern art, a task that was important in the face of the anti-modernist Degenerate Art exhibition of 1937.[53] Bode's vision entailed recovering works by artists who were denigrated by the Nazis such as Picasso, Ernst, Arp, etc., while also elevating the status of German modern artists such as Klee, Schlemmer, and Beckman. The rescue and recovery of art was actually a progressive move to reconnect Germany to the international community. Similarly, the Trienal de Luanda sought to recover Angolan art, as seen particularly with the Lunda Tchokwe project, and connect Angolans to the

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Section, October 31, 1997.

[53] See Walter Grasskamp, "'Degenerate Art' and Documenta I: Modernism Ostracized and Disarmed" in Daniel Sherman and Irit Rogoff, eds., *Museum Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).

world after the civil war.[54]

By 1964, however, Documenta was, according to Grasskamp, firmly entrenched in the now. What would become the default of biennials worldwide, Documenta from there on acted as a "seismograph" of contemporary art production from all over the globe. Past trauma was conjured through works like Joseph Beuys' in Documentas VII and VIII, where he planted trees and basalt boulders to indicate change in the city of Kassel. It brought attention to Documenta as a progressive establishment, a way to heal a war-torn Kassel. Beuys' installation became in many ways iconic to the role of art in the immediate environment of Kassel—both the ruined buildings and the acid rain-damaged environment.

In comparing Beuys's site-specific works in Documenta to one produced at the Trienal de Luanda, we see two slightly different approaches to addressing the physical space of the city. Spanish artist Miquel Barceló visited Luanda as a guest of the triennial in 2007. Working in collaboration with resident Angolan artists, he installed and photographed murals on the wall of a destroyed and abandoned building in downtown Luanda (fig. 12). Barceló's untitled work consisted of outlining bullet holes that pocked the wall with charcoal and splashed with white paint. The resulting photographs evoke ghoulish hauntings of past conflict. They bring into consciousness the physical manifestations of a shared national trauma.

Barceló's Luanda intervention attends to one traumatic postwar space, now silent where there used to be gunfire. The silence is made visible by icons of haunting, white

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[54] Interview with Alvim, March 2006. See also the English Information section of the Trienal de Luanda website.

ghosts. Rather than attempting to heal such spaces as a type of social sculpture or activism, however, Barceló represents the remains of war. It is an intense fantasizing, as Santiago Colás explains, "to recall the past out of which the seemingly eternal, postmodern, present emerged…," parallel to the triennial's fantasizing "the possibility of transforming it."[55] That is, though the pieces treat the spaces differently, Beuys's to overtly heal and Barceló's to make aware, they both carry within them the intent to change a postwar space.

And yet the potency of the changes to social spaces through artworks and institutions is inert to many who have studied the "biennalization" of art. The first Trienal de Luanda might come under the same criticism that Andreas Huyssen leveled against Documenta VII after his visit in 1984. The triennial, like Documenta VII, "can stand as the perfect aesthetic simulacrum: facile eclecticism combined with aesthetic amnesia and delusions of grandeur."[56] Current blockbuster exhibitions lay emphasis on the "spectacular difference," to paraphrase Okwui Enwezor in Documenta XI, of the exhibited art. In that, there is the persistent danger of aestheticizing difference, and even the violence that the many documentary pieces show. Alvim was aware of the danger of global exhibitions being too superficial, the art being relegated to empty spectacle.[57] Nevertheless, the triennial rendered conceptual "real" space and infrastructure. All of the physicalities of the city, the politics and economy of Angola, and even to an extent the suffering of Angolans, were simulacra.

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[55] Santiago Colás, "The Third World in Jameson's Postmodernism or the Logic of Late Capitalism." *Social Text* (1992), 258.

[56] Andreas Huyssen, "Mapping the Postmodern." In *After the Great Divide: modernism, mass culture, postmodernism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986), 181.

[57] Alvim 10/5/2008

And so it is a matter of course that, as Roces notices, the art is minimized in favor of the exhibition itself. In fact, as the triennial joined forces with the Dokolo Foundation, the collection itself became paramount. The Dokolo collection was also featured as the African pavilion in the "Luanda Pop" exhibition at the 52nd Venice Biennale. In his criticism of "Luanda Pop," and the profile of collection owner Sindika Dokolo, Chika Okeke stated that the message of the exhibition lay not in the content of the exhibited art, but rather on art collecting in Africa.[58] His criticism recounted the somewhat simplistic criticism of the ethics of exhibiting a collection based on the owner's business dealings, which certainly could have been put into context with American institutions such as the Guggenheim or the Museum of Modern Art, but was not.[59]

Dokolo himself overtly states the importance of collecting in his manifesto. In it, he claims that "Africans seem to have lost their self-confidence" and "[t]he initiative to base the Sindika Dokolo Collection in Luanda and exhibit it as a forerunner to the Triennial is also a political act."[60] Echoing Alvim's emphasis on "self-esteem," Dokolo maintains that it is the existence of a major collection of African art that announces the all over viability of Africa. It is, he insists, the answer to the underdevelopment of Africa.

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[58] Chika Okeke, "Venice and Contemporary African Art" *African Arts* (Autumn 2007).
[59] For a much more nuanced discussion on the ethics of Dokolo Foundation's collection at the Venice Biennale, see Ronald Suresh Roberts, "The Colour of Money." *Mail and Guardian online* (November 2007). Accessible: http://www.thoughtleader.co.za/ronaldsureshroberts/2007/11/13/the-colour-of-money/. He states, "Dokolo's business activities certainly deserve rigorous scrutiny and criticism and ought to receive a lot more of both. But when I hear talk of diamonds and forced labour, when I hear of the kinds of objections raised by the activist NGO Global Witness in the Angola case, I also immediately think of South Africa's De Beers, which is a philanthropic benefactor of Michaelis, of the University of Cape Town more broadly, and of all sorts of African studies work across the cultural and academic landscapes of South Africa and the world."
[60] Sindika Dokolo, "African Collection of Contemporary Art." *Fundação Sindika Dokolo*. Accessible: http://www.sindikadokolofondation.org/foundation/communications.cfm.

Significantly, Dokolo announces that he has "consciously chosen to create an African collection of contemporary art rather than a collection of contemporary African art."[61] That is, the significance of the collection's owner and location trumps the collection's content.

The emphasis on the collection lessens the impact of certain artworks that address the recent past of Luanda, and Angola generally. Censorship, whether self or government imposed, still looms over cultural production in Angola. In short, Alvim walks a fine line between the sponsorship of the project and the possibility of any serious critique of the state. Indeed, although Angola has historically poised itself as part of the oppositional "Third World" along with Cuba, this exhibition demonstrates a radical departure from that stance. The triennial is the most serious sign that the oppositional Third World has been again appropriated by the logic of late capitalism and been integrated into the global information economy.

Information and Biopower

The Lunda Tchokwe project also provides for us a connection between the information economy and the labor economy. The complexities of its sponsorship, aesthetics, and nationalism mirror a form of capitalism that has, at best, only selectively benefitted Angola. It has only fractured and deepened the exploitation of the body in the remote regions of Angola, the diamond-rich Lundas. Tucked at the bottom of the "Lunda Tchokwe" project essay, the sponsorship is listed as exclusively CATOCA. The last paragraph of the essay reads: "in light of the social and cultural politics of CATOCA and

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[61] ibid.

being a company that operates essentially in the Lunda region, it is to enhance the

fundamental conscience and participation of this project funded exclusively by

CATOCA."[62] Missing from the essay is what CATOCA does. It operates the fourth

largest diamond mine in the world, one with direct ties to Diamang, the diamond

company that produced José Redinha's collection that the project scanned and

manipulated.

CATOCA is a venture that operates in the Lunda region under the ownership of

Angola's state-owned Endiama (Empresa de Diamantes de Angola) (32.8%), Russian

diamond company Alrosa (32.8%), Brazilian company Oldebrecht (16.4%), and the

Israeli company Daumonty Finance (18%). After Independence, the MPLA nationalized

the diamond industry along with all industry in Angola. Diamang was nationalized in

1977 and in 1979 Angola passed a law giving the state exclusive rights to mining

enterprises. Endiama was formed in 1981 and they took control of the 77% of Diamang

owned by the government.[63] In response UNITA made the diamond fields their major

target, both to cripple the MPLA's funding sources, and to procure their own for

weapons. Diamang was officially dissolved in 1986 after two of its operators left the

enterprise. It lives on, however fractured and dispersed, in Endiama.

If Endiama is in many ways an outgrowth and continuation of Diamang, we could

conclude that Endiama's sponsorship somewhat nullifies the antagonism of removing

Redinha's signature. That is, the realities of the postcolonial situation as intimately tied

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[62] Trienal de Luanda, "O Resgate, a Absorção e a Visibilidade." "http://www.trienal-de-luanda.net/?page_id=101" http://www.trienal-de-luanda.net/?page_id=101, accessed March 8, 2007. Page no longer available.

[63] Clark, Nancy. "Diamonds". Angola country study. Library of Congress Federal Research Division (February 1989).

and continuing many of the programs of colonialism might lead us to conclude that the ethics of the postcolonial are now impossible. I would like to suggest, however, that we must accept the existence of today's fractured and hyper-capitalist market embodied in the Angolan diamond industry. Only then can we interrogate instead the relationship between biopolitics and biopower in a manner much more effective than simplistic ethical judgments.

Antoni Negri recently wrote that "…the multitude appears as the figure of a possible recomposition of the sensible, within the catastrophe of contemporaneity. The multitude appears as a liminal figure between biopower and biopolitics…."[64] The situation that Negri works from is vastly different than Angola, given his assumption that biopower is based largely on the technology that transforms working bodies to brainpower and communication. In the Lunda region, brainpower and the excess of language dispersed by digital transmission, especially in the diamond fields, is not the main order of society. This population is still profoundly negatively affected by the diamond industry. In fact, it is neither the discipline of biopolitics that Negri calls the hallmark of modernism nor the control of biopower of postmodernism that is the social order in the Lundas. We have seen a much more complex and ad hoc use of both discipline and power in the form of random brutality and insurgence. How we connect the production of signification is extremely complex in today's Angola. The excess of money and of signification *is* in the hands of the ruling elite.

The Lunda Tchokwe exhibition was to be the most powerful redress of Portuguese

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[64] Antonio Negri, "Contemporaneity Between Modernity and Postmodernity" in Terry Smith, Okwui Enwezor, and Nancy Condee, eds., *Antinomies of Art and Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 28.

colonialism, a process of reparation that evoked the heroes of the Independence era. However, as it addressed the traumatic memory of colonialism, "Lunda Tchokwe" silenced the traumas of the current regime and its culpability for the civil war. Similarly, the progress that the triennial sees in the shift from socialism to capitalism silences, however unwittingly, the continued human rights violations in the diamond-rich Lundas. Given that they evoked ethics, should the triennial have accepted support by the president's inner circle and the diamond industry? In the next chapter I will present a detailed history of the diamond industry and how the very book that the triennial scanned was published from within a specific mode of production, one that when implemented in Angola enacted such penetrating violence that the removal of a signature in Photoshop could only gesture towards it.

Chapter Two

Scientific Colonialism and *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda*

The "Lunda Chokwe" project presents an opportunity to revisit an exceptionally interesting work of Chokwe ethnography, *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* (*Painted Walls of Lunda*) (1953). The primary artistic gesture of the "Lunda Tchokwe" project, as previously noted, is the Trienal's removal of José Redinha's signature from the watercolor reproductions of Chokwe wall murals published in Redinha's volume. The overriding goal of the project—both the removal of the signature and the distribution of the images on the internet and on posters around the city—was to present the prints "to the larger public" and thereby recirculate the images into public discourse. In essence, the project argues that Redinha's signature is emblematic of colonialism insofar as it claims ownership of an image generated by a civilizational "other," in this case the Chokwe. Their project therefore seeks to redress the abuses of Portuguese colonialism in some measure.

In order to contextualize and analyze the claims of the Lunda Tchokwe project, this chapter will take up the larger issue of native agency and representation during Portuguese occupation. Agency is central to postcolonial studies. In this chapter I will link its usual political orientation with agency in art historical theory's concern with the singular artist's formulation of style as well as its anthropological sense of style as a classificatory device. In *Paredes*, José Redinha vacillates between the two in an awkward endeavor to achieve a union of scientific rigor and aesthetic sensitivity.

In what follows, I describe the moment of the publication of José Redinha's *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* (1953), which was one volume of the Cultural Publication

subset of the series "Contributions to the History, Archaeology, and Ethnography of the Lunda Peoples." I begin the story in the 1950's with the circumstances of its publication by the mammoth diamond interest, Companhia de Diamantes de Angola [Diamang]. At the time, the Portuguese government and Diamang officials, including José Redinha himself, resuscitated the 19th century notion of the "civilizing mission" in order to defend Portugal's beleaguered political stance in the international community. The ideology of Portugal's civilizing mission can be seen in Diamang's notion of "Scientific Colonialism." Scientific Colonialism is the endeavor to measure and control every aspect of "life;" it was the superstructure of Diamang's activities in the province of Lunda North. *Paredes* and its accompanying publications, products of Diamang's Scientific Colonialism, at once construct an image of Chokwe "life" and bear witness to Diamang's attempts to instrumentalize Chokwe mind, body, and territory. It is essential to understand them in the context of Diamang's total "knowledge production" that encompassed studies of botany, biology, zoology, agriculture, and health—what they considered to be the totality of the Chokwe. I discuss how two key scholars, Marie-Louise Bastin and José Redinha, sought to understand and represent Chokwe artistic output within this context.

After discussing Chokwe agency as it was configured in mid-century Portuguese culture and politics, I analyze the specific representational techniques of the Cultural Publications and their construction of Chokwe subjectivity through specific media. The representation of Chokwe life in the publications operates from the premise that the "real" Chokwe exist and can be rationally controlled and instrumentalized. These ideas coincide with the media used, such as print publications, Redinha's watercolors, and even

in the museum structure itself. My discussion will culminate with the argument that

Paredes divorces style from the agency of the Chokwe artist and recasts it as a

"characteristic" of Chokwe culture. After claiming the rights to produce knowledge on

the Chokwe, a facet of Diamang's biopolitics, style is remobilized to aid Diamang's (and

by default Portugal's) propaganda. Rather than seeing representation in the Cultural

Publications as a negation of the Chokwe modes of representation, it is useful to

understand them as a conceptual territory overlaid onto a preexisting one.

The Political Territory of Lunda North

A major concern of the Cultural Publications is to chart the symbols and

pictograms as they appeared in various media. This concern is not only artistic, but was

also intended to establish a hierarchy of images and objects based on their accompanying

spiritual and political power. That is, the power structure of the Chokwe could be

determined through prestige objects and their holders. Diamang's publication of Chokwe

symbols was a significant maneuver, and accompanied their establishing the Dundo

Museum. They expected that the Chokwe would visit the museum to pay tribute to

prestige objects, photographs of chiefs, and performances. In essence, the visitors would

be paying tribute to Diamang, their keeper. The Cultural Publications negotiated the

three political structures that overlaid each other in Lunda North: that of the Chokwe, that

of the company Diamang, and that of the Portuguese colonial state. All three were states

in their own right, as they each had a strong centralized bureaucracy, a centralized

economy, and a military. This section attends first to the political situation of Lunda

before discussing how the publications bridged the Chokwe infrastructural "state" with

its psychological "state."

Here we must briefly define the term "Chokwe" as it existed in the 1950s. As Joseph Miller explains, "[o]nly with reservations can one speak of a single homogenous Cokwe people in the middle of the twentieth century. However true this may be today, a century and more ago the Cokwe people lived in a compact nucleus, something more than a hundred miles in diameter, astride the watershed of the Kasai, Kwango, Zambezi, and Kwanza rivers in east-central Angola."[1] From about 1850 until the 1920s, the Chokwe had more or less maintained control over the region; first, in their role in the slave trade, which included a system of pawnship, and, after the slave trade was abolished in 1835, in the wax and ivory trade. With their economic success, the Chokwe amassed firepower and conquered various groups, which aided their expansion that lasted until the beginning of the twentieth century.[2]

Before Chokwe prominence in the nineteenth century, the Lunda state was the most powerful political entity in the region. However, the colonization of the Chokwe by Lunda around 1600 was primarily political and, ironically, Chokwe cultural practices were adopted by the Lunda. The Lunda political network distinguished "land chiefs" from "political chiefs," which made it possible for the Lunda government to operate while still preserving Chokwe descent systems. This system allowed the Chokwe to preserve their local traditions and values.[3] Not only did the Chokwe cultural practices exist under the Lunda empire, but the Lunda and other communities adopted the language and cultural customs of their Chokwe subjects. This cultural integration helped the

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[1] Ibid., 1.

[2] See Joseph Calder Miller, *Cokwe Expansion: 1850-1900* Occasional Paper no. 1 (African Studies Program, The University of Wisconsin Madison, Wisonsin: 1969).

[3] Edouard Bustin, *Lunda Under Belgian Rule: the Politics of Ethnicity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 4.

Chokwe to later gain dominance in the region and spread exponentially in the mid nineteenth century. They determined how they were to make their own contacts with the Portuguese, and did so to the extent that it benefited them. Chokwe political dominance was in large part due to their practical adaptability in their trade and territorial expansion.

At the height of Chokwe expansion, the Lunda, Luchaze, Pende, and Lulua neighbors effectively became "Chokwe" in their adoption of symbols, origin myths, language, and customs. While the Lunda had spread their political systems in order to conquer neighboring communities in the seventeenth century, the Chokwe instead spread their influence by cultural and physical interpenetration, which, by the twentieth century, included the area where Diamang settled. When Diamang entered Lunda North, the Chokwe were waning in influence and power, a situation exacerbated by Portuguese colonial pursuits. The portion of Chokwe art that represents Chokwe origin myths, Boris Wasitiau argues, must be seen as "the expansion style," or the "Chokwe colonial style."[4] The visual culture, as far as it related to the Chokwe myth corpus, helped to integrate the communities that the Chokwe conquered. Chokwe art and language during the Chokwe expansion were symbols of empire to the extent that they melded a diverse population. Diamang's collection of art reflects best "the expansion style," as art produced in that period was considered "classical" Chokwe art (see figs. 14 and 15).

Because the Chowke political system constantly mutated mainly through pawnship—the trading of people to pay for debt—and intermarriage, the Chokwe were vulnerable to collapse even at the height of their dominance over the Lunda and other populations in 1880. After capturing Lunda villages and their stronghold, the pawnship

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[4] Boris Wastiau, *Chokwe.* (Milan: 5 Continents Press, 2006), 23.

system ended and there was no remaining method to integrate neighboring populations into the Chokwe social system. By the 1920's, not only had the Portuguese made stable inroads to the area and established posts in northeastern Angola, but also a devastating famine in 1910-1912 obliterated the ability of the Chokwe to resist Portuguese dominance.

Diamang's occupation marks the first time the Portuguese were able to effectively control northeastern Angola. The inland areas of Angola were historically difficult for the colonial government to control and had a reputation among the Portuguese for being the most rugged and repugnant places on earth. It was not only disease and harsh climate that made the hinterlands impossible to occupy. Those sent to colonize the inland regions had a reputation for being lawless. In their many attempts to bolster the white Portuguese population in Angola, Portugal typically sent prisoners, or *degredados,* from Portugal to Angola, and from Luanda they were sent to remote areas to trade and to farm. Politically, however, the *degredados* were not loyal to either the colonial government or to Portugal. They became rogues and were a constant thorn in the side of officials in Luanda. The colonial government's inability to control the hinterlands was not unlike that of many colonial powers. In the neighboring Congo, Belgium also struggled to control the Katanga region after the Berlin Conference in 1885, which was occupied by the Lunda and Chokwe populations.[5] As this population straddled the border, northeastern Angola was likewise difficult to occupy, especially given the presence of the *degredado*

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[5]The Berlin Conference of 1885 was designed to regulate European trade and control of Africa. The arbitrary country borders divided the Belgian Congo and Angola by the River Kasai. By then, the Chokwe and the Lunda occupied both sides of the river and as a result of the partition and accompanying policies, there were periodic population shifts from one side to the other.

population.

All told, Diamang found very rich diamond fields in a very unstable and stigmatized territory. Diamang began extraction operations in Lunda North Province in northeastern Angola in 1917, shortly after the colonial government set up a post in Kwilu in 1908 (see map, fig. 16). Diamang was established with financial interests from Portugal, Belgium, France, and the United States. The company was given sole mining rights in the area by the colonial Angolan government. In addition to the colonial state guaranteeing sole concessionary services to Diamang in the area, it bolstered Diamang's manual labor force by conscripting portions of the local population. In exchange, Diamang gave the colonial state 40% of its profits. By the 1960's Diamang extended larges lines of credit to the Angolan government and paid large dividends to their investors in Europe. Diamang grew rapidly throughout the twentieth century. In 1920 they employed 20 foreign (white) workers and 2300 indigenous manual laborers. By 1960 those numbers had grown to 600 white workers and 25,000 indigenous workers, of which 80% were Chokwe.

The Société Générale de Belgique controlled Diamang through a web of Belgian, French, and Portuguese subsidiaries. Because the Portuguese were not particularly adept in mining operations, most white laborers in the beginning were Belgian, South African, and American. By the 1950's, because of increasing complaints from Portuguese workers and the Portuguese government, the colonial state enacted legislation to increase the amount of Portuguese workers employed by Diamang. The city of Dundo became essentially a Portuguese neighborhood within Chokwe territory.

Diamang has been referred to as the ninth province of the Portuguese Empire, a

state within a state. It administered its own police, roads, damns, hydroelectric plant,

radio station, schools, health service, plantations, extension services, missions and

museums—for reasons of security and because of its geographical isolation.[6] Security

was crucial because of the constant threat of diamond theft but also, as Clarence-Smith

argues, in order to discipline and supervise.[7] Disease was a major concern and expense

of the company and was treated with the same precision as its other security measures.

Clarence-Smith explains that Diamang's operations were typical of business ventures in

the Belgian Congo, a "subtle mixture of paternalism, racism, and repression, expressed in

the vocabulary of social catholicism and instrumental technocratic rationality." Put into

the context of the historical lack of Portuguese control in Angola, Diamang is truly an

exceptional case of colonial occupation. It was for this reason that Portugal could

gamble on its "success" to demonstrate the rationale of its by then anachronistic colonial

enterprise.

Although, or perhaps because, Diamang was an exclusive operation in Lunda and

never entirely Portuguese owned, company officials consistently linked the company's

success to the civilizing mission of Portugal. A major figure in the construction of this

relationship was Diamang's Delegate Administrator, Ernesto de Vilhena, who was

commemorated by a public monument in Dundo in 1969 (fig. 17). Vilhena, and his father

both were instrumental in the overseas holdings of Portugal, both serving in various

official positions in Africa and Portugal.   Ernesto first traveled to Angola as a marine

and later was governor in two different provinces in Mozambique.

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[6] W. G. Clarence-Smith, *Slaves, peasants, and capitalists in southern Angola 1840-1926.* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 5-6.
[7] Ibid., 6.

Upon his receipt of Redinha's *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* in 1953, Vilhena marveled: "I do not know of any other publication superior or equal—about Angola—presented so well. Honor to the Company, honor to Angola, honor to Portugal!" [8] Vilhena, perhaps more than anyone in the company, conceptualized the Dundo Museum at the Diamang compound in Lunda North as an internationally recognized institution and along those lines established partnerships with other institutions and individual scholars. He facilitated visits by leading specialists in various scientific fields and encouraged them to publish with the Dundo Museum. The museum and its publications became the best source of propaganda for Diamang, a way for the company to demonstrate its investment in the people of the immediate area. As Barros Machado explains, though Vilhena was not particularly sensitive to the aesthetics of Chokwe art, he understood the Dundo Museum and its publications to be indicative of the moral responsibilities of the company.[9]

The publications were crucial at a time when criticism against Portugal mounted within the country and from the international community. Prime Minister António Oliveira Salazar's Estado Novo (New State) (1933-1974), an authoritarian right-wing dictatorship, reestablished what he saw as the historic mission of Portugal, to "civilize" the African native. Salazar insisted that indigenous Angolans were more than a labor force. He instituted the largely cosmetic *indigenato* system wherein the "uncivilized " Angolan population could achieve *assimilado* status with the correct procedures.   Once

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[8] Ernesto de Vilhena, Letter of Receipt of *Paredes and Pinturas,* October 7, 1953. Diamang Dundo Museum Archive, University of Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal.

[9] Barros Machado, "Notícia Sumária Sobre a Acção Cultural da Companhia de Diamantes de Angola." In *Diamang: Estudo do Património Cultural da Ex-Companhia de Diamantes de Angola.* (Coimbra: Museu Antropológico de Universidade de Coimbra, 1995), 14.

an *assimilado*, Angolans had the same rights as the Portuguese, social and juridical. The policy failed. Despite the ideological declaration that all Angolans, black or white, were Portuguese, de facto racism is evidenced in the social, political, and economic leadership.[10] The 1950 census of Angola reports that only .7% of the population of Africans in Angola was of the juridical status of "civilized." Diamang itself, what Salazar insisted was a symbol of Portuguese success in the civilizing mission, presented spurious accounts of their activities towards native Angolans. As one former employee asserts of Diamang's labor practices, "[i]t was slavery."[11]

Salazar needed to offset the United Nations criticisms of labor abuse in the Portuguese colonies. His new plan claimed the colonies to be overseas provinces of the Portuguese nation, and not colonies. The switch in terminology came in 1951 when the international community pressured Lisbon to let Portugal's colonies go as part of the global push to end European colonization. In a petulant defense of Portugal, the "underdog" of the United Nations, the Portuguese Foreign Minister in the 1960's declared: "We alone practiced the principle of multi-racialism, which all now consider to be the most perfect and daring expression of human brotherhood and sociological progress."[12] Hence, the common adage in Portugal, "God created the Portuguese and the Portuguese created the mestiço."

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[10] For an exhaustive discussion of racial makeup of Angolan society, see Christine Messiant's extensive work, especially *1961: l'Angola colonial, histoire, et société: les prémisses du mouvement nationaliste* (Basel: P. Schlettwein Publishing, 2006).

[11] Paulino, quoted in Todd Cleveland, *Rock Solid: African Laborers on the Diamond Mines of the* Companhia de Diamantes de Angola *(Diamang), 1917-1975* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2008), 42.

[12] Franco Nogueira quoted in Gerald J. Bender, *Angola Under the Portugese: The Myth and the Reality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), xxi.

Lusotropicalism and the "Natural" Fact of Portuguese Colonialism

As Portugal faced growing political pressure to end their imperial practices, it turned more overtly to the myth of the "natural fact" of Portuguese colonialism to combat accusations that its project consisted of a systematic exploitation of resources in its territories. To this end, Salazar used Brazilian scholar Gilberto Freyre's influential theory of Lusotropicalism as an ideological tool beginning in the 1950's, a theory heavily invested in the benefits of miscegenation in the Portuguese colonies. After WWII Portugal struggled to have a viable place in the global economy. Government officials saw the colonies as the one source of power left to hold onto, regardless of the growing social and economic problems Portugal faced with them. Portugal was under great pressure internationally to let go of its colonies and so they sought to downplay the negative effects of its colonial policy by terming Angola, Cape Verde, Ginea Bissau, Timor, and Mozambique overseas provinces of the Portuguese "nation." Lusotropicalism claimed a "natural" and "organic" development of a global Portuguese culture.

Gilberto Freyre visited Dundo in 1951 on a tour of the Portuguese colonies sponsored by Salazar. The significance of his response to the Diamang complex must be understood in terms of his theory of Lusotropicalism. Freyre had for many years been writing on Lusotropicalism—a celebration of Portuguese colonialism based on Brazil's supposed racial harmony. Lusotropicalism contends that because of many factors including biology, geography, history, and culture, the Portuguese more readily mixed with the people that they colonized. Freyre argues that Portuguese were less harsh on their colonial subjects than were other European powers, as racial segregation and violence were non-issues in such mixed societies. Freyre wrote mainly about Brazil,

pointing to the miscegenation there as proof that the Portuguese were more willing to intermix with the indigenous, and not just descend upon them to exploit the resources. Certainly Brazil presents a unique situation in colonialism, including the fact that by the 19th century Rio de Janeiro was the center of the Portuguese empire, and not Lisbon. Freyre argues that the identity of the Portuguese is intimately tied to Brazil not only economically and politically, but culturally—a belief that he now attempted to apply to all corners of the Portuguese empire. He traversed the Portuguese colonies in the 1950s with the goal to discover proof of a common "Lusotropical" culture. The trip was funded and heavily propagandized by the Salazar regime.

Freyre's narration of the trip is recorded in *Aventura e Rotina* (1952).[13] During the course of his trip he visited the Diamang compound of Dundo. Despite the Company's (and government officials') wishes for his approval, he writes that he is quite ambivalent about the Diamang operation and especially the Dundo Museum. He notes the feeling of being policed at Dundo, that despite the "festive" environment of a civilized city in the tropics, the need for security makes everyone suspect no matter their race or position. [14] Freyre in essence describes an environment highly artificial and engineered in its racial segregation. He calls Diamang's operation "anti-lusitanian" and states that sociologically it is not a Portuguese society. He blames authoritarian Belgian-designed methods for the harsh and overtly racist environment there.[15] The company was already under fire for the small number of Portuguese investors and employees and thus Freyre's criticism only exacerbated the objections by Portuguese Angolans that the

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[13] Gilberto Freyre, *Aventura e Rotina.* (Rio de Janeiro: J. Olympio, 1953).

[14] Ibid., 425.

[15] Ibid., 426.

company was not "Portuguese" enough. More importantly, however, it frustrated Diamang's efforts to downplay racism in their organization and to highlight their Luso-African "culture."

Freyre's objections perhaps stemmed from his intense interest in culture as a realm in which racial divisions are erased. In the seminal text of Lusotropicalism, *Casa Grande e Senzala* (1933)[16], Freyre explains the profound influence of Franz Boas's theories of culture on his work. After taking Boas's course at Columbia University in the 1930s, Freyre became convinced of the "difference between race and culture, to discriminate between the effects of purely genetic relationships and those resulting from social influences, the cultural heritage, and the milieu."[17] Boas, who promoted the idea of cultural studies as a science, grappled with the difficulties in locating the agency of the individual within societies but argued that he could describe such a notion if he collected and systematized enough information. Boas' influence is seen in the wide range of evidence Freyre marshals to defend Lusotropicalism, including the history of Brazil's settlement and the natives' susceptibility to social change, and the formation of the family unit by miscegenation due to—this being perhaps the most contested claim—the allegedly pronounced sexuality of Portuguese men. Ultimately Freyre would use *Casa Grande e Senzala* to explicate and extol Brazilian racial harmony.

Diverging from the "science" of Boas' anthropology, Freyre mused over and poetically interpreted the early history of Brazil. Freyre always boasted that his work had no particular disciplinary bias or evidentiary limitations. However, critics such as Luís

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[16] Gilberto Freyre, *Casa Grande e Senzala*. (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Record, 2002).
[17] Ibid., xxi.

Madureira point to his highly subjective interpretations of history, such as the passage in *Casa* that claims: "The European leapt ashore only to slide into naked Indian women…." Madureira argues, "aside from the reductive 'ethnocharacterology' informing Freyre's comparative analysis of tropical penetrations, the other problem with this account is the only partially concealed projection of authorial desire onto the ostensibly verisimilar actions of the subjects of his 'history.'" [18] That is, Freyre's description of Portuguese culture projected his own fantasies of racial harmony that was based in large part on virulent Portuguese sexuality and native willingness. He not only mischaracterized the racial situation in Brazil, but an even harsher racial reality in the African colonies.

Freyre's insistence that the native and the Portuguese together created a new culture assumes the superiority of the Portuguese, but extols the subsequent attractive mixture of the Portuguese with the best elements of the natives. It was this same celebratory account of the colonial encounter that was taken up by the Portuguese government in the 1950s to reinvigorate support for its colonial policies. They were, however, undermined by Freyre's objections to the presence of overt racism in Dundo as he especially decried the policies of the Dundo Museum. For Freyre, Diamang was more invested in "rational" modes of governance and production, and less in the poetic and mysterious aspects of Portuguese culture evoked in the sexual metaphor of Lusotropicalism. That is, instead of the Dundo Museum being there to describe "natural" Lusitanian culture, Freyre accused the museum of prescribing a highly hierarchical social situation.

In concert with Salazar's government, Vilhena responded that the civilizing

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[18] Luís Madureira, "Tropical Sex Fantasies." *Cultural Critique* (Autumn 1994), 164.

mission of Portugal was a long process. His comments fell in line with the government in Lisbon that at the time strongly countered Freyre's claims. Its stance was a clear echo of the Colonial Minister's 1933 statement, "[w]e don't believe that a rapid passage from their African superstitions to our civilization is possible….it is impossible for them to traverse this distance of centuries in a single jump."[19] Vilhena's defense of Diamang's social project was similar, that integration was a process of maturation that varies with each geographic and cultural setting. In the face of instability from outside Angola, as well as the ongoing protest from within, Diamang increased its campaign to penetrate and regulate social behavior in Lunda. Thus, the company intercepted the expressive symbols of Chokwe culture and formulated the pictograms' representational function in the image of its own logic. Perhaps Freyre's objection was that the Dundo Museum and its scholars instrumentalized these data so overtly for the company. In essence, Diamang's mirror was not only a projection of their own ideas of the "real," but also a tool for company productivity.

Vilhena writes that the pictograms are popular art, ingenious, and they seem to "explain the soul of a backward people." He goes on, "In truth, the soul of the Black is a mirror…rational."[20] His statement is not far off from Redinha's own views on the Chokwe. On the one hand Redinha considered the Chokwe as advanced in their art and "culture." On the other, he states that they are indeed "backward" socially and need Portuguese civilization. Above all, he argues, they needed to come to a shared realization with the Portuguese, a shared narrative of the World. The Cultural Publications of the Dundo Museum—as well as the museum itself—are an attempt to conceptualize of this

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[19] Quoted in Bender, 150.
[20] Vilhena, ibid.

shared representational system. Despite the objections that Freyre had for Diamang's

cultural policies, he and they operated in a discursive field "built like a game of mirrors

played by Portuguese history, the formation of Brazil, and Portuguese colonialism." [21]

The discursive field, it must be remembered, had real implications for the body of the

native, who, despite the abolition of slavery, was still subject to forced labor and

dispossession.

Scientific Colonialism and the Chokwe "Soul"

Scientific Colonialism, the theoretical model for Diamang's knowledge

production, did not quite fit in with Freyre's conception of culture. Not only was it more

concerned with the structures of society and its governance, it overtly aimed to assuage

the perilous political situation of the Portuguese colonial project. That is, Scientific

Colonialism had less to do with describing, as Freyre did, the milieu of Chokwe culture,

as prescribing a program of integration with Portuguese society. It was a social

experiment, formulated by the conceptions of the Estado Novo, but thinly veiling the

purpose of profit generation and its concomitant racially based division of labor.   In this

next section I will propose that the term "soul," in the publications used to describe

Chokwe culture, instrumentalizes the Chokwe by 1) demarcating the characteristics of the

Chokwe culture and connecting the Chokwe to the Family of Man, which, 2) allowed the

company to be responsible for "rehabilitating" the Chokwe—psychologically and

physically. Where other colonial projects had similar civilizing missions, Diamang more

carefully maintained a self-contained diamond extraction operation. The health of the

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[21] Miguel Vale De Almeida, *An Earth Colored Sea. 'Race,' culture, and the politics of identity in the post-colonial Portuguese-speaking world* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2004), 49.

native body and soul were essential to the perpetuation of their extraction system. By inserting themselves into the process of signification—the mimetic act of artmaking—Diamang representatives distinguished the Chokwe body from the process of symbol making. That is, they extricated the Chokwe body from Chokwe culture.

Diamang administrators implemented Scientific Colonialism to measure, control, and predict every aspect of life in Lunda in order to increase productivity and profitability. With its total control of the district and its resources, security, and health, Diamang was pervasive in its influence over the inhabitants of Lunda. When Diamang charted "life" in Lunda, it literally meant to control the bodies, minds, and souls of the natives. Jorge Varanda, speaking to Diamang's extensive healthcare services, explains, "[t]hanks to these prophylactic campaigns Diamang was able to penetrate aspects of indigenous life—houses, habits, bodies—that another mode—administratively or militarily—would not have been able to."[22] It is hard to overstate the precision with which the company identified and eradicated any impediment to the supply and maintenance of its workforce. To mention just a few of their measures, the health services included vaccinations, pre and post-natal care, surgery, and other preventative and rehabilitative medicine. Injured workers were immediately taken from their position, rehabilitated, and returned to their posts in the shortest time possible (see fig. 18). However, Diamang insisted that its ultimate mission was to fix the African "soul" and medical care was just one facet of that endeavor, as it was able to "exert a beneficial

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[22] Jorge Varanda, "A saúde e a Companhia de Diamantes de Angola." *História Ciências, Saûde—Manguinhos* 11 (2004), 264.

psychological influence on the African native."[23] Diamang treaded a fine line in its

civilizing mission—between bestowing individual subjectivity (read self-determination)

and maintaining a cultural hierarchy that facilitated company control.

Diamang's activities in Lunda were a "mode of knowledge production" under

which their conception of Chokwe art was formulated, one of the foundational

Foucauldian notions of biopower.[24] The product of the mode of knowledge production

is, of course, knowledge. Taiwo splits the mode of knowledge production into two

subunits: material structure and social relations. Separating these two is not simply an

analytical tool in this case; it is precisely the way that Diamang structured their activities.

Diamang is an unusually neat case study of mid-century colonialist societal restructure in

that we do not have to conjecture whether material structure had a direct bearing on

social structure and its underlying processes. Diamang deliberately linked the two,

arguing that "[the company's] own activities in the material sphere, no matter how

extensive or how successful they are, will have failed to use to the full their power for

good if the Company has not done creative work in the realm of the spirit as well."[25]

Since the company had sole concessionary rights in Lunda and their influence was so

calculated, pervasive, and bounded, the construction of Chokwe "art," among other

things, as a facet of the colonization of Chokwe consciousness.[26]

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[23] Museu do Dundo, *Flagrantes da Vida da Lunda* (Lisboa: Companhia de Diamantes de Angola, 1958), 42.

[24] Olufemi Taiwo, "Colonialism and its Aftermath: the Crisis of Knowledge Production." Callaloo 16:4 (Autumn 1993), 892.

[25] Companhia de Diamantes de Angola, *A Short Report on its Work in Angola.* (Lisbon: Diamang, 1963), 61.

[26] See John Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

The native "spirit" was spoken of quite frequently in Diamang publications. By the 1950s, the Museu do Dundo and its publications became Diamang's validation of its concern with Chokwe mind and soul. This concern was not limited to the Chokwe. With Diamang's explicit rhetorical association of the Chokwe with "mankind," the company implied that their project was essentially humanitarian. With the wide dissemination of the publications, Diamang increasingly projected its humanitarian image to its critics in the international community. That is, Diamang's control over the physical aspects of the territory—wildlife, food, water, health—only facilitated its assertion of having a nobler role as the custodian of the *ongoing* spiritual and cultural aspects of Lunda. Repeatedly, company publications caricature the Diamang/Chokwe relationship in the most crass and paternalistic rhetoric. "If the Company is to train a worker and bring out the best in the man," a Diamang publication asserts, "it must get the African to understand clearly and to accept fully certain alterations in the traditional picture of his life previous to engagement. He must be brought to look upon his health and his physical fitness as supremely important. The company feeds and houses him, and by persuasive and kindly teaching endeavors to modify the African's century-old dislike of continuous and methodical work." [27] Diamang used the idea of productive labor as the ultimate expression of human behavior and justified its direction of that labor in terms of their concern for spiritual and cultural expression.

Diamang publications often refer to the Chokwe or African "soul." The term "soul" is an attempt to describe Chokwe culture and connect it to a universal psychology. Though Diamang sponsored Catholic Church services in Dundo and many of its (white)

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[27] Diamang, 29.

employees were Catholic, Diamang publications's references to the "soul" should be considered neither a reference to an individual's spiritual life, nor to any concern with Chokwe spiritual practices. Rather, it was a generic word that loosely referred to two main ideas, 1) the interconnection of the human family on a psychological level, and 2) the "essence" or character of the Chokwe people, indicated by the various cultural practices. Ultimately Diamang's use of the term "soul" should be understood as one of the most propagandistic rhetorical twists they performed in order to present themselves as a humanitarian company.

Theories of the universal and the particular are both found in the theories put forward by Diamang scholars and in their classificatory models. In Chokwe art, style indicates culture and symbolism indicates psychology. But Diamang's interest in the "soul" was not just descriptive, not merely scientific. By integrating the native into Diamang's labor scheme, both administrators and scholars sought to neutralize the "psychologically dangerous" potential of the change in work habits and Portuguese culture. This could only be achieved by preserving, and in turn instrumentalizing, cultural continuity through continued traditional practice. Redinha and others developed the idea that the Dundo Museum was a "living museum" and not just a repository. Diamang's apologists argued that tending to the "family of man" took more than theories. It was at base a practical endeavor.

In order to illustrate what they meant by this mixture of civilizational progress and the preservation of tradition, Diamang published "Flagrantes da Vida na Lunda (Aspects of Life in Lunda)," a key propagandistic publication in the Cultural Publications series. A celebratory introduction by José Osório de Oliveira precedes an extensive

collection of beautifully rendered photographs, some constructed to look spontaneous and some posed as singular portraits. The photographs are divided into four sections—what amounts to the visual construction of the Chokwe "soul": Landscapes, Native Types, Scenes of Native Life, and Folklore. Each photo takes up half a page with a short caption, and all photos are carefully composed and finished. Publisher Bertrand Brothers Ltd of Lisbon printed the volume using Photogravure, Typography, and Offset printing, producing an elaborate and technically pristine collection of pictures. Many of the pictures, especially of the "natives" in idyllic settings, are extensively retouched. The result is a book that reads somewhat like a coffee table book to be consumed primarily through the photographs.

Flagrantes divides Lunda life into four sections that juxtapose scenes of "traditional" activity with those of natives happily working in various positions of Diamang. For instance, the "Scenes of Native Life" section depicts on facing pages one scene in which the caption reads "Representation of the ancient custom of executing a prisoner to put an end to hostilities" (fig. 19) Facing it, another photo is captioned with "The making of a road and the erection of a metal bridge by 'Diamang.'" Another telling photo (fig. 20) depicts two small native children bathing each other in a stream, one boy smiling widely for the camera. The caption reads "A scene in the best traditional manner; with only one new element: soap!" Each photo and each editorial decision is carefully constructed to present Diamang in peaceful equilibrium with the Chokwe and the Chokwe humble acceptance of rehabilitation.

Along with the photos, Oliveira's introduction strikes a very precarious balance in its evocation of the legitimacy of Chokwe tradition and its depravity in the face of

Portuguese rational civilization. Oliveira, who spent a total of twenty days in Lunda on an official visit, romantically describes his love for the people and landscape of Lunda and his respect for the project of Diamang there.

> Beside the native from the bush, living as his ancestors did, appears the advanced native, with modern customs. There is room for all, and there is mutual respect, for if some possess the dignity of those who maintain their ancestral customs, others are proud to have become civilized without losing their national characteristics. There is no place among them for those theories which give rise to destructive notions of inferiority or superiority. [28]

Oliveira believes it an ethical responsibility of Diamang to give the natives "access to a higher pattern of living," and includes in this the ongoing educational project of the company. This education, "not destroying their inherent qualities, makes them healthier" and more productive. In fact, Oliveira's theory is that as the Chokwe become "healthier" there will be no need for faith in witch doctors, fear of fetishes, and belief in magic [29].

Oliveira extends this discussion of "scientific colonialism" by invoking UNESCO's ethical statement on colonial responsibilities:

> The effort made to extend the benefits of industrialization and technological progress to the whole world cannot fail to be accompanied by profound cultural disturbances. The problems arising from these sudden changes affect traditional ways of life, both in theory and in practice; a plan of action has to be devised and applied methodically as the program of technical transformation is carried out, not only to ensure the cultural stability of the peoples who are acquiring new knowledge but also

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[28] *Flagrantes*, 39.
[29] Ibid., 42.

to increase our science of the relations between men and their civilization.

[…] It is preferable to give them the means of constructing, in new

conditions, traditions in harmony with those of former times.[30]

Oliveira reads in this Diamang's mission: "A true museum of African culture, not only its

preserver but its living expression, this Museum represents a valuable contribution, on the

part of white colonizers, towards helping the Negro peoples to obtain what they lacked:

the conscience of a common soul." In total, what drops away in Oliveira's configuration

of the Chokwe under the Portuguese is their irrationality. What remains is their "culture"

stripped of its "dangerous" aspects.

Scientific Colonialism in the Dundo Cultural Publications

The publications, begun in 1946, presented research completed by those affiliated

with the Museu do Dundo and reflected the expansion of their purview to archaeology,

biology, botany, and history. Their publication of these volumes coincided with the

expansion to a new museum edifice in 1950, in those critical years for Diamang's image.

In this section I will discuss some of the exact moments when key scholars intercepted

Chokwe signification and created Chokwe art "in their own image" through specific

representational strategies of the publications. Nuno Porto analyzes "Chokwe art" as an

index of social relationships following anthropologist Alfred Gell. [31] Chokwe art, and for

that matter any art that has been categorized under an ethnic style, mediates ethnic

politics and itself has a certain degree of agency. Porto argues that this exists in

colonialism and persists in current Angolan politics. His analysis of the "agency

appropriation" enacted by Diamang is useful in my discussion, but I want to interrogate

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[30] Ibid., 42.

[31] Nuno Porto, "The Spectre of Art." *Etnográfica* 6(1) (2002), 116.

this moment of interception in which the Chokwe symbols are invested with meaning by Dundo scholars, when they insert themselves into the interstitial spaces of Chokwe signification through their particular methods of signification.

Taking social relationships as a presupposition based on my agreement with Porto, I explain that the Cultural Publications—and to a lesser extent the Dundo Museum itself—are Diamang's attempt to present an index of the "real" Chokwe. Here, however, I liberally use "index" as a semiotic term. I refer to the index as a sign whose veracity assumes that the image has direct physical connection to the object it refers to. Capturing the real ("culture" and the unconscious) through creation and documentation of Chokwe art was completed in an unstable and insecure environment—both in Lunda territory and the larger political field abroad. Diamang's agents sought to control the unstable phenomenological aspects of Chokwe "life." Chokwe "art" stood at the threshold of the infrastructure and superstructure of Chokwe society. Therefore the conceptual instability is endemic to signification, as the "real" referent is always elusive. This conceptual instability is directly related to the larger context of Diamang's tenuous control over the Chokwe.

The Cultural Publications, among other things, announced the company's humanitarian purpose for its presence in Lunda. The cultural publications were not sold; the company had no license to sell them. Their distribution around the world, accompanied by the many propagandistic publications by the company, offset the increasing protests against the company, both in Portugal and internationally. In the 1950's, after a series of scandals about how the company extracted labor and distributed its wealth, Diamang determined to internationally publicize its research—to demonstrate

the value of capitalist production and their renewed version of the "civilizing mission" in Angola.

José Redinha was a key figure in the propagation of the Cultural Publications and enthusiastically cooperated with scholars whom he hosted at the Dundo Museum. He was a natural choice, as he was familiar with the Lunda area. He served as an administrative assistant in the colonial post of Chitato and became deeply interested in art after he arrived there. He had an early career as an established designer in Portugal, working in the glass industry in Marinha Grande. After his move to Angola he began to amass a collection of local art and by 1942 had collected around 315 objects. His collection, in fact, was used to initiate the collection of the Dundo Museum, to which he added thousands of objects.[32] Redinha was chosen as director of the Museum in 1942. Redinha was deeply interested in the art of the area and learned several of the local languages. He prepared monthly and yearly reports to the company headquarters in Lisbon and much of the information he presented in those dispatches later formed the basis of monographs published under the Cultural Publications series.

Redinha, a self-taught anthropologist, used methods of mid-twentieth century anthropology that were developed to understand the inner workings of societal and cultural change. Redinha argues that the Chokwe symbols and pictograms are both indicators of the subconscious and also elements of aesthetic play and pleasure. The schematization of Chokwe art in the Cultural Publications position language and signification as a portal into the unconscious machinations of Chokwe society and as

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[32] By the time of independence in 1974 the Dundo held over 14,000 objects. Most were moved to Luanda after hostilities broke out in the Lunda Province.

proof of the Chokwe's connection to the family of man. But Redinha's concern with change was to curtail innovation, as inauthentic practices evidenced to him the psychologically dangerous elements of Chokwe culture in a rapidly changing mode of production. Because the cultural project attempted a psychological patch for those experiencing traumatic social change, Scientific Colonialism instrumentalized its research on Chokwe (collective) mind.

Redinha repeatedly makes connections between Chokwe pictographs' linguistic function in Chokwe society and their status as symbols of a collective unconscious. The pictograms are akin to a pool of linguistic data and can at the same time be considered "art," or the disinterested decorative play in human behavior. He is interested in so-called prestige items made by specialists in the field, but maintains a focused interest in continuity of Chokwe symbols and their use in popular culture.

While other art historians and ethnographers only studied and collected three-dimensional work and prestige items, Redinha and also Marie-Louise Bastin, another prominent Chokwe scholar, chose to study the pictographic wall murals, a popular artform by men women and children of no special social status. These images more than any others, Redinha continually argued, showed the soul of the Chokwe people. In their historical and cross-cultural function—such as Redinha's conjectured links between the wall paintings and the *sona* drawing practice of northern Angola and a similar Hindu sand drawing practice—they were primordial symbols of "mankind." Redinha and Bastin both emphasized the pictographic visual vocabulary. In their studies the pictograms are the index of the psychological aspects of the Chokwe soul.

This idea that the Cultural Publications are an index of the "real" needs to be

qualified, as their medium, the book, is not normally identified as having indexical

qualities. Let us return to *Flagrantes da Vida na Lunda*, where photography is used to

present "real" life. Oliveira argues that in *Flagrantes*

> [b]y illustrations, more faithfully than by words (for these are always
> influenced by subjectivity, as they reflect a personal point of view) the
> World is seen as in a mirror…this mirror reflects the habits of the local
> populations with an objectivity, which not even the personal choice
> involved in the selection of the subjects can destroy. [33]

Oliveira appeals to the photograph as an index of the "real." In semiotic terms the

index is a type of sign that assumes the existential presence of its referent. A s

distinct from symbols, the index assumes a direct connection to the physical such

as smoke from a flame or footprints from a foot—or symptoms from a medical

condition. Jakobson, who developed this theory to a large extent, recalls Peirce's

contention that "it would be difficult, if not impossible, to instance an absolutely

pure index, or to find any sign absolutely devoid of the indexical quality."[34] The

Flagrantes photographs assume, as Oliveira contends, the existential presence of

the Chokwe found in their daily habits.   The Chokwe body in the photographs

refers to the phenomenological life of Chokwe, especially joined with the physical

environment and engaged in habitual behavior.

However, Oliveira's contentions that the photographs in *Flagrantes* present the

"real" Chokwe—their bodies, social cohesion, and habits—is undermined by their

artificial framing, theatrical staging, and subsequent retouching. Because of their

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[33] *Flagrantes*, 37.

[34] Quoted in Roman Jakobson, "Quest for the Essence of Language." *Diogenes* 51 (1966), 25.

extensive retouching, *Flagrantes* photographs are less a product of photographic realism than they are propaganda. The company's need to retouch the photographs indicates Diamang's anxiety over the absence of the Chokwe that they construed as existing under Diamang and the absence of the equilibrium in which they wished to present them to Portugal and the international community. It is likewise useful to understand the photographs as an aestheticization of the "real." The Diamang photograhers and scholars were free to project their ideals of beauty. This is found in what Porto describes as a shift in terms of artifact to art. He points to Bastin's work as the main impetus of this shift and the primary creator of the category "Chokwe art." [35] According to Porto her work set up a hierarchy of skill and refinement based on aesthetic criteria. Both Bastin's and Redinha's work shows a tension between the task of charting the pictographs' social function and critiquing their aesthetic value. Their analyses awkwardly jump between anthropology and art history. In addition to Redinha's and Bastin's mixed backgrounds, these disciplinary vacillations are the result of what I have described as underlying their term "soul," that is, a discreet Chokwe culture and also its connection to the collective unconscious.

The Cultural Publications propagated an image of Chokwe life and of its "soul" that always claimed to be its true representation. Therefore, Redinha and Bastin always establish their physical presence as a preface to the information and images they present. In this, their work claims the same relationship to the real as does *Flagrantes*, though certainly based on less celebratory accounts of Diamang.

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[35] Nuno Porto, "The Arts of the Portuguese Empire: The Emergence of Cokwe Art in the Province of Angola." In A. Shelton. *Collectors: Expressions of Self and Other* (London: The Horniman Museum and Gardens, London, 2001), 237.

In the next section, I will discuss how Bastin and Redinha interpret the pictographic symbols as illustrating the Chokwe soul, emerging from both Chokwe culture and a human collective unconscious. In a parallel function to the Diamang's extensive photographic corpus, Diamang's representation of the pictograms index the "real" Chokwe culture, laying bare their mental processes and the Chokwe social unconscious. However, the structure that these scholars used to analyze Chokwe art is the structure of Chokwe "art" itself. Its logic is much like the hall of mirrors Luis Madeira describes operating in the theory of Lusotropicalism.

Marie-Louise Bastin- Chokwe style and the primordial

It would be useful to compare Redinha's profound vacillation in *Paredes* between scientific classification and aesthetic judgment with Bastin's approach. Both were artists and their own subjective sense of aesthetics is an important facet of their analyses.[36] Bastin's subjectivity rarely crops up overtly in her work, as she tempers herself with the charge of scientific rigor. That is, the "real" for Bastin comes from her exhaustive collection of symbols, objects, and visual culture in general. James Clifford refers to the extensive amount of fieldwork completed by an increasingly professionalized field of anthropology and the necessity of fieldwork to establish textual authority.[37] Like Redinha, however, Bastin struggles with locating a stable meaning of the pictograms and their status as either decorations or icons. Unlike what we will see in *Paredes*, Bastin nearly always refers to the decorative elements of Chokwe "art" as impulsive and

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[36] Bastin was trained as an artist at the Institut Supérieur d'Architecture et des Arts Visuels de la Cambre, which curriculum was in the Bauhaus tradition of high modernism. She originally had plans to be a designer in Paris but instead worked at the Terveuren Museum and became deeply interested in African art under the mentorship of Franz Olbrechts.

[37] James Clifford, "On Ethnographic Authority." *Representations* 2 (Spring 1983), 121.

generated by a primitive impulse to mark a blank space—she nearly always presents

Chokwe art as anthropological and sociological evidence.

One of the Cultural Publications, *Art Decoratif Tshokwe* (1961) is Bastin's most

important work on the topic and still the authority on Chokwe art. It is still the seminal

text on the Chokwe and the most detailed account of her extensive research among them.

Furthering his vision for the company's quest for the spiritual well being of the Chokwe,

Commandant Vilhena supported her trip to the Dundo, with secondary support for

documentation from the International Center for the Study of African Art and the

Institute for Scientific Research in Central Africa in Tervuren. Her mentor, Franz

Olbrechts, encouraged Bastin to travel to Angola in 1956 to study at the Dundo Museum.

There Bastin carefully catalogued the museum's collections and traveled extensively in

the region, becoming very familiar with the Chokwe population.

Bastin's book lays out the corpus of Chokwe motifs and symbols and traces their

manifestations in various media. As the pictographs were ubiquitous throughout Chokwe

visual culture and could also be seen in some form in rock art, they are, for Bastin, the

visual constants in her construction of a static primordial Chokwe culture. Bastin's

historicization of Chokwe art is developmental, not chronological. The pictograms are a

visual invariable of Chokwe culture and the basis of her use of the ethnographic

present.[38] Though the geographical distribution of this rock art extends beyond the

contemporary Chokwe parameters, Bastin considers the ethnic Chokwe the predecessors

of this pictographic corpus. As an example of *horror vacui*, Chokwe pictographic

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[38] Sidney Kasfir calls this approach "an extrapolation from the present to an idealized time prior to significant European contact." Sidney Littlefield Kasfir, "One Tribe, One Style? Paradigms in the Historiography of African Art." *History in Africa* 11 (1984), 166.

inscription demonstrates the primitive impulse to fill space. As symbols, she suggests, the

pictograms have a higher social function. She likens this to the Chokwe decorative

impulsive that develops into more specialized media like sculpture as their socio-political

system becomes more hierarchical. Similar to what other visual anthropologists claimed,

a wide variety of art media indicates a societal division of labor in an elaborate Chokwe

state system.

Art Decoratif Tchokwe attempts a historical, social, and cultural contextualization

of the Chokwe. Bastin first lays out a short sketch of the geographical and topographical

setting of her study. She then charts a modern history of the Chokwe that begins with

first contact, summarizing records of European explorers. Bastin explains the difficulty

in charting the history of the Chokwe themselves, because "until now, they transmitted

their migrations by oral history."[39] Bastin translates a bit of oral Chokwe history told by

her informant Muacefo, which was passed down to him by his grandfather Salumbu.[40]

This amounts to a very short paragraph about the division of the Chokwe into two groups

that were historically divided by the source of the river Kwango or the river Kasai.

Salumbu's short synopsis of Chokwe history is followed by a genealogy of Chokwe

chiefs told by Salumbu and verified by the historian MacCulloch. This short section is an

attempt by Bastin to bridge the anthropological present, told by the legend of Chokwe

migration, with the written history of European contact. She then reverts to the

ethnographic present to analyze the totality of Chokwe "life."

Within Material, Spiritual, and Social Life, Bastin embeds an explanation of the

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[39] Bastin, 30.
[40] Ibid., 30.

materials that will be salient for the subsequent discussion. She links material and its uses to the entire structure of the society and subsequently ties it to the material culture presented in the book. She explains symbols of power and how they support the Chokwe power structure. The introduction folds the topic of art under the section "Social Life" after a discussion of the importance of ancestors and their appearance in the various Chokwe initiation rituals. Bastin divides Chokwe art by media: ornaments, sculpture, metalwork, and decoration, and she then describes briefly the meanings of these objects.

The balance of Bastin's book is a careful systemization of Chokwe visual culture in its elemental formal characteristics and its significance to Chokwe culture. Her first reading of Chokwe art argues that it is visually pleasing and emanates from a collective sense of well being in the community. I n that sense, Chokwe art is a symbol of the homeostatic and peaceful Chokwe society. Bastin refers to Finnish scholar Yrjö Hirn, whose early twentieth century writings combined psychological theories of aesthetic beauty with the sociological practice of art. Hirn details the dangers of modern aesthetics because it atomizes art practice into specialized fields. "Art can no longer be deduced from general, philosophical and metaphysical principals; it must be studied—by methods of inductive psychology—as a human activity. Beauty cannot be considered as a semi-transcendental reality; it must be interpreted as an object of human longing and a source of human enjoyment." [41]   Rather than defining the criteria of art as solely disinterested, he believes that it is imperative to study together "the psychological interpretation of the art-impulse and the sociological interpretation of the work of art." Hirn and Bastin both seek to merge the social context and function of the work of art with the human

[41] Yrjö Hirn "The Psychological and Sociological Study of Art." *Mind* (September 1900), 59.

psychology from which it springs.

Bastin's conclusion that Chokwe symbolism is essentially primordial and tribal is implicit in the conclusion that "the considerable development of Tshokwe decoration can be explained by its symbolic value system which gives it utility, but aesthetic qualities must have a spiritual source implying a double pleasure."[42] This entire configuration, art for social utility and art for spiritual satisfaction, renders Chokwe symbolism as a collective pursuit. That is, style only refers to the agency of the Chokwe collective. Bastin's scholarship, as noted, follows anthropological configurations of style as representative of societal structure such as in the work of Franz Boas, which curtails the individual choices of each artist and each work of art. It also renders the individual Chokwe body, the artist/image maker, inert as "author" of these images. This, I will explain more thoroughly explain later, had critical connections with Diamang's civilizational project itself.

Bastin's and Redinha's scholarship is itself a "style." Panofsky argues that Baroque art, being "modern," represents psychological processes but that the artist (and viewer) is aware of those feelings. [43] He explains that the "new consciousness" among people at this time is essentially a split between their "hearts quivering with emotion [and] their consciousness [that] stands aloof and 'knows.'"[44] Agency, as described in Panofky's conception of artistic criticality, is not possible for the Chokwe artist under the configuration set forth by Bastin and others. Instead, the one who "stands apart and

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[42] Ibid., 64.

[43] Erwin Panofsky, "What is Baroque?" *Three Essays on Style* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), 75.

[44] Ibid 75.

knows" is the ethnographer.

Bastin and Redinha erase individual artistic agency with regards to art making by Chokwe individuals. In their insistence on securing a one-to-one relationship between symbols and their meaning, they privilege the imitative repetition of the forms, even in the face of their mutated uses and meanings in compositions, masks, etc. The Chokwe artist—and they are understandably ambivalent in their use of this term with regards to Chokwe individuals—copies symbols from the iconographic repertoire of Chokwe images. Imitation is, in fact, the basis of the stability of the Chokwe iconography. Bastin's and Redinha's desire for iconographical stability was not just a result of their anthropological training and of their cooperation with Diamang. It was, and still is, a methodological bias.

That the form of Chokwe iconography could ultimately reveal the Chokwe soul was not a new idea, but one that Gombrich traces in art history back to Winckelmann's declaration that form was indicative of the "Greek soul."[45] In order for a set of symbols to be the "style" of a particular culture or race, they must be shown to be integrative and continuous. As I have shown, this was Bastin's entire project and one that she undertook with systematic precision (see fig. 21). She demonstrated not only the constellation of symbols and signs of the Chokwe but also the particular way in which the Chokwe used them throughout different media, following the art historical tradition traced by Gombrich.

This leads me to consider the question of agency within the mid-century

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[45] See E.H. Gombrich, "On Physiognomic Perception," *Meditations on a Hobby Horse and Other Essays on the Theory of Art* (London and New York: Phaidon, 1963), 45-55.

construction of Chokwe art. Gombrich took issue with the type of historicism inherent in this investigation of form because it implied that whole races could be deemed marginal to the sanctioned progress of history. Certainly there is evidence of this tendency with the case of the Chokwe under Diamang—a process not only performed within Scientific Colonialism, but also within the propagandistic publications such as *Flagrantes*. The body is silent within classical art historical discussions of style that emphasize opticality. The body is *silenced* in the process of Diamang's creation of Chokwe culture. Diamang, like many colonial entities, was hyper aware of the Chokwe body. It was inseparable from the fear of the native body, which led them to control, cleanse, and ultimately extricate the body from Chokwe "culture."

By dividing optical qualities of Chokwe "art" from the actions of the body that (re)produce them, Redinha ultimately inserts himself as an author into the signification process. In the next chapter I show just how significant this act was when I cover the history of performance in Chokwe culture. Redinha's focus on the purely visual aspects of Chokwe art was termed by him "symbology" (*simbologia*). The emphasis on visuality, is a poetic practice in itself, which culminates in Redinha's signature on the watercolors reproduced in *Paredes*.

Aesthetics and Agency in *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* (1953)

Paredes is an exception in mid-century writings on African art. More than any of his other studies *Paredes* and his correspondence with Diamang officials about its publication show his struggle with individual agency evidenced in Chokwe art. Though Bastin's work addresses certain mutation and change in Chokwe art, Redinha more directly addresses the problem of change, both in his volume *Paredes* and in his writings

about the premise and theory of the Dundo Museum. Redinha seems to be fascinated by

noting the change in semantics in Chokwe visual culture. At the same time, he is

ambivalent about what uncontained societal changes artistic "play" might bring about.

Redinha consistently expresses interest in Chokwe aesthetics—that is, *his* judgment of

Chokwe art, and not primarily Chokwe aesthetic judgment. In his assumed roles as art

critic and ethnographer, as well as in his powerful position as scholar and director of the

Dundo Museum (which employed working artists), he managed the space in between

Chokwe labor and Chokwe conceptual output. But beyond all of the instrumentality of

Redinha's position and scholarship, his writing reveals that he genuinely *liked* the

Chokwe wall murals.

Paredes Pintadas da Lunda (Painted Walls of Lunda) was published in 1953,

culled from his fieldwork completed between the years 1939 and 1943. He collected

examples predominantly from the Chitato District of the Lunda Sul Province, 10

kilometers from the city of Dundo. His work was also part of the Cultural Publications

and, as with the *Flagrantes* publication, *Paredes* was printed by Bertrand Brothers Inc.,

which specialized in typography and handled the reproductions of Redinha's watercolor

renderings of the murals. Redinha does not give an explicit reason for rendering the

reproductions in watercolor, but it may be assumed that he did so in part to preserve the

color symbolism within the murals. I will discuss other more significant aspects of the

watercolors later in my analysis, including the key issue of his signature on the paintings.

Paredes is a collection of more than 100 images of wall paintings of varying

subjects figured in pictograms, ideograms, and geometrical "decorative" forms. In the

introduction, he explains that the color prints shown in the volume are direct copies of the

original wall paintings.[46] Redinha states that he adopts methods and materials similar to those used to paint the murals in order to achieve the most exact copies possible. Each print is rectangular with a solid background behind the various and dispersed figures. Each plate takes up the right-hand side of the page. Redinha may have painted the murals because of his inability to use color photography in the field.

Redinha first addresses the question of medium. He had written in his reports that the execution of the wall paintings presented particular problems for classification: the ephemeral nature of their medium and its effects on the meaning of Chokwe art generally. In the introduction, however, he presents this as a great opportunity for researchers. To quote the opening lines of *Paredes*:

> The paintings executed on the walls of the houses are a manifestation of one of the most spontaneous art of the indigenous of Lunda. Made by adults and children, sometimes by women, they are, that is to say, a popular art. This no doubt confers to them a great value for understanding the soul of the people. Unlike other artistic activities, as for example sculpture, there is no professionalism in wall painting: it is an amateur art.[47]

From the outset of the volume, then, we understand the wall paintings to be temporary manifestations of artistic play as they wash off during the wet season. These artworks are not "official" symbols of authority, but exemplify the popular use of the symbology that Bastin and Redinha were both interested in.

At times, he explains, one encounters murals that have been painted over successively by children who copy the forms and superimpose them onto the lower half

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[46] José Redinha, *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda*. (Lisbon: Diamang, 1953),16.

[47] *Paredes*, 9.

of the walls. This play of form includes children imitating form, thus suggesting that children were educated on the Chokwe worldview through this medium. In fact, many examples note the young age of the artist and include the artist's interpretation of the work. Though not overtly stated, *Paredes* presents the murals as a medium that facilitates both mimetic copying of symbols and innovation in play. This is repeated in Redinha's configuration of his interpretation as both scientific (formulaic) and aesthetic.

In conjunction with the health services of the Diamang, Redinha saw ethnography as a scientific pursuit, and, more importantly, as a powerful way to psychologically integrate the Chokwe into the Portuguese way of life. Redinha's job, as he understood it, was to use the scientific study of Chokwe material culture to help stabilize the migratory Chokwe population and integrate them psychologically into the superior Portuguese social structure. Thus in addition to the museum's mission to act as guardian of "pure" Chokwe culture, its most potent role was to provide a behavioral and conceptual constant for a migratory population. He was for that reason, and because he was conscious of the trauma of colonialism, highly suspicious of innovation in Chokwe art and culture. In one particular case, Redinha laments the appearance in the village of a Brazilian dance that had been taken up by Chokwe youth, writing, "It is as important to introduce good customs as it is to exterminate bad ones in order to guarantee the existential equilibrium of the indigenous population."[48]   Conscious that Diamang's presence was a destabilizing force, Redinha believed that culture was the most powerful antidote to societal upheaval. The space in between convention and change was the very space that, if controlled, would be the most intimate and potent act of the civilizing mission.

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[48] Museu do Dundo Relatório Mensal n 4 referente ao mes de Abril de 1947, 2.

It is in this sense that Redinha took great interest in the wall murals of Lunda. First, it was unusual for scholars of African art to be interested in two-dimensional art, most specialists studied and collected prestige and three-dimensional items. Two-dimensional art was, so to speak, not exotic enough to be considered indigenous to Africa. The idea of African art developed from early examples that were taken from, among other things, the British punitive mission against Benin 1897 and various expeditions into the interior of the Congo. Schildkrout and Keim describe how the idea of Mangbetu art was perpetuated by field workers who commissioned copies of "specimens" collected by early explorers.[49] Most of what constituted this idea was made from wood and "indigenous" material.

Redinha, however, was taken by the possibilities of two-dimensional art as a way to extrapolate the purely visual aspects of Chokwe art and to track the mutations of meaning of icons and symbols. As Redinha explains, the murals show "an unexpected richness, power of imagination and interpretation, form of reason and of feeling."[50] In a compelling section of his 1942 annual company report, he proposes to further study the murals because, he explains, although the museum has thousands of examples of the paintings archived in photos, they need many more to gain a comprehensive understanding of the practice and its history—and most importantly to construct a "symbology." Though Redinha gives no definition of "symbology," it is his attempt to create an entire lexicon of pictograms, ideograms, symbols, and icons.

The changing meaning of the symbols, Redinha writes, makes this research

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[49] Enid Schildkrout and Curtis Keim, *African Reflections: Art from Northeastern Zaire* (New York and Seattle: AMNH and University of Washington Press, 1990).

[50] Museu do Dundo Relatório Anual 1942, 8.

urgent. As they are used in popular speech and artwork, they morph due to predominantly colonial influences—for instance the symbol for "sun" becomes "clock," "wheel" or "coin."[51] Redinha calls the changes the "decay of symbology" because of both the dearth of examples and because of their ever-changing signification due to colonial contact. In the brief passage about the wall paintings, Redinha's interest in the creative aspects of the "decay" of meaning is pronounced, as is his profound desire to contain such change.

Redinha considers the "decay of symbology" a serious impediment to the "existential equilibrium" of the Chokwe. In *Paredes*, Redinha's fascination with the medium is at least in part fueled by the desire to understand the inner workings of Chokwe culture so that he might aid the Chokwe in achieving this equilibrium. Though he states that researchers can understand the popular use of form and the constant creation of meaning, more so than the more institutionalized arts, Redinha consistently returns to the stability of Chokwe symbology, or the conventional use and invariable meaning of the symbols. Paired with his position as a functionary of the Company, he relegates creativity to a dangerous disequilibrium in the civilizing mission.

However, Redinha was hard pressed to find any kind of formula that united the wall paintings, either in form or in meaning. In subject matter, Redinha notes the inseparability of everyday Chokwe life to the Chokwe worldview. Images can be images of quotidian life, aspects of history, descriptions of folklore, nature and human beings, animals, plants, ritual personages, masqueraders, idols, ghosts, imaginary monsters, lands, stars, celestial spheres, and so on. The paintings have themes of the everyday, but are also concerned with religion and folklore and have roots in the past. He states that the

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[51] Ibid., 7

paintings will benefit ethnographers, psychologists, and archaeologists alike, since they not only inform us about the past and present of the Chokwe, but about "primitives in general."

There is no predominant theme perhaps, Redinha conjectures, because their animistic beliefs "[cause] the Chokwe to be widely interested in universal life."[52] Since there is no predominant theme to the paintings, Redinha describes them as visual "diaries" of the artist(s). In this, each Chokwe artist has a particular relationship to the worldview of the Chokwe in general. Many times, Redinha states, the paintings are a journal of the painter's thoughts, worries, and joys.[53] And still, though the volume repeatedly makes reference to the subjectivity of the Chokwe artist, the emphasis is on locating stable referents. In the paintings, the artist tries to describe his state of mind. As he analyzes wall painting as a collective endeavor with certain conventions—though transgressible—Redinha understands the form and meaning to be inextricable from one another.

If subject matter for Redinha illuminates the mind of the Chokwe with regards to their worldview, the artist's formal solutions describe the level of Chokwe rationality. Like Vilhena, who described the Chokwe as mirroring the Portuguese in their rationality, Redinha approches a philosophy or pictorial theory in Chokwe art. In one particular example, Redinha discusses the use of white paint to either create luminosity in the image or to suggest a third dimension.[54] He admits that in the absence of the interpretation by the artist of this particular image, he has to make interpretations of his own. Noting that

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[52] *Paredes*, 10.

[53] Ibid., 10

[54] Ibid., 40.

his interpretation might be inadequate, Redinha writes, "Chokwe art is, really, profoundly subjective."[55]

Redinha then writes about artistic agency in terms of the formal properties of the paintings and the problem solving of the artist(s) in terms of representation. He discusses the "abstract" geometrical designs that align many of the borders of the scenes on the wall murals. First he explains that what may appear to be "decorative" geometrical visual elements are representations of villages, streets, fields, and legendary lands. He suggests the geometric designs actually represent villages, streets, fields, and legendary places.[56] They are, he surmises, "an intermediate attempt at a topographic sketches and landscape printing."[57] It is for this reason, he concludes, that one must understand the Chokwe artists as attempting "realism," but an intellectual and not visual realism.

Finally, Redinha's own agency was key to his creating an index to represent the "real" Chokwe in his work. I believe that one episode in Redinha's tenure at the Dundo Museum will allow us to draw out the poetics, or the subjective aspects, of Redinha's "scientific" analysis of Chokwe art. Redinha notes the possibility of the geometric elements of the wall paintings being "mistaken" for mere decoration, adding that they actually have significance in their symbolic reference to the landscape. Redinha, however, can never quite divorce himself from superficial decorative aspects of the murals. Like Bastin, Redinha vacillates between describing the surface qualities of the Chokwe visual corpus and their symbolic or iconographic depth.

It was the surface qualities of the murals that were foregrounded inside the newly

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[55] Ibid., 40.

[56] Ibid., 10

[57] Ibid., 10.

constructed Dundo Museum in 1949. Writing about the aesthetics of the museum in his 1949 company report Redinha explains, "An important factor to resolve for an ethnographic museum of this type, in which the majority of the objects are black or darkened, is the question of ambient color."[58] He goes on,

> There is a need, therefore, for a harmonizing element. Nothing seemed more appropriate than the painted murals of Lunda, which have been brought into the museum, the combination of coloring sufficient to liven up the rooms, documents of such ethnographic importance that we cannot permit the absence of painted murals in the ethnographic museum without considering it a serious deficiency.[59]

Redinha reiterates in most of his writings on the museum that the Dundo is a community "living" museum interested in the participation of the natives. In this spirit, Redinha used hourly Diamang employees to paint the interior walls of the museum. It is also under this configuration of labor practice, the institution of the hourly wage, that the native artist was a function of Diamang. The murals in the museum literally uphold the edifice of Diamang's museum.

In fact, one image in particular will sum up the significance of Redinha's signature on the watercolor reproductions. Redinha successfully inserts himself into the Chokwe signification process when he extrapolates a visual image from a wall mural in Chitato and recirculates it within Diamang's mode of production. Figure 22 is a photograph taken of the installation of the murals that shows a group of young men painting various sections of the museum wall mural. Most are young, around the age of many of the informants and artists of the murals in *Paredes*. These are the paid artists

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[58] Museu do Dundo Relatório Anual 1949, 2.

[59] Ibid., 2.

and employees of Diamang who are in the process of executing the desires of Redinha in his vision for the museum. Figure 3 is an image from *Paredes*, Estampa 9A. These two compositions are nearly identical, enough so for us to be relatively sure that the museum rendition was copied from the wall mural found in the Chitato district.

Redinha does not detail how he actually commissioned the artists to work in the museum, nor does he state whether some of the same artists used in the museum are the authors of the murals in the Chitato district. The image in the museum must postdate the image in *Paredes*, as Redinha's fieldwork predates the museum construction. Redinha's interpretation of *Estampa 9A* suggests that he did not meet the artist, nor was he privy to the artist's intepretation.[60] It is unlikely, therefore, that the artist who completed the mural in the museum was the same artist who created the mural in Chitato. It may have been that the artist(s) in the museum copied Redinha's copy, perhaps directly from his book. There are no records to verify any of these assumptions, however.

Given the impossibility of knowing the origin of the image, there are in fact many authorships of this image. They are the silent subject(s) who first painted this particular composition—the unnamed artist(s) in Chitato—and the unnamed paid Diamang employees who rendered the museum mural. Then there is Redinha, the artist, who painted and signed the rendition of the image that appears in *Paredes*. Finally there is Redinha, the director of the museum and Diamang official, the one who conceptualizes the layout and aesthetics of the museum.

Each instance opens onto a hall of mirrors, of mimesis and acts of the body in

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[60] The text reads "The figure of the animal, traced in white, must represent the idol of the hunting dog…the accumulation of small dots in the right hand side of the picture doesn't seem to be fortuitous, we believe that the artist sought to communicate the idea of profound sidereal depth."

relation to this particular image. The mysterious "artist" of Redinha's account who

imitates the Chokwe "symbology," with only a measure of artistic agency, created the

mysterious first rendition of the image. The second, Redinha's bodily act of imitating

"exactly" (read optically) what he saw in front of him, follows the general mid-century

anthropological mandate to erase the anthropologist's subjectivity from the object of

study. Redinha's signature, however unwittingly, actually gives us this potent visual

moment to consider the authorial function instrumentalized by colonialism. Once

Redinha's "copy" of the Chitato wall mural became the standard, Chokwe art entered a

realm in which mimesis was accomplished with mechanical reproduction, either by the

body under capitalist production, or by machine. In the next chapter, I extensively

examine mimesis with regard to the treatment of the Chokwe body as base and chaotic

matter.

Chapter Three

From *Sona* to Sign: the signature and mimesis in *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda*

Redinha's project to define the form of Chokwe art in his writing and in his watercolors was a key, perhaps *the* key, aspect of Diamang's biopolitics. This chapter will further argue that his copying and defining Chokwe art through techniques of observation treated the Chokwe, especially their bodies, as objects of base matter. Within the confines of Redinha's scholarship, the Chokwe were both subject matter and the abject other, the chaotic material that needed form. Redinha adopted the role of the ethnographer, or the one who stood apart and "knew," formulating Chokwe art based on his own training in mimetic verisimilitude. Redinha interpreted the different practices of mimesis in Chokwe art as proof of intellectual depravity, particularly the Chokwe's ability to observe and to know.   His logic was shaped by his administrative responsibilities at Diamang, but also by a deeply held epistemological agreement with the Enlightenment separation of form and matter.   As Redinha copied exactly what he observed in the "field," he then instituted that same mimetic production among the artists he hired at the Dundo Museum. Diamang thereby established a social system of Chokwe "art" wherein mimesis was not a philosophical, interpretive, or even a social act, but one of mechanistic bodily production.

The first part of this chapter presents a case study of mimesis in *sona* drawing, which was a large component of the visual corpus that Redinha encountered in his research on the murals. *Sona* is a system of drawing in the sand that is performed synchronously with storytelling. The drawings illustrate social rules and have been

traditionally passed on to younger boys during the *mukanda* initiation. In *Paredes*, Redinha records many of the finished *sona* figures as they appear in the Chokwe wall murals. He is primarily concerned with how the *sona* fit into a developmental progression from their execution on the ground to their appearance on the walls. His teleological model also underpins the analysis of the compositional decisions of Chokwe artists in the murals. Both their form and their composition, he asserts, evidence Chokwe art's premature position in the universal evolution of art and perception.

Redinha's evolutionary model includes *sona*'s visual affinities to rock art. He charts similar *sona* type images that appear in cave art throughout the region. According to him, sand drawing developed predominantly during the Chokwe's nomadic period until around the turn of the twentieth century. Their final iteration is the habitation walls, which indicate the Chokwe's sedentary period, a fact corroborated by Redinha's and other scholars' inability to find proof of the murals' existence before the twentieth century. Because of his emphasis on the social evolution of pictographic drawing, Redinha cannot fully explain the ongoing performance of *sona* and its relationship to the static image. In part, this is due to Redinha's outsider status, a status that is in fact carefully engineered by the Chokwe in *sona* practice. *Sona* performance, and not necessarily the finished figures, demarcates the social status of outsiders to specialized knowledge. His misunderstanding is not confined to *sona*, however. It carries through to his attempts to critique the mural compositions based on classical Western ideals of perspective and representation. Redinha's inability to "enter" certain Chokwe images makes their visual form all the more important in their subsequent exact reproduction. We can read his signature, in part, as a moment of their untranslatability by him.

Redinha was constrained somewhat by not only by his outsider non-access to knowledge, but also by the logical complexity of *sona*. *Sona* drawings present a challenge for anyone who studies them, as they resist classification. Only recently has *sona* literature begun to take into account their complex logic structure, with one scholar even arguing that their mathematical structure is the precursor to today's information technology.[1] This growing literature on *sona* variously defines them as mnemonic devices, symbols, pictograms, ideograms, and mathematical formulae. Chokwe terminology for the practice has not been openly interpretable for outside scholars. The word *sona* can indicate the practice or the finished visual symbol. At the time Redinha was writing, however, the emphasis of the relatively small literature on *sona* was its formal development in societal change, particularly illustrated by its visual affinities to local cave art. In *Paredes* Redinha emphasizes on the finished visual symbol as part of his interest in Chokwe symbology and he underemphasizes the crucial importance of their performance. Here I will extend that discussion to focus more directly on the connection between epistemological and physical violence, the former being most potently enacted through the cultural policies of Diamang. Far from being a mere shortcoming in his analytical prowess, Redinha's interpretation of Chokwe art, and particulary *sona*, demonstrates his inability to not only account for but to *allow* for bodily genius in the Chokwe symbolic lexicon.

By silencing the bodily techniques of Chokwe art, Redinha introduced a change in their production, from a system of drawing to machine-like reproduction. The second

[1] Ron Eglash, *African Fractals: Modern Computing and Indigenous Design* (London: Rutgers University Press, 1999).

section of this chapter will connect the way Redinha understood mimesis to his

discussion of composition in the murals. In order to delve deeper into Redinha's logic in

this enterprise, I will extend the previous chapter's discussion of *Estampa 9A* to a

discussion of its formal aspects and the challenge this particular image overall posed for

Redinha. Building on my analysis of Redinha's mistranslation of *sona*, I more precisely

locate the epistemological gap in the range of notions of mimesis—individual versus

social, optical versus behavioral, artistic versus anthropological. He was at a loss in most

cases to resolve the contradictions of what he saw in the murals as either a haphazard

collection of symbols or a coherent composition. Ultimately, Redinha left the image as a

static object illustrative of Chokwe ethnicity. The Dundo Museum and its attached

"native village" were the apotheosis of the subsequent cultural mechanization, when the

feedback of the Chokwe system of drawing is interrupted. To this end, Redinha's

signature is a trace of the violence of this interruption.

In Chapter Two, I discussed Diamang's meticulous attention to surveillance in all

aspects of "life." I argued that their efforts to control and rationalize the totality of

Chokwe life extended into the cultural sphere mainly through the Cultural Publications

and Redinha's and Vilhena's policy decisions at the Dundo Museum. Redinha's science

of symbology, his books, and his museum were containers of knowledge, features of

what Foucault calls modernist biopolitics. In Dundo, symbology was in turn mechanized.

What I finally argue, what is usually absent in analyses of colonial anthropology,

is that Redinha himself was subject to this system of biopower. *His* body, his mind, and

his creative capacities were instrumentalized by the same system that controlled the

Chokwe. Unable to arrive at any stable theory about the relationship between symbols

and composition in the murals, Redinha is left with only one way to deal with the murals, in his own hermeneutic medium. He copied them exactly, as he knew science to demand as illustrative of social "truths." Then from the container of knowledge (the book) to another (the museum), Redinha instituted a wage system for Chokwe artists who coped *Estampa 9A* exactly onto the wall of the museum. Images such as *Estampa 9A* were especially suited to reproduction, as this type of mimesis compulsively repeated optical symbols. Optical mimesis functioned to fix an ethnic identity for the Chokwe—a decorative or superficial *visual* identity, that is, identity based on a recognizable sameness. Philosophically, sameness was the mirror logic that Vilhena noted in his remarks on *Paredes*. Instead of understanding the workings of representation in Chokwe visual production, Vilhena and Redinha both instead encouraged the Chokwe perpetuation of themselves presented to them by colonial scientific typology.

On the whole, this chapter describes the identification and instrumentalization of form as part of a disciplinary society. Much like the factory, prison, and the book that Foucault uses to characterize disciplinary societies, Diamang instituted in Lunda North. Diamang secured Chokwe art as cultural capital and distributed it to a wider public through the format of the book. The murals' two-dimensionality does not imply change in logic, as two-dimensionality was already a part of the Chokwe corpus. Rather, through their tools of containment Chokwe art became for Diamang an object of "information," what then circulated as intellectual capital.

Sona

In *Paredes*, Redinha includes a chart of symbols derived from the *sona* drawing

practice to better explain the range of symbols in the murals (fig. 23). They were part of

Redinha's Chokwe symbology, along with other images of anthropomorphic, natural, and

zoological forms. *Sona* drawing was intimately tied to Chokwe collective memory, its

perpetuation, performance, and transmission of Chokwe power structure. The colonial

project's attempt to rarefy the *sona* images illustrates the intervention in that system of

logic. *Sona* demonstrated Chokwe preference for allegorical reality enacted through

various visual and performative strategies. They were less emphatic about imitative

representation of reality.

The process by which *lusona* (plural of *sona*) are drawn in the sand is formulaic, as

is the format of the resulting images. The *mukakasona*, the elder maker of the *sona*

drawing who is usually in his fifties or sixties, finds a patch of ground and smoothes it to

make a clear drawing surface. He begins the drawing by impressing dots with the tips of

his fingers (see fig. 24). These dots form a grid structure in which the dots are carefully

plotted equidistant from one another, measured by the distance between the fingers. After

a basic grid is plotted, the *mukakasona* creates in-between interlocking dots.

After the *mukakasona* has plotted the grid specific to the *sona* he will draw, he then

begins to draw an unbroken line around the dots. He circumnavigates each of the dots

quickly and precisely, creating an even and symmetrical lattice pattern. In some instances

the conventional method of drawing entails starting at one edge of the dot grid and

drawing a diagonal line down the middle until the edge is reached, making a 90 degree

turn and returning in a diagonal line until all of the dots are outlined and the line returns

to its starting point. Accordingly, most of the *sona* patterns are symmetrical.

The drawing of the line is the challenge, the riddle, and the part of the drawing that demonstrates the *mukakasona*'s memory and skill. The line, or the *mufunda*, is the key element in the communicative process. It demonstrates both the figurative elements of the drawing and its aspects of play and performance. It is also, in some respects, the indicator of success in mastering the act of creating standard pictograms and ideogram. Given their performative nature, there is great pressure on the *mukakasona* to execute the drawings perfectly. Mistakes are often marked by laughter or a quiet sarcasm.[2] For that reason, *sona* is a popular pastime for Chokwe and a favorite activity as men pass through each other's towns. It was a social event, a conventional way to disseminate information. At the same time it provided an opportunity for innovation based on new iterations of standard algorithms.

At times, the *mukakasona* narrates the corresponding myth as he is drawing the figure. Other times he is silent as he concentrates on the process. Because the drawings are finished with the interweaving of one unbroken line, it is not only the finished image that must be retained in the memory of the *mukakasona*, but also the process that will lead to the final result. Paulus Gerdes calls the drawings mnemonics that aid both the elders and their students in learning social mores and political configurations. In terms of their status as repositories of shared knowledge for the Chokwe, Gerhard Kubik believes that *sona* are the Chokwe "library" and "convey to the male community ideas about

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[2] Paulus Gerdes, *Sona Geometry: Reflections on the Tradition of Sand Drawings in Africa South of the Equator* (Maputo: Instituto Superior Pedagógico Moçambique, 1994), 14.

existing institutions, to stimulate fantasy, abstract logical thinking and even meditation."[3]
According to these scholars the Chokwe library is conveyed through an act of bodily
production, wherein mimesis is both visual/logical and performative.

As such, *sona* can also be understood as a liturgical practice, according to Mario
Fontinha. He explains, "The sand drawings are part of a liturgy of songs and ancient rites,
a type of mnemonic language perpetuated by oral tradition."[4] One function of the *sona*
practice is to instruct boys in the process of their initiation into the *mukanda* rite. In this
process, the boys enter into the *mukanda* camp and are instructed for a varying period of
time by the elders on rituals, history, and mask making. Therefore many *sona* figures
represent *mahamba* (ancestors). Still others refer to the highly circumscribed topography
of the village itself and especially of the *mukanda* compound. Being that this "real space"
of the compound is of paramount importance to the conception of ritual separation, the
sona drawings meant to teach this concept are likewise multi-layered in their meaning.

One very standard *sona* represents the structure of the *mukanda* camp (fig. 25).
This particular drawing is unique in that the dots do not constitute a grid. Rather, they
refer to the subjects of the *mukanda* ritual, the boys inside of the camp and the guards and
community members outside of the camp. They do not create a lattice through which the
lines weave, but are instead lined up and enclosed by the lines. The two upper dots
represent those charged with guarding the camp and the two lower dots those community
members who try and are kept from entering the camp. As women are barred from

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[3] Gerhard Kubik, "African Space/Time Concepts and the Tusona Ideographs in Luchazi Culture
with a Discussion of Possible Cross-Parallels in Music" *African Music* (Grahamstown, South
Africa: 1987), 58.
[4] Mario Fontinha, *Desenhos na Areia dos Quiocos do Noreste de Angola* (Lisboa: Instituto de
Investigação Cientifica Tropical, 1983), 77.

entering the camp and/or bringing food to their sons, this is in part a circumscription of women in relation to the *mukanda* rite. The shape of the *sona* does not refer to the layout of the camp. It is therefore not a verisimilitude of the camp, but illustrative of the idea of inclusion and exclusion in *mukanda*.

This example of the *sona* illustrating a *mukanda* camp is key to understanding the importance of *sona* in shaping human behavior. As the human hand traces the conceptual boundaries of Chokwe society, so the "real" space is established. Bodily mimesis is in part to teach the proper behavior and habits of the body and the mind. The system of society allows for multiple iterations based upon logic and not, as Redinha wrote, static tradition and adolescent rationality. It is necessary to think of *sona* as a system so that the analysis includes bodily behavior *and* visual mimesis, conceptual systems *and* the will to verisimilitude. Or, in Western terms, *sona* is securely within both the realm of a logical system of art *and* the machinations of societal systems.

Another example illustrated by Mário Fontinha does engage with verisimilitude in its description of a *kusu* (parrot) (fig. 26). It is an unusual example because of its non-symmetry, though it is still monolinear. According to Gerdes, this figure, along with other non-symmetrical figures such as the "thinker" *sona* (fig. 28), indicate the "great expressiveness achieved by the drawer-artist who invented it."[5] *Sona* practice allows for different modes of realism, from what Redinha described as an "intellectual" realism to verisimilitude.

Gerdes and other ethnomathematicians focus on symmetry as a Chokwe cultural

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[5] Gerdes, 23.

value. Increasingly, these scholars have dissected the range of algorithmic operations involved in *sona* drawing, concluding that it is this specialized mental activity that constitutes the body of shared knowledge. Also by analyzing *sona* as an operation, they can better explain innovation and interpretation than by analyzing it as a repository of forms to be executed. That is, the morphing of resulting figures and images can be explained by *sona*'s recursivity. The drawing's value lies in the mastery of an operation, and not the copying of a corpus of images. Thus *sona* involves both mnemonics and also the conceptual training involved in operational thought. In that sense, *sona* can perform a social function in excluding certain members of the community from restricted spaces, while it can also be a purely ludic activity.

Gerdes in particular argues that the patterns can be amplified and reduced according to an algorithm. He gives many examples of this; one that he postulates shows a progression of the "protected settlement" *sona* (fig. 28). The inner lattice of dots and lines is built upon using the same configuration of dots and lines. The line that loops around the upper three sides of the figure is the constant graphic element of each version. This line, according to Gerdes, is the fence that protects the settlement. It is therefore the key conceptual element of its identity.

The challenge for outside scholars to typologize *lusona* lies in the process of how they are made. Narrative is not found in the arrangements of forms, but in the tandem performance of drawing and telling in tandem: *sona* is social, intellectual, and significatory practice. Objects are sometimes distinguishable from the figure, but sometimes not. *Lusona* are concerned with both everyday life and with mythical worlds and beings. In short, they elude every chart or graph created by scholars such as Redinha

and Bastin. Even the mathematically minded authors such as Gerdes and Kubik are interested in how or whether the finished drawing attains any measure of verisimilitude.

As *Estampa 9A* did, the image of the *sona* in these moments becomes a "Chokwe," or ethnically fixed, visual symbol. Even relatively recently (1983), Mario Fontinha muses, "it is not hard to believe that in the future [*sona*] will come to illustrate postcards, stamps, and decorate streets and signs, tile, pottery and embroidery."[6] Fontinha does not mention the large corpus of *sona* patterns in Chokwe pottery and embroidery, which Bastin and Redinha wrote about in their work. Nor does he mention the by-then prolific use of *sona* and other Chokwe symbols in post-independence paintings. Regardless, what Fontinha communicates here is their decorative qualities and their ability as two-dimensional images to travel to various objects and contexts. However, the "mystery" of the *sona* is what semantic change, if any, occurs as the finished drawing is "raised onto the walls" of the houses. By revealing this fundamental gap in understanding the process of culture, it is clear that the desires and pleasures of the observers eclipse the possibility of "purely" scientific analysis.

Sona in *Paredes*

Mathematical analyses on *lusona* were nonexistent when Redinha studied the murals and he did not write about their logical structure. In *Paredes*, he uses *sona* to illustrate his processual theories of Chokwe drawing. He often references Eduardo dos Santos's mid-century literature on *sona*, which discusses the *lusona* as design. Dos Santos analyzed the *sona* "pictographs and ideograms" according to their use value in

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[6] Fontinha, 74-75.

everyday life.[7] For Redinha, as for dos Santos, the finished *sona* drawings are at most

illustrative but not logical. They are primitively abstract but not geometrically advanced.

Redinha also references Hermann Baumann's work on the diagrams that claims that they

have a predominantly religious function.[8]

Unlike other scholars, Redinha links *sona* to other visually dissimilar drawings that

do not follow the line and dot formula. Redinha devotes two pages in *Paredes* to *sona*,

specifically its place in the development of the Chokwe lifecycle. Like the other symbols

that he and Bastin charted and graphed, the drawings are shown as figures labeled as

trees, birds, men, meteorological phenomena, etc. In *Paredes* Redinha explicitly ties

together all Chokwe drawing practices by their visual outcome, the static pictogram or

ideogram. Here he was constrained in part by his subject matter, the wall murals. They

functioned for Redinha like a museum of the Chokwe visual corpus. They were the

remains of the various life cycles and intellectual development that the Chokwe social

individual moved through. As Redinha read it, one mural composition contained images

from the *sona* image corpus, sketches made by prepubescent children, and all of the

intellectual and societal progression in between (see fig. 29).

Redinha is confronted with two "perfectly distinct" types of drawing within the

murals, as he explains: schematic figurative drawing and geometric "surrounding points"

(*sona*) drawing. He is also presented with the problem that the more sophisticated of the

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[7] Eduardo dos Santos, "Contribuções para o estudo das pictografias e ideogrammas dos Quiocos," *Estudos sobre a etnologia do ultramar português* (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos de etnologia do Ultramar da Junta de Investigações do Ultramar 1961), 17-131.

[8] Redinha also makes passing mention of Baumann's theory that *sona* and the very similar Kolam drawings of south India evidence an ancient relation between the two cultures. Redinha does not seem to buy the idea. See Hermann Baumann, "Lunda. Bei Bauern und aegern Inner-Angola," (Berlin: Wuerfel Verlag, 1934), 223.

two, the *sona*, is also that which was practiced on the ground and to him represents an earlier mode of drawing. That is, not only were the *lusona* popularized, but also their shift in "modalities" accompanied a shift from a nomadic to agriculturalist society.[9] In this configuration, the sand drawing is spontaneous, ephemeral, and "natural," what Bastin refers to in her work as the primitive impulse to decorate and "play." Redinha explains:

> It was on the ground, no doubt, that the Chokwe tribe, still nomadic,
> entertained in the leisurely camps, drawing many of the outlines of what
> would much later, when they became sedentary, be raised onto the walls
> of the houses they inhabited.[10]

Where *sona* show a societal progression, together with the figurative drawings they show an individual intellectual progression. Prepubescent children draw schematic human figures, first without genitalia and, subsequent to puberty, with genitalia. He includes the development of perpective in Chokwe intellectual maturity and their development of the human figure generally.[11]

While he focuses on the changes in medium in the development of *sona*, Redinha does note the skill required in executing *lusona*, mentioning the "large amount of practice of such exercises" in order to learn them all. He traces a development not only in the societal changes evident in *sona* but also in the individual development of a Chokwe person in her/his intellectual development. Before puberty, the child draws human figures with "a head, trunk, and members. The second…besides the head, trunk, and members,

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[9] José Redinha, *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* (Lisbon: Diamang, 1953), 14.
[10] Ibid., 14.
[11] Ibid., 14.

they are marked with a sex, hands and feet, and the attitudes are more developed.[12]

Eventually the child learns the *sona* drawing, the ritualistic and complex corpus taught by

the elders, normally taught only to boys. Redinha does, in this instance, indicate that the

sona is a specialized practice in Chokwe society.

Besides his developmental theories, Redinha does not elaborate on the transitions

between the two artistic modalities—primarily because he can explain neither their

internal logic nor the implications of the *sona* going from a performance-based operation

to a static component of the murals. His analysis most crucially lacks a discussion about

the implications of a bodily performance of the *sona* on the ground versus the application

of the *sona* on walls, baskets, woodwork, tattoos, etc. The lacuna of analysis of

performance in *sona* is part and parcel of the silencing of the Chokwe body. More

precisely, the retraining of the Chokwe body is in his visual logic an integral part of

capitalist rationalism.

Based on the recent analyses of *sona* as a recursive system, we may understand

Redinha's symbology as an intervention that not only re-semanticizes the symbols, but

even more crucially interrupts the recursivity, or the perpetuation, of the entire system.

As such, the societal progression that Redinha notes in his model of *sona*'s development

enacts its demise, or its ultimate irrelevance. This irony of colonial anthropologists who

attempted to save the very art forms they were part of extinguishing has been noted many

times over. What the example of *sona* provides us, however, is a concentrated example

of a logical system hijacked and transformed into an element of informational feedback

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[12] Ibid., 14.

in the colonial system. In fact, the untranslatability of Chokwe art itself was the information fed back to a system—Scientific Colonialism—that was structurally dependent on the on the notion of "otherness."

Mimesis in Style Versus Composition

The notion of a civilizational "other" devoid of subjectivity underlies Redinha's emphasis on symbology. His reading of *Estampa 9A* illustrates how endemic his symbology was in his thinking as he was faced with the issue of composition in the murals. For him the Chokwe's inadequate compositional techniques, as he compared them to those in European art, indicated an untrained eye and an untrained hand. *Estampa 9A* is a composition, as Redinha explains in *Paredes*, put together based on problem solving of the artist. It is not a verisimilar image of nature but an image of "intellectual" realism. For Redinha, the extent of Chokwe creativity is in the novel arrangements of "stock" symbols. To revisit Redinha's description of *Estampa 9A*:

> Exterior painting on the wall border of dwelling, on the right side of the entrance door. Pictorial fantasy of the heavens: the black background represents the dark of night; the white spots show stars, and the circles moons.[13]

It is clear that Redinha describes a composition, especially when he notes that the aggregation of white spots on the right of the image is the artist's attempt to communicate a "profoundly sidereal idea."

But besides giving a description of the lower register of the image, Redinha's

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[13] Ibid., n.p.

description falls short of a comprehensive examination of the composition. His reading of the image as a view of the heavens implies that *Estampa 9A* is a horizontally oriented image, which ignores the upper register of an image that is divided nearly in half. In the literature that he and Bastin published, the chevron shape conventionally denotes the powerful python, however, this symbol is not discussed in his description of *Estampa 9A*. In the absence of the artist to "interpret" this mural for him, what motivated Redinha to mention its sidereal feel? It is unclear from Redinha's text if the entire composition has a narrative significance that lends to the "feel" of the painting.

Further, to what extent does Redinha's interpretation of Chokwe symbology hold up within a composition? Redinha hovers between reading the individual meanings of shapes and figures as self-contained images and their syntactical arrangement. Even while reading the composition of the murals, Redinha shows his fundamental concern with the idea of original models that the artists replicate. Consider another passage from *Paredes*: "Besides the principal *types* [of representations of living beings] just cited, there are also stylized birds, animals, and plants, colorful with the flavor of fantasy."[14] Redinha's words ,"feel" and "flavor," divulge an affective response to the murals. Hardly the outcome of symbols of communication, the images are for him charged with a presence of imagination and subjectivity.

The section of the introduction in which he discusses perspective and landscape techniques of the murals is where he most obviously tries to apply the standards of European painting to the murals. First, he divides them up into two general types:

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[14] Ibid., 11.

decorative and figurative, though he quickly troubles this distinction. The decorative

paintings, he explains,

> are generally geometric. There are friezes with elements that are almost
> always triangular, repeated in a simple manner, also with vertical or
> horizontal lines with repeated figures highlighted with contrasting
> colors…. It is not rare to be interested in apparently abstract designs that
> are in truth representations of villages, streets, fields, and legendary
> places.[15]

Here again, Redinha struggles to define the paintings according to their representational

or decorative function. His utterance of the phrase "in truth" again indicates a desire to

engage in a depth of interpretation, an attempt that is ultimately subsumed within

epistemological violence of Scientific Colonialism.

Redinha's ambivalent criticism of the murals is a significant. The act of art

criticism judges the effectiveness of formal decisions of the artist, which presupposes the

existence of artistic subjectivity. In his analysis of landscape in the paintings, Redinha

reveals his belief in the superiority of European pictorial mimesis, the optically accurate

representation of nature. Redinha's overt judgment of Chokwe painting is striking in the

line it draws between European and Chokwe subjectivity. He is very clear about his

opinion of whether the paintings are successful in their representational strategies. Most

paintings are not successful in their imitation of nature, we read. In one particular

passage, he refers to the depth perception of the landscape images as having a "forced

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[15] Ibid., 11.

disposition, boring, anti-natural, seeming that everything is in the foreground…."[16] He

continues, "[m]oreover, the poor plastic interpretation of the landscape is not a surprise, it

is a rule among primitive peoples. Let us not forget that European art only very lately

achieved the fullness of this interpretation, from the time of Romanticism."[17] Here,

verisimilitude is not only civilizationally superior to so-called intellectual realism, but lies

on a sliding developmental scale. Thus, while the Chokwe were "other" civilizationally,

in the appropriation, they became a version of the Portuguese, a bridge between their

subjectivity and the "real" external world.

Hence the Chokwe status as an "in between" art form, which for him indicates the

liminal status of the Chokwe society, between primitive and modern. *Estampa 9A*

provides an example of a composition that Redinha might have been referring to as being

an "intermediary" between landscape and topographical drawing, between verisimilitude

and intellectual realism.[18] If the picture is vertically oriented, the image reads as though

it were a schematic landscape drawing with the vanishing point as roughly the midpoint

of the picture, where the black field meets the rust-red field below the chevron line (see

fig. 30). The chevron line, then, could describe the profile of a mountain range,

especially given the slightly darker color of rust-red above the line. Given the profile

view of the dog in the lower register of the painting, we could understand this as a fairly

uniformly vertically oriented picture.

There are, however, two major elements of the picture that disturb its vertical

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[16] Ibid., 12.

[17] Ibid., 12.

[18] Ibid., 11.

orientation. First, if Redinha is correct that the white marks indicate stars and the discs moons, then that portion of the picture is horizontally oriented. However, they appear on the bottom register of the image, underneath the chevron line. The second compositional problem that the picture presents is the white upside-down triangle above the chevron line. This stark geometric shape disturbs any attempt to read the chevron line as simply a contour of a mountain range. Instead, it emphasizes the line itself, against the possibility of it becoming an illusionary device. There are, then, two major disturbances to this image as a vertically-oriented landscape: one is due to the symbolic function of the markings in the lower register—the "stars" and "moons"—and the other a compositional decision. Indeed, the emphasis given to the chevron line itself creates a both/and image, a symbol of a python and a contour line that represents a mountain range. In fact, this multiplicity of functions for each formal element well illustrates Redinha's understanding of a multi-faceted approach to representation by the Chokwe artists. It indicates a flexibility created by the artist wherein each element simultaneously functions semantically and syntactically.

For Redinha, however, this skewing of perspective indicates a problem in the Chokwe's skills of observation and contemplative aptitude. Embedded in his statement, "the treatment [of landscape] is almost always intellectual, not visual,"[19] is his judgment of the Chokwe mural compositions according to Enlightenment distinction between the individual's internal world and the external world of objects and matter. For him, the Chokwe artist had not yet experienced this internal subjective realization, which is then

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[19] Ibid., 11.

honed by the artist to a sophisticated practice of mimetic verisimilitude. Instead, Redinha

explains, they still practiced a mimesis that was at base imitative, collective, and only

semi-rational. The Chokwe artist's intellect was not yet developed as a perceiving mind,

but still largely perpetuated symbols and ideas with scant regard to correct observation.

By 1953, Paul Cezanne, Pablo Picasso, and other modern artists globally had long

since challenged this very Enlightenment idea of verisimilitude using some of the same

techniques that Redinha observes in the murals: they "painted the two sides [of an object]

towards the viewer, linking them together, so as to not deny the wholeness of the single

object."[20] However Redinha calls this style of representation "a mental process of pure

convention," not nearly the accepted "genius" assigned to Picasso, a symbol of the avant-

garde who broke with European conventions of mimesis. Additionally, Redinha's artistic

training was in Portugal, which was yet resistant to avant-garde formalism. The arts

establishment, especially under Salazar's Catholic Social Order, preferred figurative and

religious painting to the exclusion of any contemporaneous avant-garde movements in its

neighboring countries. Portuguese painter Joaquim Rodrigo, whose work I discuss in the

next chapter, went largely unnoticed as he used the Chokwe pictograms to study the same

techniques of perception and perspective as did the European avant-garde.

Even within the European establishment, Picasso had to demonstrate competence in

conventions of mimesis in order to be a part of Panofsky's genealogy of singular artistic

subjectivity that began with European Baroque artists. Even though the avant-garde was

defined by an overt break from traditional genres of landscape and portraiture, those

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[20] Ibid., 11.

artists had, so to speak, still phased through it: their observational skills and thus subjectivity had been proven. Moreover, Picasso's and Georges Braque's cubism, in particular, was immediately read by critics to be a sophisticated philosophical exposition of volumetric space.   It was part of a genealogy of form itself in dialogue with European science of perception and linguistics.

For Redinha, the Chokwe's manipulation of "reality" outside of the self was in fact not a manipulation of perception, much less a research of form. That would imply a command over and progression beyond representational techniques. Redinha had already defined Chokwe mimetic practices in image making as a social activity. *Sona* was not a bodily act of doing *and* knowing—a practice of drawing that allowed for innovative iterations of a formula. For Redinha, it was not that the body was not involved with art making or social reproduction. Rather, it was that the presence of the body was evidence of baseness, the opposite pole to genius.

In their encounter with the Portuguese, the Chokwe engaged in the appropriation of Portuguese visual culture. In his cross-cultural analysis of mimesis in Africa, Fritz Kramer explains that the Chokwe, like other African societies, did not *necessarily* value imitative representations of their "others" such as spirits, ancestors, foreigners, or nature. Kramer explains that mimetic acts increased as contact with the Portuguese increased, because they were *so* different. In these instances he cites Chokwe representations of the Portuguese in *yimbali* figures, *katoyo* masks, and *cindele* figures.[21] One of Redinha's photographs of Chokwe murals shows a Portuguese flag incorporated into the design on

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[21] Fritz Kramer, *The Red Fez* (London: Verso, 1993), 184-185.

the wall. Redinha mentions the Chokwe representation of the Portuguese coin, an instance of mimesis that disturbs him, perhaps due in part to his being seen.

In Kramer's comparison of sub-Saharan cultures, he explains that mimesis does not exist in homogenous societies, but rather in cases of contact where the portrayer is different than the portrayed. He argues that in mimesis, "one conforms with something one is not and also should not be. Hence a generally recognized difference of some sort between the portrayer and the portrayed is an absolute prerequisite for mimetic behavior."[22] Kramer's work establishes and reinforces the notion of difference and otherness in the process of mimesis in the contact between Chokwe and the Portuguese, predominantly. What is less obvious but more salient to the present discussion is the historical presence of violence in the formation of Chokwe art—both by the Chokwe as they expanded regionally and, subsequently, by the international community as they expanded onto the Chokwe.

Thus, to revisit Boris Wastiau's contention that the majority of Chokwe art in collections represents the Chokwe colonial style, we understand the consistent presence of violence and desire in the formation of Chokwe art. Where Nuno Porto sees that Chokwe "art" was a fundamentally new category set forth by Marie-Louise Bastin, the important constant within both colonial enterprises, Portuguese and Chokwe, is appropriation itself, the violence and desire that shapes the action.[23] In fact, the Chokwe actively attempted to gain control over the Portuguese, however unsuccessfully they were

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[22] Ibid., 250.
[23] My discussion here draws from René Girard's writings on mimetic desire and the perpetuation of violence within the process of mimesis. See *Violence and the Sacred* (London: Continuum, 2005).

in the end. Kramer describes the particularly compelling case of the *Hamba wa nzambi* figure (fig. 31), which, according to him, mimics the religious icon paintings of the Portuguese. Importantly, he does not emphasize a difference in representing the Portuguese body, for instance the Portuguese couple with identifiable clothing and accoutrements, and Portuguese *art*. What the *Mahamba a yimbali* sculpture proves is that the Chokwe were aware that the Portuguese worked from an artistic hermeneutic that was different from their own.   In this sculpture, the Chokwe artist imitates Portuguese that logical system. It both uses and makes strange the convention of the frame, the physical apparatus that sets the image apart from the "real" world, ironically the conceptual frame that accompanied untold physical violence on the Chokwe population.

Extending Kramer's discussion to the ways in which symbols are acquired within a closed societal system, say from father to son, Gebauer and Wulf explain "the inclusion of others introduces power, if only in symbolic terms, into one's own personal world, into the interpretive and perspectival modes developed there."[24] Relational network are at the base of the *sona* practice. In large part the practice exists to assimilate youngsters into Chokwe society*Sona* is the fusion of doing and knowing that allowed for the individual Chokwe to both encounter the symbolic world and to assimilate it to the extent that they could manipulate it. By silencing that bodily action in his analysis, Redinha silences the process of Chokwe worlding through *sona*. The colonial enterprise was not comfortable with the native imitating their behavior or symbolic world, but beyond that they could not abide the native assimilating it to the point that it represented a returned gaze.

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[24] Gebauer and Wulf, *Mimesis: Culture—Art—Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 3.

Further, I would suggest that it is Redinha's ideologically influenced refusal to recognize Chokwe logic—the complex relationship between bodily performance and genius—that limits his ability to entirely represent their subjectivity. This gap in understanding in turn threatens his identity as an apt scientist/observer. In at least one case he was faced with his limited knowledge of Chokwe culture. Mary D. Leaky records an episode from her visit to Redinha at Dundo in which he dismisses the existence of a string game that she had been researching.[25] She recalls that Redinha found it inconceivable that he would not be privy to ever see a practice of "his people" that he had been living among for years. She was able to prove him wrong, as the workers in his own house practiced these string games and purposefully kept them secret from him. Along with this episode, his signature in *Paredes* represents the extremely tenuous contours of a refusal on his part to recognize the Chokwe as anything beyond an object of study.

What the *Hamba wa nzambi* also teaches us is the profound awareness of the mechanisms of Portuguese control over symbolic capital. Against Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J.D. Wacquant's argument that symbolic capital depends on a mutual recognition (agreement over) power relationships, we can look at countless other scholars of colonialism who point to the ambiguities of that recognition of power. In the case of the Chokwe, Todd Cleveland has found in his extensive interviews of former Diamang employees that the Chokwe maintained control over their symbolic capital when they were off the clock.[26] Other acts of resistance such as smuggling diamonds from Diamang's concessions coincided with symbolic resistance. That is, within the chaotic

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[25] M.D. Leaky, *Some String Figures from North East Angola* (Pasadena: Munger Africana Library, 1981), 10.
[26] Cleveland, ibid.

situation of power struggles in Lunda North, the moments I have described in the realm

of signification are "at the intersection of both text-appropriating and world-appropriating

activities…."[27] As we read in the last chapter, Diamang's world appropriation, like much

of colonialism, involved an objectification that was turned against the Chokwe.

Modernism and Bodily Alienation

Redinha was committed to the separation of constant form and bodily production,

or genius, in Chokwe art. Even performances in the native village of the Dundo were

formalized as cultural heritage, identical in structure and form. Within that realm Redinha

had the power to enact a situation in Chokwe art where the Chokwe body was silenced as

the site of "genius" and becomes rationalized along with their labor. His signature

indicates a hermeneutic practice that transforms Chokwe social information from a

system to a machine—not recursive but repetitive. It also points to his stewardship over

the Dundo Museum and its workshop that produced Chokwe objects to be given or sold

to visitors of the company compound. It was at the Dundo generally where Chokwe

artists copied the prototypes that Redinha set forth, the Chokwe ethnic "style."

The hourly employee faithfully copied the authentic specimens of the Dundo

collection (see fig. 32). At least officially, art production has little to do with the artists'

perpetuation of a symbolic or visual system, an interest in sameness. Rather, it was

Diamang's insistence on the artists' (re)producing difference as such, after its form was

identified. As Hal Foster reminds us, "…the rarefying of optical effects and the

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[27] Robert Weimann, "Text, Author-Function, and Appropriation in Modern Narrative: Toward a Sociology of Representation," *Critical Inquiry* (Spring 1988), 433.

fetishizing of visual signifiers are not foreign to capitalist spectacle; they are fundamental to it."[28] Taken all together, the Cultural Publications, Dundo Museum, photographs, and copies of sculptures make up Chokwe ethnic identity.

The mechanization of Chokwe art and its emphasis on opticality was the condition of modernism—the rationalization of art, society, and body. Armstrong states "[t]he clarification of the body involves the rendering-conscious of states of interiority, or of those limit-phenomena…in the name of a scientific aesthetic."[29] Diamang's cultural initiatives dovetailed with the education initiatives in that they identified and aimed to control those limit-phenomena in Chokwe "life." That regulation and clarification of the body involved determining how form related to the collective or individual subconscious, how to control for the most uncontrollable element of Chokwe life. Once determined, or really constructed, that now conscious element of form—the now manifest sign of the mind—is then taught to the Chokwe along with "proper" hygiene, work ethic, singing, sport, etc. In the cases where modern rationalism was implemented, the modern condition divided labor of all kinds, mental and physical. The body is still very much present—not dissolved, but dislocated and devalued, especially in those geographical sites of extraction of raw materials such as diamonds.

Niklas Luhmann further explains that formal analysis is, quite simply, a marking of space, a distinction created between chaos and order. Redinha observed and marked form within Chokwe "culture" seen in his and Bastin's charts and analyses in various

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[28] Hal Foster, "The Archive Without Museums" *October* (Summer 1996), 107.

[29] Tim Armstrong, *Modernism, Technology, and the Body* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 5.

texts. Luhmann argues that observation is not only an activity of the beholder but subsequently includes the artist him or herself: "Focusing on the observing *operation*, one recognizes that artist and viewer are both engaged in judgment, albeit in different ways, at different times, in different operational sequences, and perhaps with different criteria. We are always dealing with a historical process that consists of operations…"[30] Again Ernesto Vilhena's response to Redinha's *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* is telling: "In truth, the soul of the Black is a mirror…rational."[31] Vilhena in this moment *observes* the Chokwe in a mode similar to his own, as operating within the same system in which the noblest function of the body is in the act of perception, thought, and communication. More importantly, his metaphor of the mirror also implies a return action, one in which the Chokwe mirror recognize the Portuguese. Along with the civilizing mission of cleansing the Chokwe body with soap and work, Vilhena sought to teach a proper consciousness of the "self," the one that produces the art and communicates within a specific philosophical system—consciousness that the Portuguese had already discovered. It therefore was not paradoxical for someone like José Osório de Oliveira to claim that Diamang's activities "[helped] the Negro peoples gain what they lacked: the conscience of a common soul."[32]

The Dundo Museum was established in part to teach and thus stand intellectually apart from the artifacts of their bodily production, to make them "realize" the superiority of the Portuguese system of thought. To the extent that within the museum compound

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[30] Niklas Luhmann, *Art as a Social System* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 43.

[31] Ernesto de Vilhena, Letter of Receipt of *Paredes and Pinturas,* October 7, 1953.

[32] Museu do Dundo, *Flagrantes da Vida da Lunda* (Lisboa: Companhia de Diamantes de Angola, 1958), 42.

Chokwe artists imitated the visual characteristics of the established corpus, the system took hold. What Redinha did not account for, naturally, was Chokwe resistance to this regime, as was noted in Leaky's book on string figures of the Chokwe and the research on Chokwe resistance to Diamang by Todd Cleveland.[33] However, as propaganda, the Diamang publications and scholarship had to present themselves as complete. If it was to be used to justify a radical re-education of the Chokwe, it had to present clarity of its own form along with the clarity of Chokwe form in their art. The publications had to demonstrate a sound science to be disseminated, particularly to the Chokwe themselves.

In one episode of this re-education, Jóse Redinha writes of a *soba*, Sangime from Chiumbe, from whom the museum acquired a decorated chair.[34] The chair had belonged to his father and uncle and was decorated with proverbs, jokes, and images. In the years after the acquisition, the *soba* regularly came to visit the chair in the ethnographic collection room of the museum. After time, the museum staff noticed that the *soba* spoke to the chair each time he came. Redinha writes that it was quite a surprise to them, that the *soba* came to visit "not to properly *see* the chair, but to speak to it…"[35] After puzzling about the status of the chair as a cultural object or functional object, Redinha sides with its functional status for the *soba*, concluding, "This is also a fact in perfect agreement with the manner of animistic belief."[36]

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[33] Todd Cleveland, *Rock Solid: African Laborers on the Diamond Mines of the* Companhia de Diamantes de Angola *(Diamang), 1917-1975* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2008).

[34] Jóse Redinha, *Album Etnográfico*, 11.

[35] Ibid., 11 (Italics mine).

[36] Ibid., 11.

In this episode we see two philosophies of the chair's mediative function. What the chair contained or mediated for the *soba* was based on a logic of the chair as performing an operation for him, a mediation with the dead based on his proximity to the chair. For Redinha, the chair is supposed to be something visual and mental in which to apprehend meaning *as such*, as a symbol of Chokwe society. Similarly, the *soba*'s discussion with the chair was seen as a symptom of animism. In other words, for Redinha, the civilizational gap between the Chokwe and the Portuguese is figured in the fact that the chair has a function as opposed to its proper status as a cultural object for the eyes, an object for consideration. Redinha established the Dundo Museum with this express educational purpose in mind (see fig. 33). As Redinha believed that the *soba*'s actions were indicative of animistic belief generally, his focus was not on Chokwe pictorial theory.

This corporeal control over the Chokwe and the accompanying downplay of individual artists's formalist development would often find its fruition in the relationship between craftsmanship and labor in the colonies. Redinha hired craftsmen to work in the company compound and produce copies of "authentic" Chokwe sculpture and murals for foreign visitors. Publications such as *Flagrantes* frequently picture Chokwe sculpture with an anonymous Chokwe artist in the act of making it. Unconcerned with his self-presentation, the Chokwe artist is one with his materials, his activity, and the outdoor studio. The artist is in his "natural" environment, his productivity facilitated by Diamang (see fig. 34).

Concerned Europeans all over the African colonies sought to preserve and perpetuate ethnic styles, and established variously structured colonial workshops. To

name just a few, there were Ulli and Georgina Beier in Nigeria, Frank McEwen in Rhodesia, and Pierre Romain-Desfossés in the Belgian Congo.[37] The predominant working philosophy of colonial workshops was that the African must not be taught any particular art skills, lest they risk contamination of their innate ability. Rather, African artistic creativity was a natural fact that could only be facilitated by the guidance of the Western interlocutor. Creativity was seen as a "natural" fact. Perpetuation of creativity, in the language of these workshop directors, was an ethical project of cultural preservation.

"Matter"

The basic conflict within Redinha's activity of formulating Chokwe art is the specter of the distinction made in traditional art history between form and matter. If meaning animates form, or lies behind its veil, in Western philosophy matter is in a labile state until form makes it something. From Aristotle, we have the phrase, "what desires the form is matter, as the female desires the male."[38] From Gilberto Freyre, we have the relationship he struck between the Portuguese man and the native woman in the phrase "[t]he European lept ashore only to slide into naked Indian women…."[39] On the form/matter distinction in origins of art philosophy, Martin Heidegger explains that "thingness" derives from and sustains the separation between us and whatever we have

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[37] For a general introduction to colonial workshops see Sidney L. Kasfir, "Transforming the Workshop" in *Contemporary African Art* (New York: Thames & Hudson: 1999). See also Kasfir and Förster's forthcoming book *Rethinking the Workshop: African Art and Agency*.

[38] Artistotle, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1966), 235.

[39] Luís Madureira, "Tropical Sex Fantasies." *Cultural Critique* 28 (Autumn 1994), 164.

conceived of as matter.[40] Far from being a natural or innocuous distinction, Heidegger

explains,

> if form is correlated with the rational and matter with the irrational; if the
> rational is taken to be the logical and the irrational the alogical; if in
> addition the subject-object relation is coupled with the conceptual pair
> form-matter; then representation has at its command a conceptual
> machinery that nothing is capable of withstanding.[41]

In its most crass and exaggerated form, then, the activity of art making involves the

purposeful distinction between form and material, which is nothing less than the subject-

object distinction. In the case of colonial ethnic formations that began rather with the

distinction made between civilizational subjects and objects.   If we agree with Heidegger

that this matter weighs on us from within the conceived form itself, the work of art as

with anthropology contains this relationship itself.

Consider this passage from a catalogue of Angolan crafts published by the

Instituto do Trabalho, Previdência, e Acção Social [Institute of Social Work, Security,

and Action]: "Anthropomorphic sculpture is deeply rooted in the cultural past of

practically every Angolan ethnic group, having even flourished, at one time, in many

schools, which have since disappeared. A few museums keep their last specimens. It's

[sic] actual forms, although quite naturally suffering in many cases the influence of the

West [sic] European Civilization brought in by the Portuguese, are still, in their aesthetic

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[40] Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art." In *Basic Writings : from Being and Time (1927) to The Task of Thinking (1964)* (London: Routledge, 1978), 156.
[41] Ibid., 158.

sense and inate [sic] hand-work ability, very interesting to look at."[42] Within the very definition of form is already assumed ethnic coherence as well as the native hand; implied is the audience/observer. Angolan craftsman whose artworks are borne from an innate *bodily* ability. Craft and body, therefore, are synonymous—an assertion of biopower conceptually potent enough to operate within a hermeneutic where the native body is exploitable object.

Nature figured in the idea that the "primitive" man is one with nature, rooted in the body, rooted in the landscape. Everything about Chokwe "life"—thoughts, rituals, life cycles, environment, etc.— was conflated into this picture that Redinha painted and signed. Redinha is the *I*, the subjective construction. Thus while the two-dimensional murals were distinct from the usual emphasis on wood, raffia, and the body as the typical media of African art, the conceptualization of Chokwe as matter allowed them to collapse within the primitive status of Chokwe art.

Redinha's Signature and Mimesis

While scholars have noted the racism in the attempt to preserve cultural purity in native populations, a direct link is yet to be made among scholars's mimetic acts, the technologies that produced that knowledge, and ethnic preservation. This is in part because they miss the initial link between preservation and observation. Redinha's paintings themselves obey a strict set of parameters in their format. They are all uniform in their dimensions, both individually and in their syntax within the book. The scale of

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[42] Instituto do Trabalho, Previdência, e Acção Social, *Artesanato de Angola Catálogo IV* (Luanda, 1972), XVII.

proportion between mural and book varies. Scale is adapted to the mechanical format of the book. We are also left to wonder whether the rectangular background and background color occurred on the murals or whether he included it for ambience and clarity of the pictographic elements, especially given his concern in the museum for aesthetic balance between the dark three-dimensional objects and the colorful vibrancy of the Chokwe wall murals.

The "Redinha" signed at the bottom of each of his prints—and he signed all of his drawings, from maps to masks—indicate the condition of art and subjectivity explained by Adorno in his *Aesthetic Theory*.[43] Adorno argues that the work of art will always fail in its attempt to demonstrate semblance because art, as art, will always refer to itself despite its attempts to represent the objective world. Redinha's signature, a convention of art, holds within it the dialectic of semblance and expression, or truth and fiction. Instead of art successfully performing either of these two functions, Adorno asserted, art is self-identical. It is striking that Redinha should have even acknowledged his own expression in the sphere of science, particularly in Scientific Colonialism. Regardless, Redinha's signature has gifted us an analytical tool, despite the dangers of it being used reductively, to interrogate the anthropological enterprise and its role in visual modernism.

To return to the "Lunda Tchokwe" project's claim that Redinha appropriated Chokwe artistic agency, his signature represents mimesis in its obedience to the Western tradition of witness and authorial voice. In terms of his administrative role, it indicates a more aggressive appropriation of Chokwe subjectivity. Per Adorno, it is possible to

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[43] Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

understand that he was at the same time constrained by and empowered through the act of producing *Paredes*. In his own "artistic" practice of representing nature, in this case the Chokwe, his bodily practice is limited to optical production and the strict format of his medium. In other words, Redinha's body was trained to perform a hand-to-eye exercise easily adaptable to the mass-production and distribution of a book.

These constraints on Redinha's "artistic" output are compounded by his subscription to the logic of anthropology, wherein subjectivity (on both ends of the study) is suppressed in the name of representing "truth." Within the materially reproduced book and the discipline, medium takes precedence over the overt use of images for social reproduction. To push Adorno's concern with the nature of art itself into the colonial context, the relationship between "what is represented and what is representing" includes Diamang's entire mode of production, what was discussed in the previous chapter. Weimann further argues that as the modern author subscribes to the mode of his/her production, "there is very little that *he or she can make on his or her own*" (emphasis his).[44] Rather than his signature as a bodily gesture of genius, it is an indicator of his own limitations in a strict discipline. In the sense that the Chokwe were matter formed, at least in part, by their perpetuating Chokwe style within the Dundo workshop, the intersection of bodily and symbolic control is the most obvious. The Chokwe increasingly became strangers in their own land, their bodies and minds estranged from their "own" art.

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[44] Weimann, 434.

Chapter Four

Viteix and the Chokwe Symbols After Independence

Construção Civil (1971)
Antonio Cardoso

Não foi prever em vão tanto sonhar
Como nunca ficou só reduzido
A palavras, o quanto foi vivido:
Dos sonhos e actos meço o caminhar

E das palavras, rumo a fabricar...
Nem é por mim que luto repartido,
Mas também estarei no prometido
Futuro que nos há-de realizar...

Se sonho, falo, avanço, o muito, o pouco,
Feito passos da vida em tom agudo,
Foi argamassa e pedra no cabouco

Duma casa inventada para escudo,
Tendo como ético tom... só rebouco
Desta sanguínea cor que pus em tudo!...

Many Angolan artists recognized the violence involved in the reproduction of

Chokwe visual symbols and sought reparations to that violence through art making.

Walter Benjamin's analysis of art in a state of emergency applies to cultural production at

this time, as artists were intimately involved with the revolution and desired to bring

about a state of emergency in which to claim their "Angolan" heritage. Angolan art was

at the time of independence in 1975 produced in a state of emergency, shaped by a

response to epistemological and physical violence. This art in fact took advantage of the

crisis of signification in Angola and sought to reinstate that feedback loop interrupted by

Portuguese anthropology.   Thus nationalist artists used Chokwe symbols, including those

derived from *sona*, as visual symbols of "Angola." Further, the most effective of this art

attended to Chokwe formal logic as a feedback system, which they saw as indicating

nothing less than a functional civil society. At the same time, within the medium of

painting the Chokwe symbols could be expressive of immanent placelessness that

attended to a deep mourning, a feeling expressed by the Portuguese word *saudade*.

Therefore, it is important to distinguish within these paintings ethnic "symbols" and

floating signifiers.   For instance, in the writing and art of Vitor Manual Teixeira (1940-

1993), or his artist name "Viteix," the pictograms are symbols, which is their

revolutionary aspect. Symbols negotiate a continued consensus among the masses. For

Viteix, the pictograms and the murals generally were not only "pre-colonial," but also

more aggressively anti-illusionary and anti-bourgeois. Additionally, and sometimes in

the same painting, the symbols float formally detached within expressive scenes of bodily

distress that described the violence of contemporary Angola.

After Independence, ethnic identity became an object of desire for the competing

MPLA and UNITA, which was many times claimed through violence. The image of the

Chokwe during this time became an important piece of political propaganda for the

MPLA in their quest to consolidate power after they declared Independence. Pictures of

Chokwe masks and pictograms decorated the covers of many MPLA cultural

publications. The Dundo Museum collection was brought to Luanda and formed the

basis of the new National Museum of Ethnography.   Prominent post-independent artists

used Chokwe motifs and mask images in their paintings. Given the preponderance of

Chokwe sculpture in collections worldwide, it was an important corpus of work over

which the MPLA would claim stewardship. I would also suggest that given the Chokwe

support for the opposing UNITA during this period, it was an important ethnic identity

for both factions to claim as "Angolan."

Under the Marxist-Leninist government, cultural officials saw art as being propelled by the material condition of the people. They used the classic Marxist dialectic between the superstructure and the material infrastructure in theorizing the place of the cultural production. A strong contingent of artists opened up the form of the pictogram generally for interpretation through debate in journals, conferences, and in their work itself, examining the political conditions under which images and symbols are defined. Recognizing that symbolism itself was in a state of emergency, Viteix's Marxist study examined political agency as coterminous with artistic agency. Agency will again be an undercurrent in this chapter, specifically the MPLA's rhetoric of reclaiming agency, artistic or political, in post-colonial Angola. Their strong language again revealed the gap between utopian socialism and an artistic practice that was increasingly threatened by the Angolan civil war.

The postcolonial condition in Angola contained ruptures and continuities with the condition of Portuguese colonialism, not the least of which was the continued violence in Angola as they immediately transitioned from an independence war to a civil war. Many Independence-era artists chose to continue the rhetoric of revolution, transferring the enemy from the Portuguese to the "puppets" of Portugal, the enemies within the MPLA and UNITA. The Chokwe found little improvement after Independence. On the contrary, conditions quickly declined. The area became a hotbed of violence as UNITA and the MPLA fought for control over the diamond fields. In terms of the typology and opticality of Chokwe art, Independence art seamlessly transferred the visual forms from anthropology books to their canvases.

This chapter begins by describing the moment of Independence and the new Angolan state under the Marxist-Leninist MPLA. The MPLA's efforts to construct a cultural program were in creative tension with the notion of *Angolanidade*, a cultural movement of the 20th century rooted in *creolité* and a decentralized Angolan culture. I will then examine Vitor Manuel Teixeira's *Theory and Practice of Angolan Plastic Art* (1983)*,* the seminal text of post-colonial Angolan art. It begins with a detailed overview of art in Angola and then provides a blueprint of how Angolan artists should "return" to Angolan art, which included celebrating its heterogeneity. *Theory and Practice* argues that the unity within the geographical borders of Angola is based on both stylistic and logical affinities. I will then examine his methodology in terms of "Afrocommunism" and the MPLA party line concerning cultural nationalism. By then the MPLA considered itself the only caretaker of Angolan culture. That bias, a key element of the civil war, is an element of *Theory and Practice* and haunts Teixeira's hope for the total unity of the masses.

The third part of the chapter will focus on Teixeira's art, produced under his artist name "Viteix." In his work, he uses the Chokwe pictograms in a conscious nod to formalism itself, implicitly arguing that the artist must find socially functional methods of signification. By using the pictograms in a grid that outlines the parameters of his canvases, Viteix interrogates the very surface onto which he inscribes meaning. His reflexive account of the Chokwe symbol is even more potent given his knowledge of the fragility of the arts infrastructure in Angola, the flow of material that is taken for granted in most discourse about art. Viteix links formal and material elements of art in his writing and his painting. His art of the 1980s is an "intraface" of meaning and structure.

It contains textual and paratextual registers that draw attention to the canvas itself and the specificities of its format.

The Paradox of Angolan Socialism

Much of what I describe in this chapter is the negotiation Angolan nationalist artists made between African identity and scientific socialism. The 1979 MPLA Museum Manual states that after independence, museums must always improve themselves, "to be assessed by dialectical materialism, in the experience of our People and in Universal concert of progressive culture."[1] This statement contains the descriptive and prescriptive functions of scientific socialism. The museum was to be a laboratory through which to observe the processes of change and progression to new and better standard of living for Angolans.

In proposals for a new museum system found in official documents, the MPLA names the inhabitants of the hinterlands as the People. The MPLA publications attempt to circumscribe them through educational programs and a pledge of respect for their "cultures." The publications explain that in order for this to succeed, officials in Luanda must work in concert with the various local chiefs and power structures. The MPLA's attempt to culturally integrate rural Angolans coincided with the historical struggle to gain control over all of the sectors of Angolan society, including agriculture, mining, industry, and so oo. The urgent need to unify Angola in the face of serious fracture caused the MPLA to shift from the revolutionary side of Marxism-Leninism to the implementation of "scientific socialism" in the hopes of having a state system that could

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[1] Departmento Nacional de Museus e Monumentos, "Manual de Museologia," (Luanda: Instituto Angolano do Livro, 1979), n.p.

transcend divisions of race, ethnicity, tribe, ideology, etc.

The first president of Angola, Agostinho Neto, declared independence on 11 November 1975, "in the name of the Angolan people, the Central Committee of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola [MPLA]."[2] He conflated the Angolan people and the MPLA while also indicating the tenuousness of the MPLA's ascendancy to power and the unity of Angola, as he referred to the "struggle we are still waging against the lackeys of imperialism." Without naming the organization he spoke of out of a stated respect for the occasion, Neto referred to MPLA internal enemies, as well as UNITA, which was at the time increasingly making military pacts with the Portuguese army in the hinterlands. The MPLA had been already fighting a civil war with the FNLA and UNITA. William Minter explains that by the late 1960s "UNITA clashes with the MPLA were at least as common as its confrontations with Portuguese troops."[3] The MPLA's declaration of victory, not only over the Portuguese but also over opposing resistance factions, was at best fragile.

The definition, idealization, and subsequent instrumentalization of the peasantry became characteristic of the ideological battle among the anti-colonial factions. Under the MPLA's "scientific socialism," the peasants were the rural Angolans who had been forced to labor under colonialism alongside the urban "proletariat" in Luanda, Benguela, and other cities. Both the FNLA and UNITA countered that the MPLA did not represent the "true" peasant masses, those ethnic groups in northern and southern Angola. UNITA

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[2] Agostinho Neto, "The Proclamation of Independence," Speech given on 11 November 1975 in Luanda, Angola.

[3] William Minter, *Operation Timber: Pages from the Savimbi Dossier* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1988),13.

characterized the MPLA as an urban party of elite and upper class privileged Angolans who were educated abroad and therefore had no connection to "real" Angolans. UNITA's bifurcation of Angolans was in itself an attempt to claim the hinterlands.

The Chokwe in "the Lundas," that is Lunda North and Lunda South, provide an excellent example of the complexity resulting from the competing presence of Portuguese, Diamang, and local authorities. In Chapter Two's analysis of *Flagrantes*, we read of Diamang's attempts to characterize the local Chokwe population in terms of their peaceful acceptance of Diamang's political prominence and the continuance of the customary power of the *sobas*. Lurking just to the side of that propaganda was an uneven transmutation of the Chokwe population through the diamond industry. Although a large portion of the Chokwe became proletarianized under wage labor with Diamang, another portion remained subsistence farmers. That is not to mention the forced labor that persisted after the abolition of slavery in Angola's hinterlands. It required a large amount of generalization to term the Chokwe in the Lundas "peasants."

In the 1970s, the Chokwe became politically divided between those who had urban contact and those who lived in Lunda South (fig. 35). The former generally supported the MPLA and the latter, UNITA. In the 1980s the situation became even more chaotic for the Chokwe as large numbers were driven into neighboring Zaire due to UNITA's violent capture of diamond fields. Mahmood Mamdani explains, "the nature of conflict between ethnic groups in the larger polity is difficult to grasp unless we relate it to the conflict within a tribe."[4] The common colonial method of controlling populations through

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[4] Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 183.

customary law both homogenized custom and pitted one against another. Therefore

tribalism cannot only be described by interethnic conflict, Mamdani argues, but must also

be understood as intraethnic conflict.

The case of the Chokwe demonstrates the pervasiveness of the civil war. And as in

the case of Diamang, which attempted to reify the Chokwe under its conceptual

condition, the MPLA conceived of the Chokwe and other groups as stable "nationalities"

that coexisted under a multi-ethnic rational—and therefore neutral—state. As incomplete

as Portuguese colonial institutionalized segregation was, the MPLA's institutionalized

unity was even weaker. Their socialist policies and processes of transition from colonial

rule to democracy were characteristic of what Lenin warned of when socialism is

imposed from the top down. Of ideological posturing, he cautioned, "a mere change of

signboards is harmful and dangerous."[5]

For instance, the MPLA's plan to nationalize the diamond industry was part of a

leveling of conditions in Angola, purportedly regardless of class, race, ethnicity, etc. The

education program aimed to raise awareness of the continuing struggle for democracy

among workers and rural agriculturalists alike. Through their plans of land redistribution,

agriculturalists would share the standard of living of wage laborers. Without "peasant"

cooperation in the Lundas, however, institutionalized socialism could only be imposed by

coercion, as it increasingly was. Additionally, UNITA's operations in the Lundas

encouraged an informal economy of diamond mining that was buttressed by violence and

the taxation of individual miners. For the Chokwe, the MPLA failed to effectively

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[5] Lenin quoted in Galia Golan, The 'Vanguard Party' Controversy," *Soviet Studies* 39:4 (October 1987), 601.

integrate them after their initial overtures in the late seventies.[6] The Lundas would

become the hotbed of the Angolan War and the Cold War generally, the territory

consistently in the heat of battle over the diamond fields.

The Chokwe situation under the MPLA confirms Adrian Leftwich's conclusion that

there can be no socialist path to socialism.[7] Speaking of scholars who studied the failure

of socialist projects in Africa, Leftwich explains that "[j]ust as had occurred in Eastern

Europe, it came to be thought that there was a socialist path to socialism in the Third

World, simply because one willed it, and that socialist development was somehow the

same as the development of socialism."[8] For rural agriculturalists, one segment of the

Chokwe population, socialist ideology meant little to occupants of family farms that the

MPLA claimed as "state-owned." Instead their status as the peasant population of the

socialist Angola envisioned by the MPLA was all but obliterated as UNITA severed

roads, railways, communication, and other means of contact between the rural and urban

areas. Similarly, the socialist anti-imperialist ethos quickly eroded as all factions accepted

international money to fuel the civil war.

MPLA Cultural Initiatives

Unlike other post-colonial African nations who kept peaceful relations with their

former colonial powers, MPLA official had little desire to maintain any ties to Portugal.

Independence was ugly and violent for the Portuguese colonies. Upon their exit from the

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[6] Tony Hodges offers an example of Chokwe discontent in a decision by Endiama to open a health clinic for its employees in Luanda, while abandoning all efforts to provide the same services in the Lundas

[7] Adrian Leftwich, "Is there a Socialist Path to Socialism?" *Third World Quarterly* 13:1 (1992).

[8] Ibid., 33.

country, Portuguese nationals sabotaged every sector of Angolan infrastructure. Instead of identifying with the Portuguese metropole, throughout the seventies and eighties Angolan artists and writers were increasingly influenced by their ideological counterparts in Cuba, the USSR, and East Germany. Despite their strong linguistic ties with Guinea Bissau, Brazil, Cape Verde, and Mozambique, many visual artists, including the founding members of Unap, left Angola and trained in the School of Fine Arts in Havana. In the end however, many of them found that the socialist realism they learned at many of these places did not fit the context of Angola and indigenous Angolan culture(s). Unap was conceived for precisely the reason of art's applicability to the people of Angola. In Unap's 1977 inaugural proclamation, the signatories speak of the necessity of art that can interacting with the people in order to better the behavior, consciousness, and material situation of the "everyday Angolan."[9]

The Dundo Museum was nationalized along with all museums in Angola after the departure of the Portuguese. Under the 80th decree on September 3, 1976, all cultural patrimony was declared the property of the People of Angola. The re-appropriation of Angola's cultural "patrimony" accompanied a detailed program for the newly nationalized museums. They were to play an important role in unifying the nation culturally, an intellectual and practical endeavor. Where Diamang's Dundo Museum instrumentalized Chokwe culture for Scientific Colonialism, the MPLA's Dundo Museum instrumentalized Chokwe culture for the nation-state. A publication by the MPLA's National Department of Museums and Monuments claims the People as the

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[9] União Nacional de Artistas Plásticos, "União Nacional de Artistas Plásticos—U.N.A.P.: Proclamação." Reprinted in *África: literatura: arte e cultura* 1:2 (October-December 1978).

author of the artwork in museums and of the museum itself.   In fact, the museum manual
is one of the clearest statements on the MPLA's cultural program at the time of
Independence. At once celebratory and sober, it explains that museums are the
storehouse of cultural capital—the objects of culture—and the educational apparatus that
spread cultural capital to the Angolan people.

The anonymously authored museum publication was written in 1979 at the apex
of the MPLA's power, when internal dissent in the party had been (violently) silenced
and the party had established itself as the party of the Angolan state. The manual reflects
the fervor with which the MPLA conceived of the State's responsibilities and functions.
The Preface argues that museum collections offer material proof of advancement and
good in society. It later argues that if museums are set up correctly, they will powerfully
demonstrate the depravity of all other societal systems before the triumph of socialism.
Under the MPLA's authorship, Museums must always teach about "the victory against
colonialism, the victory against imperialist invasion, divisions practiced at times by the
People, by tribalists (Unita, Fnla, and today's outlaws), racist fractionists, leftists, and
neocolonialists."[10] The conceived network includes, citing only a few, museums of
Anthopology, Nature, Slavery, Archaeology, Armed Forces, and Colonial History. The
Directorate of Museum Services was responsible for making inventories, classifying, and
preserving cultural heritage as well as determining its use.

The MPLA's emphasis on museums was scientific, but modeled after Marxist-
Leninist "scientific socialism." Taking much of its structure and organization from

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[10] Departmento Nacional de Museus e Monumentos, "Manual de Museologia," (Luanda: Instituto
Angolano do Livro, 1979), 12.

Diamang's scientific colonialism, museums were now carefully systematized in the service of the Angolan nation, for the People and by the People. Scientific socialism emanated from the belief that socialism was not culturally specific; it was within the confines of the museum that this would be most potently demonstrated. As scientific socialism was believed to be objective and universal, it allowed for differences and cultural diversity to exist under a stable and well-conceived superstructure.

The museum manual echoes the call by party officials to educate the masses about their role as Angolans and their position in the new society. As functionaries of the revolution, museums had a pedagogical role as presenting objective proof of Angola's genealogy. The MPLA declared that with objects, "it is difficult to lie about the ingenuity of man, about material progress, about human sensitivity and the social consciousness of artists…."[11] While this was also important for Redinha, the role of pedagogy was particularly urgent for the MPLA as they fought to circumscribe the vast territory of Angola and all of the political, ethnic, and social factions within it. The powerfully uniting rhetoric of revolution could not yet be abandoned.

As with Diamang's scientific colonialism at the Dundo, the rigidity of the MPLA's museum program was in part a response to the violent cultural and social heterogeneity of Angola. In the museum program the party acknowledges that there is no "natural" communalism. Following classic Marxism-Leninism, however, MPLA officials believed that all art production aided the revolution, and therefore cultural divisions could be bridged if all Angolans were conceived of as one egalitarian class. In a speech given to the Angolan Writer's Union, Agostinho Neto referenced Lenin's theory

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[11] Ibid., n.p.

of cultural nationalism when he stated, "May I recommend to my esteemed comrades and colleagues that they take every advantage to those conditions that will permit our writers to work and produce and observe every nook and cranny of our national geographic sphere as they live the lives of the people."[12] In this speech Neto refers to the superiority of socialism in correctly utilizing culture and the importance of research in constructing and perpetuating the "soul" of the Angolan people.

Although Négritude and Black Consciouness influenced early Angolan nationalists, including Agostinho Neto, the increasing alignment with scientific socialism pushed out romantic notions of nationalism in favor of more racially diverse and decidedly state-controlled Angolan unity. The museum program clearly refutes négritudist theories of primordial unity and black authenticity, characterizing such methods of exhibition and scholarship outgrowths of colonialism. The example of Chokwe art is given to exemplify the museum's approach to "black" art. Using language strikingly close to Vilhena's analysis of the murals as "rational" as well as Redinha's summation of the murals as "intellectual realism," they propose "the Chokwe sculptor is in truth a colleague of the intellectual painter. Both work in a very similar creative manner with observable objectives…."[13] Perhaps recognizing the affinities between Chokwe artists and modern abstract art in Europe or Luanda for that matter, Chokwe art was aligned with contemporary art in technical sophistication and in content.

Romantic notions such as Senghor's "emotion is black and reason is Greek" took

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[12] Agostinho Neto, "On National Culture," Speech given to UAE January 8, 1979. Compiled in Agostinho Neto, *On Literature and National Culture* (Luanda: União dos Escritores Angolanos, 1979), 30.

[13] Departmento Nacional de Museus e Monumentos, 46.

the backseat to more practical administrative solutions to interethnic problems.
Accordingly, the MPLA did not purport to create a division between races and their
sources of creativity. Instead, they sought to accurately reflect the changing material
conditions of the African—not necessarily the black African—in forming a new culture.
Neto claims that to move Angolan culture away from the emulation of Portuguese
standards towards nationalist standards would only happen "when material conditions are
sufficiently determinant of a new consciousness."[14] Thus veering away from his earlier
interest in the spiritual communalism of blackness, President Neto invokes the Marxist
materialist leveling of society and shaping of culture.

The MPLA's Marxist nationalism was in sharp contrast with UNITA's "blood
and soil" nationalism. Jonas Savimbi, leader of UNITA, claimed indigenous rights to
Angola, accusing the MPLA of an intellectualism that was removed from "real"
Angolans. In turn, the MPLA not only accused UNITA of tribalism, but also directed
attention to the deals that Savimbi made with the Portuguese army during their violent
suppression of the MPLA in the early seventies. They claimed that UNITA's Portuguese
alliance and its pacts with South Africa in fact demonstrated that UNITA was the party
most ingratiated to foreign influence. The rhetoric from both sides involved making
contorted claims of authenticity and sovereignty from a deeply entrenched foreign
presence in Angola.

The authors of the museum policy did not altogether reject Portuguese colonialist
museology, just its ethical stance. The manual authors write that Portuguese museums
treated the pieces and their function within culture as the most important aspect of

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[14] Neto, "On Literature," speech given at UAE November 24 1977, 12.

Angolan art, but the Portuguese administrators "knew little about the men and about their relations and their thought."[15] The authors of the museum policy thus draw an ethical distinction between colonial and revolutionary museology, which frees them to utilize some of the same science. In many ways this led them to the same problems presented to Redinha as they began to account for individual creativity as well as collective "style."

The manual, as government policy, had to engineer artistic unity very carefully in order to preserve the spirit of nationalism. If a tension was present between individualism and communalism, there was likewise an interethnic tension that they had to attend to. They professed in this manual and other official publications that each nationality would thrive under the superstructure of the state. For example, the manual proposes an "Experimental Museum," in which any Angolan may mount an exhibition as opposed to only institutionalized officials. There are a few guidelines as to what is permissible, the key one being that the exhibition "not have content contrary to the political agenda of the MPLA—*the Worker's Party*."[16] Here, curation is understood as authorship—and ultimately cultural agency—under the purview of the Angolan people.

The authors consider many models within the MPLA's museological program, including a lengthy discussion of the USSR's. In the USSR they saw a strong coalition museum model based on a sound logic. By allowing for representatives of various provinces and ethnic groups to exhibit their work, the museum was to aid in the MPLA's overriding goal to both create unity among Angolans and to encourage all Angolans to

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[15] Departmento Nacional de Museus e Monumentos, 46.

[16] Ibid., 26.

exercise the right to "preserve or renew" its cultural patrimony.[17]

Cultural patrimony in late 1970s Angola was overtly claimed by the MPLA as being a ward of the state. It was treated as important a resource as diamonds, oil, and the Angolan soil. Also in the realm of culture, the MPLA more obviously grapples with the incredible complexity of its role as an administrative "state" and an existential "state" of competing nationalities. In that sense, the MPLA did not so much claim natural rights to nationhood, but professed a more rational method of joining together many nationalities, races, genders, etc. That the MPLA demanded that any exhibition mounted had to pay homage to the party, however, reflects the increasing rigidity in its governance.

The Chokwe exemplified Angola's "heritage" as well as the stakes in claiming custody over cultural patrimony. The MPLA visually claimed the Chokwe, and featured the Mwana Pwo Chokwe mask on the cover of various MPLA publications (fig. 36). One simple explanation for this is the size and visibility of the Chokwe art collections worldwide and within Angola. The museum manual describes the Diamang collection as a jewel in the crown of Angolan art collections. The Dundo Museum, it reads, "engaged with a responsibility towards producing Western European 'Intelligence.'"[18] Accordingly, the museum and Chokwe art in general became an important symbol of the richness and sophistication of the art, and the general "intelligence" of Angolans.

The Chokwe also symbolized the reaches of Angola. The Lundas were regions historically contested with the Congo as the Chokwe transcended Angola's eastern

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[17] Agostinho Neto, "MPLA Statutes and By-Laws," distributed as part of Neto's contribution for the Frente Democrática para a Libertação de Angola, Léopoldville, July 10, 1963.

[18] Departmento Nacional de Museus e Monumentos, 10.

borders. The Chokwe were an important political force in Angola, aligning themselves with various political factions during and after the Independence struggle. Most importantly, the Chokwe were significantly affected by the changing conditions after Independence, after Diamang was dissolved and replaced by Endiama. Their growing discontent over the deterioration of conditions eventually led them to form the *Partido Renovação Social*. The Dundo Museum closed in the years after independence and most of the pieces were relocated to the Museum of Anthropology in Luanda. The movement of objects out of Lunda North accompanied the dwindling presence of the MPLA there, first by the complications in administration shifts after the departure of the Portuguese, and subsequently as UNITA forced control over the diamond fields there.[19]

The Legacy of "*Angolanidade*" in MPLA Cultural Administration

The shift to statehood for the MPLA accompanied a sudden shift in defining the enemy of Angolan nationalism from the Portuguese to what MPLA members called the puppet regimes of the Portuguese, FNLA and UNITA. Angolan nationalist artists, especially those in the MPLA, faced a complex transition from anti-colonial nationalists to state workers charged with initiating a cultural infrastructure and a practice of collectivity. Until Independence, the nationalist arts community was underground, embedded in the *musseques*, exiled in Portugal, Cuba, and other countries, or imprisoned in Tarrafal prison in Cape Verde. Many from this same community, including Neto himself, were now in administrative positions and faced with the task of preserving that unifying language of nationalism while structuring a state. The rhetoric of anti-

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[19] See Tony Hodges, *Angola from Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 164.

imperialism did not leave Angolan nationalists, nor has it yet, but rather *Angolanidade* was defined anew.

In the late 1940s Angolan writers coined a movement, *Vamos Descobrir Angola* [Let's Discover Angola]. Its associated publication *Mensagem* in 1951 marks, as Patrick Chabal argues, "the beginning of a self-conscious Angolan literature."[20] Let's Discover Angola attempted to figure *Angolanidade* in literature*,* a conception formulated during Angolan resistance to Dutch occupation in the 17th century. It was from the beginning a hybrid notion of Angolan identity that was formulated in the urbanity and *assimilado* population of Luanda.[21]   Within the pages of *Mensagem* was written a language that attempted to encompass the hybridity and *creolité* of the *musseques* and urban Angola. Part of that hybridity was in the poetic and political influences they sought out, not only from African post-colonies but also from other socialist nations and Brazil.

At the height of the independence struggle Agostinho Neto, an early poet of Angolan nationalism, wrote "Havemos de Voltar (We Must Return)." In it he advocates a return to the culture of Angola embodied in masquerade and music, as well as to the material resources of Angola such as diamonds, oil, and soil. As the first president of Angola and the author of many of the early policy decisions on national culture, Neto was

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[20] Patrick Chabal, "Aspects of Angolan Literature: Luandino Vieira and Agostinho Neto." *African Languages and Cultures* 8:1 (1995), 34.

[21] The bulk of critical writing on these early movements of Angolan nationalism has been on its literature, a preferential treatment that Marissa Moorman has lamented in its incomplete picture of early Angolan nationalism. Marissa Moorman, *Intonations: A Social History of Music and Nation in Luanda from 1945 to Recent Times* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2008), 57-58. Her important book and Adriano Mixinge's historiography of Angolan visual artists and their role in nationalism have helped us to fill out the picture of Angolan nationalism as a concerted effort to amass cultural capital in all of its forms.

the symbol of the transition from an embattled nationalism via Portuguese imperialism to the MPLA as the harbinger of national culture in its statecraft. Like Leopold Sedar Senghor before him, Neto's iconic importance as a cultural figure was unmatched in Angola. He reached international fame as a martyr of the evils of Portuguese colonialism.

The trope of return was in essence Neto's demand for Angolans' agency, essential to the idea liberty and independence, a communal circumscription of resources, traditional culture, and "our land, our mother."[22] His longing for the primordial and the communal was a feature of nationalist thought. Jacqueline Rose describes this fantasy as progressive in the sense that it is "always heading for the world it only appears to have left behind."[23] Angola's rich postcolonial cultural production was born from a search for the "real," conditioned of violently forced alienation from land and resources. Luandino Vieira, who Chabal considers one of the two "central pillars of *Angolanidade*" along with Neto, wrote about the visceral experience of space and time of Africa. His novels, rich in description of the loss and longing for the land, present "the Angolan landscape as a synecdoche for Angola itself; man and nature constitute the country."[24] Integration with "the land" marks peaceful social relations with a shared history and culture, and is also a search for the real.

To the extent that Neto borrowed from Négritudist theories I would argue that it was a search for exceptionalism itself, a way to elucidate the condition of the victim as an

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[22] For a more extensive examination of the trope of "return" in postcolonial literature, see Vera Mihailovich-Dickman, *Return in Post-Colonial Writing: A Cultural Labyrinth* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994).

[23] Jacueline Rose, *States of Fantasy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 3.

[24] Donald Burness, *Fire: Six Writers from Angola, Mozambique, and Cape Verde* (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1977), 7.

embattled figure of "Africa." Black communalism with nature is, for Neto, a metaphor for utopia. Likewise the writings of Luandino Vieira describe Africanness as a fluid identity and not an essential blackness. Against essential blackness as a white Angolan, Vieira argues that "[c]ertainly a white man can be an African writer…I am an Angolan writer, therefore an African writer."[25] This definition of the urban white and creole Angolan is precisely what UNITA used to mount a political attack on the MPLA, claiming that it was intellectual and inauthentic. The Portuguese targeted Vieira after his novel *Luuanda* won an award in 1964 from the Society of Portuguese Writers. He wrote most of his oeuvre in various prisons in Angola, Lisbon, and the Tarrafal concentration camp in Cape Verde. *Luuanda* is an example of Vieira's language as a counterpoint to Neto's use of high Portuguese, in that he writes in the language of the *musseque*, what was a major break with conventions of colonial literature. These two strands of literary nationalism, utopian and dystopian, also appear at once in Viteix's art and writing, which I will discuss below.

"Home" came to be characterized in Angolan literature, art, and political discourse as the rural masses, the peasant workers with whom the intellectuals in the MPLA sought to identify. It was a strong fantasy in the face of the reality of a severely fractured nationalism, which formed in large part along the rural/urban divide. In a sense, the MPLA's intense level of adherence to the Marxist language as it formulated its civil policy suppressed the chaos they faced in its implementation.

Like Fernando Alvim describing nationalism as a strategy, a recent essay by Adriano Mixinge argues that Angolan nationalism has always been a strategy. He writes

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[25] Quoted in Burness, xiii.

that *Angolanidade* is a

> strategic concept…that summarizes and problematizes the tradition of the
> concept and the practices in which the issue arises in literature and ideas in
> general. *Angolanidade* that is not, necessarily, an expression of the
> speeches of political elites; it is primarily a cultural discourse basically
> artistic and aesthetic and, therefore, an inclusive and unorthodox
> concept."[26]

We will see now the attempt to describe the "everyman" in Angolan art by a man who

was charged with formulating Angola's visual arts policy after independence.

Viteix's *Theory and Practice of Angolan Plastic Art*

Theory and Practice of Angolan Plastic Art answered Neto's call to research every

nook and cranny of Angolan culture. Viteix (1940-1993) was an anti-colonial activist

who took refuge in Paris before Independence. There he and two other Angolan art

students mounted an overtly anti-colonial exhibition in 1973 called "Angola- Art,

Combat, Popular Music, Painting, Sculpture." This same year he finished a master's

degree in Visual Arts in Paris, also having studied the visual arts in Portugal. Between the

time of independence in 1975 and 1983, when he took his doctorate again in Paris, he

trained the first batch of instructors at the former Barração (Shed) in Luanda. Following

his PhD training, Viteix remained in Angola, where he was director general of Unap from

1987-1989.

Viteix was in the same generation as António Ole (b. 1951), whose early work also

had a subversive intent, particularly his 1970 painting *Sobre o consumo da pilula* (*On

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[26] Adriano Mixinge, *Made in Angola: Arte Contemporânea, Artistas, e Debates* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009), 32.

Taking the Pill), which shows the Pope's head in various states of malformation, placing a pill on his tongue (fig. 37). Both artists met and were influenced by José Redinha. Ole in particular claimed that "[studying Chokwe art] was a genuine baptism, and I owe that to Redinha."[27] Both artists carefully studied the Chokwe murals and images, echoing Neto's return, an attempt to discover an essential "Angolan" form.

Theory and Practice of Angolan Plastic Arts is the only comprehensive post-independence volume on Angolan visual art. It was written in 1983 when Viteix came back to Paris after his tenure as teacher and Director of the Visual Arts Sector of Angola. He wrote the thesis for the University of Paris VIII-Saint Denis under the direction of Frank Popper, an art historian who has written widely on public art, kinetic art and virtual art. In part *Theory and Practice* is a summation of the work that Viteix completed under the employ of the MPLA as he worked to establish a post-independence body of visual art and practice.

Like the MPLA museum policy, Viteix in *Theory and Practice* takes on the task of defining and describing Angolan visual art. But because his focus is on plastic (visual) art, he has a special task in defining not only the social history and function of art in Angola but also any unifying visual characteristics of this body of work. He takes on this challenge, suggesting throughout the book that there is an underlying logic of Angolan art that does not necessarily manifest in stylistic affinity. This theory will carry through into his art.

Viteix's book uses functionalist and structuralist anthropology, ethnology, and art

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[27] António Ole, *Marcas de um Percurso (1970/2004)* (Lisboa: Edifício Sede da Caixa Geral de Depósitos, 2004), 14.

history. In addition, he subscribes to an "ideo-sociological (idéo-sociologique)" approach to his work, both describing the various ideologies behind the art he presents, and then later prescribing a new Angolan art production. This dual descriptive/prescriptive approach is important to note. He states that it is less important to him to operate within a single methodology, since the types of art and their contexts are so varied. The affinities between various types of art are more important to his project, so that they may be rightfully placed in the "new" Angolan society. Unlike Diamang, Viteix states his ideological platform for his cultural theory. He desires to instrumentalize culture for the advancement of Angolan people and maintains the importance of the MPLA in leading this project.

Viteix's theories are comparable to friend of the Angolan revolution Che Guevara, in that he viewed socialist realism and other highly programmed art expression to be constrictive and detrimental to a truly nationalist art. In his warning against such "realism at any cost," he posited instead that "the probabilities that important artists will appear will be greater to the degree that the field of culture and the possibilities for expression are broadened."[28] He maintained that adherence to party and artistic free expression were mutually beneficial. If the MPLA reiterated that their leadership was really leadership by the everyman Angolan, it did not matter what the art looked like. As the proclamation of Unap states, "Unap proclaims its decision to enter and to contribute to into a Society guided by the ideology of the Working Class and to support and defend the political line and the clear direction of the revolutionary vanguard of the Angolan People, the

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[28] Ernesto Che Guevara, "El socialismo y el hombre en Cuba." in *Escritos y discursos*,vol. 8 (Havana: Ministry of Culture, 1977), 266-267.

MPLA."[29]

MPLA activists also had ties to members of the African National Congress in South Africa [ANC]. The ANC had similar debates about the place of cultural production in the struggle, which were later articulated in an influential essay written by Albie Sachs in 1989, "Preparing Ourselves for Freedom."[30] Sachs argues against the use of art as propaganda, such as illustrating guns, and instead to understand art as an activity that can open up onto the possibility of complexity and contradictions. After all, he explains, the struggle is about winning the freedom of expression and humanity. In one important section, Sachs argues that the party guidelines should not be applied to the sphere of culture, but rather that culture should influence the party guidelines.[31] This viewpoint was somewhat exceptional within the ANC, and it is distinct from the MPLA rhetoric of culture in the struggle. Whereas both Neto and Sachs agree that propaganda is harmful to the culture of the people, Neto and the MPLA saw the material transformation of the masses as an absolute precursor to the transformation of culture.

That is, the literal representation of politics was not the key aspect of nationalism, as it became in so many other socialist states. Rather, the politics of nationalism was in the collection of cultures within the nation-state and subsequent education of the masses of that national culture. That collection, in any case, presented the biggest challenge in Angola where the citizenry was quickly descending into violent civil war.

As José Redinha's *Paredes* is a product of a hermeneutic practice, so is *Theory and*

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[29] Unap., ibid.

[30] Albie Sachs, "Preparing Ourselves for Freedom: Culture and the ANC Constitutional Guidelines." Reprinted in *TDR* 35:1 (Spring 1991), pp. 187-193.

[31] Ibid., 190.

Practice. It begins with his sources, a foundational aspect of his methodology. Viteix elaborates:

> [s]ome parts of this research have been conducted on site relying on local sources of local information on the subjects that concern us: artisans, artists, people, with or without prestige and great authority, diverse documents whether in Portuguese or other languages (see bibliography), our own experience in the field of education and artistic practice, some anthropological data and, conclusively, the continuation of our own observation and reflection.[32]

Viteix is partial to oral information, as he claims that it is the most pure source of information. However, throughout the text anthropological sources are treated as parallel information with local knowledge and oral history. He notes that the interlocutor will give him different types of information depending on the context and "personalities," which then necessitates his own interpretation and his creation of connections between various sources. After all, he explains, his is a sociological study of plastic art in Angola.[33]

As a sociological study, Viteix takes on the major challenge to any argument for artistic nationalism: to properly contextualize provincial art production. His text demonstrates the difficulty in arguing for a unified "Angolan" national art, as he is faced with an array of art production and various histories of that production. First, however, he takes what he calls a "detour" through religion, philosophy, politics, etc., that follows a lengthy, conventionally written section on the history and geography of Angola. Like

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[32] Vitor Manuel Teixeira, *Pratique et Theorie des Arts Plastiques Angolais*. Departement Des Arts Plastiques. (Saint Denis, Universite de Paris VIII: Doctorate, 1983), 12.
[33] Ibid., 10.

Bastin, his history starts with European contact and their encounters with established kingdoms like the Kongo. He also goes to great lengths to bring history to the present and to include the anti-colonial struggle as the key point—and possibly the only one—of Angolan nationalism. In all, the introductory sections of *Theory and Practice* are the most telling in the challenge to argue for a unified Angolan plastic art while acknowledging, and even embracing, its contradictions.

Again, *Theory and Practice* is not simply a sociological study, as Viteix explains, but an "ideo-sociological" system of classification.[34] Unlike his predecessors, particularly Bastin and Redinha, his study argues that political action is the original function of art. It is an appeal to an ethical humanism in which all of the variegated histories of each ethnic group and colonial influence become part of the "new socio-cultural dimension of the country."[35] Part of the reversal of colonial hermeneutic involves for Viteix the refusal to obfuscate the present condition of Angolans in his claim for their primordial rights to the land. If a study and/or practice of art is to be called "Angolan," it must address the current needs and desires of Angola's people. Indeed, as the title of his study argues, it must be a practice and not thought of as a natural law. Thus hermeneutic practice of description includes the exhortation to a new artistic practice. Where Diamang separated culture from the body of the Chokwe to dissolve and remake that body, Angolan nationalists sought somehow to reintegrate the body, if only in the beginning the body politic.

Viteix then performs the collection and systemization of visual art production

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[34] Ibid., 10.
[35] Ibid., 10.

within the geographical boundaries of Angola in what amounts to securing the cultural

capital of Angola. Viteix uses a structuralist approach to not only systemize but to create

a network of Angolan art, especially in Section Two, the "Creator Groups of Plastic

Arts." The first subsections of Section Two consist of his listing the types of art

produced by various "groups," which Viteix defines as both ethnic and territorial. In this

he notes the extreme difficulty in demarcating these groups, but its necessity in

simplifying his study. This section also demonstrates Viteix's challenge in adopting the

techniques of anthropology that he states have been so damaging in their colonial use,

that is, the tribalization of Angola. Here he also faces the challenge of integrating the

production of artists and artisans and including so-called decorative and functional arts

into Angolan plastic art.

This theoretical system included a feedback loop of historical art forms, not unlike

most postcolonial nationalist theories. Viteix begins *Theory and Practice* with a lengthy

discussion of ancient rock art in Angola. This section exists, as he explains in the intro

paragraph, to "reconstruct in part the ancientness of the human presence in Angola…."[36]

Later on in the book, Viteix declares that the knowledge of this history is more than just a

reconstruction of the genealogy of Angola, but also an art history that post-independence

artists can look to for formal tools. Here he quotes Senegalese painter Papa Ibra Tall's

contention that African artists have the advantage of making a "pilgrimage to the

sources" of African art in order to find the technical tools of expressing a contemporary

reality.

Contra Redinha's stylistic analysis of rock art as a developmental precursor to

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[36] Ibid., 14.

contemporary mural painting, Viteix points to the functional affinities of rock art to contemporary public art. For instance Viteix explains that the format of the mural in rock art is a natural precursor to the MPLA political murals in Luanda. For Viteix, art is not a disinterested aesthetic practice, but one that is "created under the immediate influence of historic and social facts."[37] Some of their functional value lies for Viteix in their magical content, where the image serves to infuse the material world with immaterial powers. For Viteix, cave painting and its related forms in Egypt are motivated art works, and any formal changes represents a change in worldview and the needs of the population who executed those changes. In this section he deploys the trope of black Africa as a site of communalism, despite the MPLA's non-racial and socialist state-based communalism. He argues for the integration of Angola into the idea of a people of black Africa whose art has always been in the service of the people.

Two influences run through Viteix's theory of artists' relationship to Angolan cultural heritage: Agostinho Neto and Vladimir Lenin. From Lenin Viteix adopted ideas about how to institutionalize art and his theories on the role of the state in perpetuating artistic production. He cautiously agrees with Lenin's theories, as he does with all socialist theories. He refuses to be in any way dictatorial about artistic production, even when placing it under the umbrella of the state. From Neto he draws the spirit of the work by including themes of Africanity and the brotherhood arising from a shared African history and experience.   He is also influenced by Neto's desire to attend to the cultural heritage of Angola through the active preservation of cultural patrimony. He then draws the tenets of that practice from various sources. *Theory and Practice*, recall,

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[37] Ibid., 81.

was written more than twenty years after the majority of nationalist texts on art during the 1960s independence decade. He also had at his disposal a developed body of literature on Luso-African nationalism that reached back as far as the late nineteenth century starting with the subversive writings of José de Fontes Pereira.   In addition to these, Viteix cites Theodor Adorno, William Fagg, Ernst Fischer, Romano Luis, Ferreira Sousa, and Adolf Jensen.

Regardless of the eclecticism of his sources, Viteix's study is at base pragmatic and concerned with the systematic logic of Angolan art. *Theory and Practice* is an attempt to demystify Angolan art, to examine its basic elements in order to propose a functional future. From heterogeneity comes unity, and unity can only be achieved through the everyday actions of the "people." One section is telling in this regard. After his discussion of the various creator groups and their characteristics, Viteix transitions to the crucial part of Section Two entitled "Elements of Visions and Perceptions," where he makes the following introductory remarks:

> We are going to summarize some different domains of expression and of the realization of a traditional Angolan conception of World. We study modestly some of these elements from a religious setting to a more banal everyday setting.[38]

Viteix here transitions from the demarcation of ethnic characteristics of art production to now an Angolan worldview.   As proof of an Angolan worldview, he discusses such things as games, proverbs, religion, magic and beliefs, etc.

The most powerful moment of this discussion directly follows his statement to

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[38] Ibid., 55.

look at the more mundane aspects of this worldview. Viteix discusses at length the

various instances of games in Angola, countering a conclusion reached by Claude Lévi-

Strauss in *The Savage Mind* that positions games against ritual. Ritual is structured to

join together asymmetrically arranged groups, while games, inversely, go from symmetry

to asymmetry with a clear winner and a loser.[39] Viteix argues the obverse of Lévi-

Strauss's conclusion, explaining that in Angola games require neither a winner nor a

loser. Viteix seems to want to assign games the same purpose as Lévi-Strauss assigns to

ritual—the binding of groups—without the supernatural associations of ritual. It is the

"everyday" secular elements of games that Viteix suggests have the most binding power

for Angolans, in that they employ a shared logic or structure.

Viteix gives the example of Txela, which is a variation of mancala marble game

found throughout the world. Viteix focuses on the Angolan identity of the game, stating,

"the game of Txela confirms the relevance of the notion of unity in the Angolan

territory."[40] He goes on, "…it seems significant that this game represents, without

elitism, the unanimity of preference in Angola." Here, he enacts exclusion in order to

formate national identity. Regardless of mancala being found throughout the world,

Viteix underscores the logical and popular *Angolan* aspects of the game, the existence of

a commonality without the imposition of religion, ritual, or any form of governance. It is

for this reason that Viteix points out the absence of a winner in these games. The realm

of games and "fun" lacks any type of power play whatsoever.

Viteix includes the *sona* practice in the section on games, interestingly the only

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[39] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 32.
[40] Teixeira, 55.

section in the book to mention the practice. In his decision to focus on the "fun and conceptual" aspects of *sona* he cites M.D. Leakey's essay on string figures in which she relates the string game to *sona* drawing. Eliminating the aspect of *sona* as the ritual instruction for *mukanda*, Viteix instead points the practice towards his ultimate conclusion concerning games in Angola: "this exercise is the culmination of an attitude towards the universe, life and society, it represents a direct expression or compensation of daily behavior."[41] Like the new society that his vision of art reaches for, the games are at base participatory and operate at the level of everyday behavior, or habit.

Viteix also connects rural game playing to innovation in urban games. His strategic linking of rural and urban is even more pronounced in the section on mural painting in Angola.   Again, the underlying ethos that connects Chokwe house painting or the mural on the military hospital in Luanda is populism and non-elite practice. He cites José Redinha's assessment of the "intellectual realism" of the mural painting, but absent is Redinha's value judgment based on a comparison to European realism. Instead, and again, he emphasizes the playful and spontaneous aspects of the murals and asserts their connection to African rhythm and communalism. Clearly the most valuable common characteristic that Viteix sees as unifying Angolan art is its non-hierarchical practice, and realism as defined by the people. Therefore the systematic structure that Viteix describes is heterogeneous and dialogical.

The sixth, seventh, and eighth part of the book set out actual practices after arguing the necessity of contemporary Angolan art. This section includes a section highly indebted to Ernst Fischer's *The Necessity of Art: A Marxist Approach*. After

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[41] Ibid., 57.

arguing that art represents the human ability to transform nature "through creative work and using the tools of labor," he lays out concrete plans on how the government might facilitate art production.[42]   Under this mandate, Viteix explains, the MPLA established the União Nacional Artistas Plasticos [Unap] in 1977. He elucidates the goals of Unap as described by the MPLA Worker's Party: to involve the public in Angolan art in order to transform Angolan mentality, to progressively transform heritage from bourgeois goods to serve a new society, and to create the conditions or infrastructure to transmit these ideas.[43] Viteix identifies three impediments to Unap: lack of materials, lack of participation by the 120 members across the country, and lack of qualified teachers. All three of these impediments were devastating to Unap's ambitious program, which in *Theory and Practice* includes plans to include painting, design, sculpture, to host conferences, and to exhibit artists from Nigeria, Yugoslavia, the USSR, Cape Verde, Italy, Romania, Portugal, Mozambique, and Congo.

Like the two strains of *Angolanidade* embodied by the work of Neto and Vieira, Viteix's study proposes the "path towards socialism" while also presenting the sobering realities of a struggling new nation. Additionally Viteix avoids dogma of any kind and instead celebrates the debates that occur within the arts community. Such debates are, he explains, signs of democracy. *Theory and Practice* itself is dialectical in its description and its prescription alike: art and everyday life, the banal and the exceptional, Western art and traditional art, bourgeois art and popular art, and so on. Though Viteix strongly warns of the continuing "threat" of the West on Angolan art, his causes for concern stem

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[42] Ibid., 287.

[43] Ibid., 216.

from intent and power relations, and not necessarily from any inherent problems with form or medium.

Viteix: Artist and Ethnographer

Even as Viteix describes his view for revolutionary art in *Theory and Practice*, he concedes that "art cannot transform society, it can only raise awareness of its present state."[44] It is a stand-alone paragraph that contains only one other sentence and indicates Viteix's assertion of the limits of political art, which is presaged in his book by his criticism of the didacticism of socialist realism. The rest of this section is devoted to art in its power to create a new subjectivity, one that inevitably happens with a change in socio-political shifts and therefore the audiences for art. Bourgeois subjects in art will be replaced by images of workers, peasants, and the downtrodden. Viteix references Rouault, Daumier, Orozco, and Rivera and Fischer's book *The Necessity of Art*, particularly the section in which Fischer declares that each change in power brings a spontaneous change in subjects, without a theory or constraint. Viteix implies that this "new" art for the people is actually a return to art's primordial purpose, the necessity of art to create a mass consciousness. By making the masses the subject of art, the masses experience a new subjectivity.

Viteix does not ever truly define his use of the term "subject." Instead he positions the subject in Angolan art against the anti-colonial stereotype of Western art as bourgeois, illusionistic, and hopelessly wedded to photographic realism. He goes on to argue that "[t]he confusion between art and the representation of nature or of life is recent

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[44] Ibid., 243.

in the West and has contaminated all judgments and erected an impenetrable barrier between Art and the people."[45]   Earlier in *Theory and Practice* Viteix argues against the view that Western art is the enemy to Angolan art, in that it provided certain formal tools for the African artist. Here, his attack is instead directed toward the illusionistic creation of the subject itself.   The subject that is figured in this way, he suggests, is objectified, "reduced to figuration, to a faithful copy of forms condemned to immobility…the values of photographic accuracy led the subject to be lost within [representations of] nature."[46]

Viteix's condemnation of Western illusionistic representation is dialectically related to his praise of African art, in which art we read that "the goal was never to satisfy a vain desire of imitation, and the figures of men or animals were never embedded in nature; if an element of landscape was used it was a symbol and to complete the meaning of the work…."[47] This piquing statement concerning vain imitation is one of the only clear definitions of what he means by the Western treatment of the subject, and helps unlock some of what is in his own art production. Instead of decrying what Redinha saw as shortcomings in representation, Viteix understands the symbol itself as being a powerful visual communication device to unify the people. The very existence of the symbol, Viteix suggests, is indigenous to African art and indicates a shared knowledge that can be deployed by anyone who shares that logic.

The symbol itself becomes content in Viteix's two-dimensional work of the early to mid 1980s. At the time Viteix was finishing his doctoral degree and divided his time

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[45] Ibid., 241.
[46] Ibid., 241.
[47] Ibid., 241.

between Paris and Luanda. He was also appointed Director of Fine Arts for the MPLA government and was implementing the plans laid out in *Theory and Practice.* He executed this body of work, what I will call the "grid series," predominantly with oil and acrylic on canvas and ink on paper. The grid series has become his iconic work and can be seen in various outdoor walls in Luanda and as the backdrop of the Unap gallery wall. This series is visually conservative when compared to his earlier anti-colonial works of the early 1970s, a few of which I examine below. The series shows a formal transition related to his own transition from an anti-colonial artist/activist to an administrator for the MPLA, charged with implementing a new arts infrastructure.

In the grid series, Viteix outlines the edges of the canvas with a grid, or a line of squares. In some works, the columns divide the space into quadrants, intersecting the canvas in the middle. Somewhat reminiscent of Frank Stella's black paintings, Viteix uses these columns deductively to outline the dimensions of the paper or canvas. Inside each of the squares is a basic Chokwe symbol such as the cruciform, line, spiral, triangle, snake, dot grid, and so on. The format recalls Bastin's grid-like chart that showed a one-to-one explanation/translation of each symbol. Within Viteix's grid, the symbols are instead emphatically geometrical. They become part of the logic of the canvas, repeated endlessly throughout the series.

Some of Viteix's first explorations of this configuration in the 1970s closely resemble the Chokwe *Hamba wa nzambi* (fig. 31) carvings discussed in the previous chapter. In these sculptures a human figure is shown standing inside of a frame, what Fritz Kramer states is a quotation of Portuguese saint portraits. This quotation is a key point. Not only is this mimetic of the portrait genre and the use of a frame, but also

denotes the emphatic logic of the two-dimensional image itself. Note that the sculpture is

frontal and read more as a two-dimensional image than a three-dimensional object. Note

also that the geometric forms on the frame are not, as Redinha described, functioning

both as topographical descriptors and geometric decoration. Rather, the artist shows his

awareness of the Portuguese logic of two dimensions, noted previously in Chapter Three.

It demonstrates the Chokwe awareness of the importance of the frame to establish the

separation between art and life, mental form and physical matter. In another instance of

mutual recognition, Viteix early on copies not only the *Hamba wa nzambi* but also its use

of the geometric formal element as functional devices. For the Chokwe and for Viteix

these seem to approach the idea of essential form, or the formal quality of certain

symbols that makes them universally suited to representation, visual or intellectual.

Most of the grid images feature contain expressionistic, or better, gestural scenes

within the confines of the Chokwe symbols. A good example is *Os Mergulhadores* (*The

Divers*) (1986), a watercolor of loose brush strokes and a preponderance of pinks and

reds (fig. 38). The edges are lined with the Chokwe symbols and their confining lines.

Contained within those is a group of abstracted human and animal figures floating in

various positions. They are not haphazardly inscribed; the two human figures on the left,

one outlined and one solid, repeat each other in gesture and scale. In the middle, three

heads conflate into one conglomeration with limbs akimbo. On the right hand side some

type of sheep or steer stands (vertically oriented) with a human arm in its mouth. It is

perhaps a scene of peril, but also reminiscent of The Cave of Swimmers in Egypt or,

closer to Angola, the San cave paintings of southern Africa. To connect rock art to

Chokwe murals through pseudomorphology was common. Jean Janmart and José

Redinha wrote an entire book on the connections between contemporary *sona* practice and cave art.[48] *Theory and Practice* takes it one step further by connecting those practices to easel painting in the urban areas, as I discussed above.

Viteix studied two-dimensional representation. The Dokolo collection owns a sketch by Viteix in which he illustrates principals of volume, movement, and trajectory (see fig. 39). For volume he uses the cube, sphere, and cone, or the basic geometric forms used by Cezanne to work out perspective. For movement he illustrates convergent and divergent lines and their angles. To illustrate trajectory he sketches the orbit of the moon and earth around the sun. All of these classic studies of form and movement in visual representation show Viteix's interest in the basic components of representation, whether exemplified by Western academic art, or by other moments of artistic and scientific inquiry. The important anti-colonialist Angolan writer Mario de Andrade writes of his work in 1975, "from modern painting, he has managed to retain that which enriches his culture and his intimate message."[49] He goes on to qualify that Viteix also silently and patiently sought out the "thread of African tradition" to mark the condition of Angola.

But it is not as important that *Os Mergulhadores* traverses modern formalism and African identity, as it is that the symbol itself is made contemporary. To indicate the contemporary in many of the works, the internal image contains signs of urbanity, as in *Canção Para Luanda* (Song for Luanda) (1985) (fig. 40). This space fluctuates in each

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[48] See Jean Janmart and José Redinha,. "La station préhistoric de Candala (District de la Lunda, Angola du Nort-Est) e outros estudos da pré-história da Lunda e As gravuras rupestres do Alto-Zambeze e a primeira tentativa da sua interpretação.*" Subsídios para a História, Arqueologia e Etnografia dos Povos da Lunda* (Lisbon: DIAMANG, 1948).

[49] Mario de Andrade in *Viteix: Dessins, Peintures* (Paris: Galerie Louis Soulanges, 1975), n.p.

of the grid works, and indicates just that—flux.   Whether narrative scene or an expression of arrest, this space of the work is about movement, or time. As the picture field is divided thus, there is a resistance to an all-over logic, even as the grid element becomes in its repetition nearly didactic. The grid series, with its use of both linguistic and mimetic elements, attempts to describe the spaces of Angola, in order to "raise awareness" of the state of Angola, as he says in *Theory and Practice* of the extent of art's abilities. The pictograms indicate identity—sociological, philosophical, and national— and at the same time investigate the basic formal elements of representation. At a time when wars over identity and representation in the juridical sense were causing a crisis of meaning in Angola, this dialectic was crucial to Viteix.

Paul Klee, whose work Viteix was almost certainly familiar with having studied European modernism in Paris, explored a similar set of problems in his rejection of the Enlightenment landscape genre. In a set of paintings made after a personally significant journey to Tunisia and Egypt, Klee attempted a method of landscape painting that abandoned mimesis to discover a "matrix of experience."[50] In paintings such as *At Anchor* (1932) or *Legend of the Nile* (1937) Klee attempted to fuse subject and object by using the landscape as a cue to explore conceptual, experiential, and even magical spaces (fig. 41). The autonomy of the picture plane, and the medium of painting itself, was secure enough to hold Klee's projections of his response to the landscape. His faith in Art was his faith in the creative fusion of subject and object.

The title *Legend of the Nile* makes a double reference, as David Burnett explains: legend as in the myth world of the Egyptians that he encountered (or fantasized), and the

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[50] David Burnett, "Paul Klee: The Romantic Landscape" *Art Journal* (Summer 1977), 323.

legend as map or linguistic interpretation, both of which are indicated with the pictographic markings in the painting. Thus fusion of subject and object occurs in the fusion of form and content, syntax and semantics. Similarly the Chokwe pictograms straddle a line between elements of form and mimetic representation—which in Chapter Three I explained challenged Redinha in his interpretation of the murals—but he consistently includes elements that indicate the political struggle for representation. This interest in the pictograms becomes so intense that the grid takes over the entire picture space of many of his works of the early 1990s (see fig. 42).

Pictograms are themselves an ambiguous space between language and image. They traverse registers of communication. In the grid series the pictograms are reduced to their smallest identity. At one and the same time the symbols are recognizably "Chokwe," but Viteix opens up this system's logic by creating a set, or grid, of component parts. They may be understood as components that resist mechanical (exact) mimesis, as Redinha's logic perpetuated, but were building blocks available for infinite combinations within the logic of the two-dimensional picture plane. It is within the confines of the grid that Viteix projects various scenes of everyday life, of myth, and of movement; in this register he figures his own subjective interpretations and responses. That is, he attempts a pictorial space that encompasses intimate and political space. This configuration creates a tension, not unlike the images of Nigerian Natural Synthesis, between the universal and the particular.

To this end, Viteix's use of pictographic elements in his work is comparable to Uche Okeke's 1960s drawings in which he experimented with *uli* design. Chika Okeke-Agulu argues that Okeke was the first to achieve Natural Synthesis because "his image

making process relies squarely on a sustained inquiry into the principles of design, as well as the conceptual parameters of a specific, traditional art form."[51] Okeke argues, via Rosalind Krauss and Yve-Alain Bois, that the spiral shape in Uche Okeke's *Owl* (1962) is polysemic, that is, the motif/sign has no inherent meaning outside of its placement within the entire composition (fig. 43). Most of Viteix's grid series works feature Chokwe symbols within the internal register. Unlike Okeke's images, however, the symbols are detached from any representational elements of the work. For example the human figures on the inside register of *Estudo II* (1992) are surrounded by streaks and marks, and a few free-floating symbols (fig. 44).

The grid series and Okeke's 1960s *uli* drawings share the condition of opticality. For Okeke's work, the serpentine line of *uli* is akin to what might be found on skin. This format, whether paper or skin, is emphasized. While the denial of illusionism is established by both artists' refusal to attempt three-dimensionality on a surface, there is in Viteix's work especially a concern with the body, even if metaphorical. In some cases that interest in the body gives way to the use of illusion in bodying forth certain symbols and images.

Viteix does this to suggest the experiential aspect of language, or how to translate embodied experiences into signification. The title of an important watercolor, *Construção Civil (Antonio Cardoso) Tarrafal 2/10/71* (1985), references a poem by anti-colonial activist Antonio Cardoso in which he speaks of translation and experience, of shared grief and its representation (fig. 45). He writes of the incompleteness of words to

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[51] Chika Okeke-Agulu, *Nigerian Art in the Independence Decade, 1957-1967* (Ph.d. Dissertation, Emory University, 2004), 253.

describe his experience, it is "of dreams and deeds I measure walking." He goes on, "And the words, I undertake to write…/Neither is it for me that shared grief,/ but also will be in the promised/ future we will be complete."[52] Viteix's adaptation shows a construction scene within the grid frame of *Construção Civil* that recalls socialist realist scenes of workers. It also contains within that scene various free floating Chokwe pictograms—line, dot grid, target, chevron—to indicate the work of linguistic production. It is a shared activity, a civil construction, with a definite structure.

We saw in the last chapter that José Redinha struggled to decide whether elements of the Chokwe murals were mimetic or decorative. We also saw that the conditions under which he hovered in his indecision were political; his artistic interpretation had everything to do with the colonial mindset. By the time of independence, Angolan poets, artists and musicians who shaped *Angolanidade* and changed the way the Angolan language itself was written, exposing that colonial mindset through the medium of literature. In the novels of Luandino Vieira, for instance, his use of *musseque* Portuguese was a way to present a language to the metropole that was untranslatable. It was the product of insider knowledge. Language itself was increasingly seen, from the 1940s on, as one of the fundamental building blocks of society, along with bricks and mortar.

As his allusion to Cardosos' poem about writing affirms, signification is an important part of the subject matter of Viteix's paintings. His focus on the linguistic process capitalizes on the state of its emergency. Not only is each symbol given a framed space, but also, each symbol is drawn as a closed form with ambient space of color. His

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[52] António Cardoso, "Construção Civil," *21 Poemas da Cadeia* (Luanda: União dos Escritores Angolanos, 1979), n.p.

near ritualistic placement of the symbols along the dimensions of the canvas and paper

comes to attain in the course of this series a preciousness that marks again and again the

loss of tradition. By remembering Chokwe, or "Angolan," tradition, Viteix is also

mourning the trauma of its near extinction by the Portuguese. He laments, "throughout

the colonial period, there was an effort to devalue the high aesthetic of popular national

creation, to reduce this creation to a simple exotic, primitive, and commercial element."[53]

The status of Chokwe art as a "floating signifier" was, as Viteix constantly reflects on,

not an abstract theoretical idea, not simply an argument over the nature of art, but a

power struggle with dire consequences for life and limb. In other words, he saw that the

feedback loop between body and signification was nearly immediate, a connection

decidedly more veiled in the societies in which Paul Klee and other primitivists worked.

That feedback loop between body and signification would likewise become more and

more dispersed even within Angola, an issue I will discuss in the next chapter.

The grid series have a finish that appears conservative against his earlier anti-

colonial work. In particular, a series of engravings from the late 1960s and early 1970s

depict horrific scenes of violence. Figure 39, an untitled engraving from 1969, is a scene

of irrational massacre. One perpetrator holds a Kalashnikov at the head of a mother with

two children in her arms. Another figure, bearing sharpened teeth, attacks a prostrate

figure with a machete. A bird of prey pecks at a fallen corpse. The all-over violence

described in this etching recalls Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) and, later on, Ibrahim El

Salahi's *The Inevitable* (1984-85) (see figs. 47 and 48). The gestures and facial

expressions of the figures, the tangle of bodies, and the utter chaos are emphasized by the

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[53] Teixeira, 285.

black and white starkness of all three images. Viteix's engraving also connects to the 20th century use of woodcuts as a political statement of the crude primitivism of violence, a technique that would be utilized later by South African resistance artists.

At this time Viteix began to develop the logic of the Chokwe pictograms as a frame for his works, almost identical to the *Hamba wa nzambi* sculpture. Beginning in the early 1970s he developed the idea more fully and paid more attention to the finish of this register (see fig. 49). While the works still include war imagery, the border begins to individuates from the chaos to become a paratextual element of the image. The border indicates the tools of his trade, or the functionality of form in building the image contained within. *Luta Armada* divides the internal register into four scenes that again use his symbols of violence, the Kalashnikov and the machete. The dialectic between the internal anti-logic of war and the external logical frame is emphasized with the use of ambient watercolor, an almost playful border. In fact, another painting of this period is often emphasized at the danger of mistaking Viteix's work as kitch, *Estudo (N'Zinga) (minha filha)* (fig. 50). Even in this work, we see faint penciled markings of right angles forming the parameters of the image with arrows directed at them for emphasis.

As I have been suggesting, the grid series is a dialogical exploration not only of geometry and expression, but also of hope and mourning, a common theme in African anti-colonial cultural production. In Angolan literature and art, mourning is very much described on a visceral level. In the last stanza of *Construção Civil* Cardoso scathingly critiques civil construction thus: "in a house built to shelter/ under an ethical guise, only the mortar/ contains the color of blood that I put on it all!" Cardoso uses the Portuguese word *rebouco* for mortar, translated from the Arabic *rabuq*, which can mean, in addition

to mortar, a plaster or gesso used as a surface to receive paint and decor. At the time

Cardoso authored this poem, he was imprisoned at Tarrafal concentration camp in Cape

Verde.[54] It is likely the *rebouco* Cardoso speaks of is the artistic format or surface that is

the conceptual condition of art, but also that which covered the walls at Tarrafal, what

was to become known as "the camp of slow death."

Viteix's *Construção Civil* is the work that best reveals the line that Angolan

marxists straddled: While Viteix's *Construção Civil* echoes socialist realist scenes of the

heroic worker, the notion of work and its rootedness in the body is politicized. The title

delivers a shock of irony when we realize that these workers could be the forced laborers

of Tarrafal. Irony was endemic to Tarrafal; it was in the village of Chão Bom (Good

Ground) and on one of the most plentiful islands of Cape Verde. Warning against the

simplistic content of propaganda, Viteix instead illustrates the dangers of nominal

political gestures in art, or in creating scenes that mask power relations and their

viscerally experienced consequences. Viteix illustrates this bodily process not only

showing the worker undergoing action in *Construção Civil*, but in pieces such as *Os

Mergulhadores* and the sepia ink rendered *Sem Titulo* of 1992 (fig. 51). In the latter, the

bodies are forcefully prominent as they pop out of the grid, emphasized by the ink-soaked

legs and flicks of ink.

Returning to the treatment of the human figure in *Sem Titulo* of 1992, the peril that

is illustrated in the two figures could be a result of a scene of war, if we read the object in

the arms of the upright figure as a gun and the action of the supine figure as one of

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[54] Tarrafal was built in 1936 after the Spanish Civil War. It was used by the Salazar regime to
house communists and dissenters. Later on, African revolutionaries were imprisoned there before
it shut down after the military coup and the independence of the African colonies.

falling. Perhaps the flicks of ink are the loss of blood from the falling/fallen figure. The

contrast of this scene with the grid behind it is the most exaggerated of all of the grid

series. It is of the level of cognitive dissonance, not only for the contrasting treatment of

brush stroke, controlled versus gestural, but also in opticality versus virtuality. Redinha

emphasized the opticality of the Chokwe pictograms, which was due to both their format

and to his own format, the watercolors he completed and the books he published. What

we will discuss now, and what will lead us to the next chapter, is the element of virtuality

that Viteix relates to the pictograms, the overtly representational aspects of the grid

series.

Before the grid series Viteix experimented with an almost bodying forth of the

Chokwe pictogram. On the left hand side of the image in *Maternidade II* (1973) Viteix

places a Chokwe symbol that alternatively signifies a tree or an anthropomorph (fig. 52).

He has outlined the figure in white and gradated areas of the figure, which has the visual

effect of three-dimensionality. Later on in *Sem Titulo* (*Untitled*) of 1983 shows a similar

anthropomorphic pictogram, this time singled out as the sole subject of the drawing (fig.

53). Unlike the treatment of the pictogram in the grid series, this one has dimension,

volume, and texture; it has been drawn as if it were an object. By giving language the

appearance of an object, *Untitled* suggests that cultural knowledge in the form of shared

symbols is one of society's natural resources. More powerfully in this pastel, we see a

linguistic element bodied forth.

David Summers is interested in how theories of perception throughout history have

influenced artists to develop representations of space, volume, perspective, etc. [55] In

other words, what he sees as characteristic of Western modernism is acceptance or refusal

of the idea that the viewer is able to complete a picture from the view that is shown,

whether it is in spatial relations or in velocity. The ability for the (human) viewer to do

this depended entirely on the eye, the impact of light and sensation. Leaving that to the

side, however, I want to focus on his assertion that virtuality depends upon the

identification of the surface as an indicator of the field of vision itself.[56] In Viteix's

work, this relation is even more exacerbated with his actual framing of the surface by

optical figures, the Chokwe symbols.

It is less important, then, whether Viteix used conventions of abstraction in his

description of bodies and movement in the inner register of the works in the grid series.

Rather, it is the tension between subject and object, which we read as a concern of his in

Theory and Practice. Summers explains that the theory of perception was, above all, the

belief in the subjectivity not only of the viewer and her/his ability to complete a picture in

the mind, but also in the point of view—the perspective—of the artist. Additionally,

whether or not the cues of ethnicity are recognizable is less important than the faith he

has in this particular definition of subjectivity. In 1992 *Sem Titulo* the two figures in the

foreground—and recall that foreground/background is a key feature of virtuality—have

masks that serve as their heads. This piece shows the tension between modes of

perception and formalism that postcolonial African artists were faced with as a matter of

fact. What differentiated Viteix from many of his peers, both in Angola and in Europe,

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[55] David Summers, *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism* (London: Phaidon, 2003).

[56] Ibid., 450-451.

was his commentary on the politics of choosing significatory devices—the political conditions under which that process and those encounters take place.

Variations on the Chokwe image in Angolan Painting

What is missing in Summers's book and also, strangely, in most of the the histories of African modernist art, is the dimensions of the powerful cultural agreement that takes place as artists from African nations use the canvas on which to figure African nationalism and/or modernism. Summers emphasizes that the transition from three to two dimensions involves a surface, a format, with which the viewer has a relationship— whether canvas, paper, or cave wall. That is, the surface upon which two-dimensional images are constructed is both a conceptual and a real space, the former determining the ideas represented, the latter the physical characteristics of the representation. However, any "world" history such as his must account for the motivated aspects of that format and its logical underpinnings, such as what I described operating in the Diamang publications. What Summers describes as the transition from three-dimensional object to a two-dimensional surface is not merely an illusionistic representation of the Chokwe mask, something that refers to a "real space" of the past.[57] In the attempts to represent the Mwana Pwo mask, for example, on her/his canvas, the Angolan artist depicts a cultural form that is assumed to be obsolete, or at least to be separate from everyday, usually urban, life *because* of the epistemological and physical violence of colonialism. Viteix and his contemporaries used the Chokwe symbols, including what came to be the symbol of the mask itself, operating in various degrees of medium critique and this very process of painting previously ritualized three-dimensional objects.

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[57] Summers, 433.

Jorge Gumbe (b. 1959), António Ole (1951), and Francisco Domingos "Van" Van-Dúnem (b. 1959), three other founding members of Unap, included elements of the Chokwe image corpus in their work. Van studied cultural research methods with Gerhard Kubik, scholar of the Chokwe *sona* symbols. He includes *sona* figures in his work, usually placing them next to schematic representations of Chokwe figurines. In Van's untitled oil painting from 2002 (fig. 57), representations of a pair of male and female Chokwe figurines straddle the *sona* representation of the "couple." The figures rest are illusionistically represented as supported by a horizontal surface. Though the painting is divided into these three registers, the *sona* drawing recedes into a type of backdrop to the space of the figures. This mixing of illusionistic modes and free-floating *sona* or other pictographic elements is seen in many Angolan paintings. It does not overtly indicate a preoccupation with form itself, but more for the mythical content of Chokwe art generally. Note the title for another of Van's paintings, *Miragem Mística* (*Mystical Mirage*) (fig. 58), in which the mixing of registers emphasizes the theme of primordial formlessness.

Adriano Mixinge has differentiated Gumbe from Viteix, in that the former uses the Chokwe symbols, in particular the spiral *tchisokar*, in the foreground of his work, while for him the latter's use is more superficial.[58] Mixinge points out that the *tchisokar* becomes a verb within the image (see fig. 59), in which case the spiral shape is akin to Uche Okeke's use of the same, as it performs a syntactical job within a unified representational image. I disagree with Mixinge's dialectic he creates between Viteix's and Gumbe's use of the pictograms, where Viteix's use is decorative and not formally

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[58] Adriano Mixinge, *Made in Angola*, 193-4.

functional. However, Mixinge's important argument is that the Chokwe pictograms had linguistic significance to many postcolonial Angolan artists in their search for new (old) formal systems. The differences among the work of Gumbe, Ole, or Viteix are the degree to which "ethnic" symbolism becomes an illusionistic practice, what Viteix criticized about European art, or a representation of exoticism or a lost "tradition."

There exists in postcolonial art a spectrum between using indigenous forms in a medium-conscious manner and using masks and symbols as content, whether as a mythical history, timelessness, spirituality, metaphysicality, or even chauvinistic ethnic identification. Elizabeth Harney writes about a particular divide in the Ecole de Dakar in Senegal between the romanticism of Papa Ibra Tall's genericized mask and the more formalist work of Iba N'Diaye.[59] Natural Synthesis in Nigeria falls somewhere in between the two poles, as Chika Okeke-Agulu argues about Uche Okeke's work.

Angolan artists likewise used the mask as a symbol of Africanity. There are many theories as to its use and significance, from its indication of farce to romantic nativism and self-primitivism. The range of uses of Chokwe imagery, whether in form, content, or both in Angolan painting is therefore wide. Early paintings explore ethnographic imagery, the most famous by Albano Neves e Sousa (b. 1921), who was a curator at the Dundo Museum and painted a large mural at the airport in Luanda (see fig. 60 and 61). His portrait paintings of women who represent ethnic groups, many of which feature topless women, spawned a huge tourist market for paintings of exoticized "ethnic" women. These paintings sold all over the country are side by side with paintings of

[59] Elizabeth Harney, *In Senghor's Shadow: Art, Politics, and the avant-garde in Senegal, 1960-1995* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

quasi-Chokwe masks (see figs. 62 and 63). This type of imagery is not confined to the tourist market, however. Masks, native women, and Chokwe symbols are all popular elements of artists at Unap and can be regularly seen in the gallery there (see fig. 64).

In Angola, the mask not only appears in painting but is also a theme of Angolan literature, the most famous being Pepetela's *Mwana Pwo* (1978). Mixinge writes about the author's falling in love with a photograph of the *Mwana Pwo* mask that inspired him as he wrote the book. [60]   According to Pepetela, he locked himself away for a week with the photo, food, and copious amounts of beer, and wrote his novel *Mwana Pwo*. He saw the mask as a "support" for the work, an inspiration. Mixinge explains that the desacralization of the mask in nationalistic writing and painting is directly related to the loss of aura that Walter Benjamin describes in his essay on mechanical reproduction. In the case of Pepetela, he worked from an actual photograph of the mask.[61]

Benjamin's "Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" is useful to think about a loss of aura with regards to the masks going from ritual object to representation. For Benjamin, that loss happens as art enters new modes of production, really reproduction. At the same time Benjamin asserts that the loss of aura is emancipatory, as art loses its "parasitic" dependence on ritual and religion.[62] His essay negotiates a dual mourning and hope about the new age he describes. This same duality operates in Angolan post-Independence art, the mourning, or *saudade* that accompanies colonial modernism and the elation over the People having authorial agency.

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[60] Mixinge, ibid., pp. 152-159.
[61] Ibid., 156.
[62] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Reprinted in *Illuminations* (New York: Schoken Books, 1978).

Portuguese painter Joaquim Rodrigo is the only other artist who uses the Chokwe image corpus to this political end, pushing the envelope further than Viteix ever did. Rodrigo, responding to the political situation in Portugal, was an anti-fascist painter whose philosophical explorations into painting led him to quote the overall format of the Chokwe murals. Like many Angolan and Portuguese artists he read José Redinha's book and was fascinated with the formal aspects of the murals. Rodrigo's painting that is influenced by the murals is the first of its kind in Portugal, not only for its break from a long history of conservatism in Portuguese academic art, but also for its critique of the colonial project. Because of the oppressive political environment, Rodrigo had to veil his criticism and he found that the Chokwe pictographic language and its composition within the murals gave him the ability to mix semiotic codes and embed subversive symbols.

Rodrigo's book *O Complementarismo em Pintura* (Contemplementarism in Painting) is an elaborate study of painting in relation to science and theories of color and form, and specifically how he has arranged them in his own work.[63] While his interest was in those basic acts of perception and memory with regards to visual art, his scientific method was also a political act to de-mystify art, as did Viteix, and declare it a human activity. Rodrigo was particularly concerned with the colonial project, and his most pointed political paintings started in the early 1960s as the colonial war was ramped up to a very violent level.

Rodrigo covertly responded in his work to political wrongs in Portugal, such as the limited suffrage rights under Salazar in *Suffrage* (1960) (fig. 54), and during the 60s his

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[63] Joaquim Rodrigo, *O Compelementarismo em Pintura: Contribução para a Ciência da Arte* (Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1982).

work turned to the political and artistic tropes of Africa. In addition to painting homage

to the fallen Patrice Lumumba in *M.L.* (1961) (fig. 55), Rodrigo thematized the Angolan

war. He paid close attention to the Chokwe and Luena wall murals, borrowing from their

compositional techniques and use of pictographic signification. In *19 S [Nightmares]*

(1961) he schematically illustrates some of the horrors of the colonial war and revolution,

and includes in the mix the letters E, A, L, S, and the number 19 (fig. 56).

Rodrigo was exceptional in European art in his awareness of, and ultimate critique

of, the colonial order that made it possible to learn new ways of signification from other

cultures. Pedro Lapa argues that unlike most European primitivists,

> It is very significant that, to the degree that the relationship of the painting
> of Joaquim Rodrigo is established with African art, a conscience of the
> historical political reality of this continent and the colonizing role of the
> west is also revealed by it in its inhumanity. The interest for these
> aesthetic forms is not yet submitted to a mythification of 'primitivism,'
> understanding the other culture as a magical force.[64]

Viteix's and Rodrigo's suspicion of illusionism in art was related to the suspicion of

political illusions, the obfuscations of the harsh realities of the masses.

Viteix's work reaches towards Chokwe art as being logical systems exemplified in

the *sona* practice. *Sona* is self-reflexive, recursive, and flexible system based on mutable

logic. It is used for ritual puposes in the *mukanda* initiation and also as a game that

involved the community. It was likewise a popular form that children and women

involved themselves in reproducing on habitation walls. In any of these cases, the format

and its logic are coterminous with the content. Any representational strategy, whether

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[64] Pedro Lapa, *Joaquim Rodrigo: Time and Inscription* (Lisbon: Museu do Chiado, 1999), 86.

pictographic or ideographic, also exposed the logic of its making. Like Viteix's work *sona* is also, therefore, is a dialogue between textual and paratextual registers. In the next chapter I will further discuss this dialogical structure in terms of the digitization and online presence of the Trienal de Luanda's Lunda Tchokwe project.

Any systematic social cohesion such as found in *sona* was increasingly challenged by the violent clashes over diamond fields in the Lundas. In the years Viteix was painting the grid series, the early 1980s, UNITA had rearmed. In 1984 UNITA soldiers attacked diamond operations that had been previously run by Diamang in the Cuango area and a diamond sorting center in Nzaji in 1985.[65] By the mid 1980s the social infrastructure that Diamang established, including a mining school in Lucapa, shut down and never reopened, even after the market picked back up in the late 1980s.

UNITA's exploitation of the diamond fields was ad hoc and administered through violence. Instead of setting up any official operation or company, the military bought diamonds from *garimpeiros* and sold them to fund their ongoing military operations, including their proliferation of land mines. On the other side, the MPLA gained back control of the "formal sector" by partnering with international diamond interests and allowing foreign investment. All of these diamond interests had their own means of violently "protecting" their operations, supposedly to curb theft and the black market. We will read that the situation has in most cases worsened as the Chokwe and other locals of Lunda describe the violent restrictions on their movement and even political

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[65] Institute for Security Studies, "War, peace, and diamonds in Angola: Popular perceptions of the diamond industry in the Lundas" (Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies, 25 June 2004).

assassinations by the MPLA and affiliated interests.[66] In the next chapter I will argue that the increasing chaos and complexity of the diamond industry can be directly linked to the triennial's online Lunda Tchokwe exhibition.

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[66] Ibid., 11.

Chapter Five

Digital Lunda Tchokwe: biopower and protocol

Along with the severance of art from tradition and religion, Walter Benjamin

emphasizes the medium of film and photography as ushering in nothing less than a new

way of seeing. Viteix's grid series negotiates the various registers of seeing and meaning

possible within the Chokwe pictorial corpus. The series's dialogical structure is an

"intraface" of formal structure and expression, a surface that is both textual and

paratextual. It relays representational information about contemporary Angola, which in

many cases was a scene of great tragedy and suffering, while referring to structure *itself*,

both formal and political. The multivalence that obtains in the grid series was predicated

on a faith in the canvas as a site of representation, or a screen to host a play of signs and

content. Turning back to the Lunda Tchokwe project, I will examine a similar dialogical

structure that the images now operate under: computer science. Here, the Chokwe

images become icons, not only in the sense that they are an element of visual branding,

but also that they visually aid the interactive interface of the digital medium.

This chapter is also a conclusion: to return to *Estampa 9A* and the Lunda Tchokwe

project's online presence.[1] Lunda Tchokwe is another medium and format for the

pictograms, which, in digital media, is a grid. A whole new order of language underlies

the legible interface of the Chokwe image, computer code and its materializer/mover—

protocol. Like Viteix's paintings, the online Lunda Tchokwe project has built within it

ideas of utopia and dystopia. However, the structure of its interface is more accurately

described an "intraface," as it manages a visual environment that is direct connected to

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[1] When referring to the triennial website I will use the past tense, as it went offline in late 2008.

hardware, software, internet connectivity—in short, all of those elements that shape the transmission of meaning. The online presence of the Chokwe images and the accompanying removal of Redinha's signature referred to the possibilities for aesthetic judgment and free access, but, paradoxically, the veneer of access could only materialize by a medium that is increasingly structured by a race for ownership on the level of technology and code. It shows, per Eugene Thacker, "how the question 'how does it work?' is also the question of 'whom does it work for?'."[2] In short, the content of the Chokwe image(s) is hostage to the protocols of its transmission. The authors of tightly controlled computer protocols are the owners and authors of code, material resources, technology, and politics. They make up the silent underside of digital culture, which in Angola, is exposed in the frequency of its breakdown.

The first part of the chapter will examine the aesthetics of the interface of the Lunda Tchokwe project. Each image from Redinha's book was displayed and each manipulated to remove his signature. In most cases the image was cropped to exclude his signature, in others the rubber stamp Photoshop tool was used. In some cases, the human or animal figure contained in the image was cut into. Individual figures within a composition were singled out and/or truncated and many were obviously part-images. In those cases of part-images, the manipulations recalled those of early surrealist photographers as the incomplete and de-contexualized image depended even more on the entired webpage and the progressive logic of the internet. Instead of symbology as the order of knowledge, the Chokwe image was genetically similar to the iconic language of the internet, the optical legibility used to enact hypertextual play.

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[2] Eugene Thacker, "Forward: Protocol is as Protocol Does." In Alexander Galloway, *Protocol: how control exists after decentralization* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), xii.

The chapter will subsequently complicate that legibility by discussing the digital divide as it exists in computer code and the protocol of its transmission. Digitization now rules information production and consumption globally and is run by a veiled code language. The Lunda Tchokwe project is a product of this code in its existence as a file and in its transmission on the internet. In reality, digital information is neither free nor accessible to all in Angola. First, there is a profound power struggle over authorship, which is actually written into computer code, what becomes intellectual property. Then there is the issue of the near monopoly of telecommunications by a few well-placed companies and individuals. Authorship/ownership has not died since the 1960s, but, on the contrary, has proliferated.[3]

I will conclude by describing the Lunda Tchokwe as a nexus. It is, as previously noted, an intraface of representational and technical elements. It manages ideas of the Angolan nation, while being plagued by the realities of power and control.

Intellectual Property and the Nation

One of the main goals of the staff for the Lunda Tchokwe project was to initiate a process of creating physical libraries and databases, addressing a persistent and challenging consequence of the decades-long conflict in Angola is the dearth of intellectual property. After the war, libraries, archives, universities, and bookstores were all but non-existent and when existent, they were underfunded and dilapidated. During

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[3] See Nicholas Rombes's critique of Roland Barthes's notion of the death of the author in "The Rebirth of the Author." In Arthur Kroker and Marilouise Kroker, *Critical Digital Studies: A Reader* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), pp. 437-442. He states, "Roland Barthes's famous prediction about the death of the author has come to pass, but not because the author is nowhere, but rather because the author is everywhere. …the more roundly and confidently the author has been dismissed as a myth, a construction, and act of bad faith, the more strongly she has emerged."

the 1980s digital revolution taking place in many parts of the world, Angola's war made it impossible to develop a telecommunication infrastructure or functional databases. As Claúdia Veiga explained, not even Redinha's *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* was to be found in the country, even though it is a book about Angolan art. In addition to the governmental archives slowly starting to recover and receive funding, the Dokolo Foundation set into motion plans for a library to be housed in a contemporary cultural center in Luanda.[4]

Part of what this dissertation has discussed is enclave economies that, at present, are written into the physical environment of Angola. Similarly, the information economy is deposited in enclave spaces that are written on the physical structures of archives and governmental offices. South African photographer Guy Tillim has created a series of images of these physical spaces in Mozambique, Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Madagascar. Two photographs in particular emphasize the anachronistic materials and technology in governmental and university facilites in the Congo (figs. 64 and 65). Papers spill from crowded shelves in the court records office and no computer is in sight. Similarly the only technological equipment in the university office is an early 20th century telephone on the desk and a typewriter on the filing shelf in the background.

At the risk of reinforcing the image of Africa as a series of dilapidated places, Tillim's photographs of governmental spaces illustrate of the place of government in maintaining and controlling intellectual property of African nations. Archives, libraries, and art and anthropological collections in Angola are all similarly underfunded and limited by their outdated technologies of information management. Compare, for

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[4] Claúdia Veiga, interview with author, October 5, 2008.

example, an office such as the court documents office of Tillim's photograph with the photograph of Alvim's triennial office. The comparison is much like the comparison made in Chapter One between Unap's gallery and those of the triennial.

The distinctions of art and the archive merge in many ways under the rubric of intellectual property, as they both involve the production and administration of knowledge. The triennial's exchange with the Ministry of Culture of the printed Lunda Tchokwe series for the rights of reproduction was a case in point. It demonstrated the extent to which that administration, or really the ability to transmit knowledge, is governed by the state, and also *which* form of the state. The Ministry of Culture administers intellectual property laws and permissions that govern cultural items. A mixture of laws exists on the books that govern intellectual property. Some are left over from the MPLA laws of the mid 1970s and some are international standards that have been adopted in the years since. Angola is a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization, and has variously adopted their standards of property. As far as more conventional media go, however, Angola's laws are fairly straightforward.

In an interview published about the conceptual aspects of the Lunda Tchokwe project, Fernando Alvim recalls,

> The Lunda Tchokwe printed series became primarily a legal study, to know
> the laws of the State that permit reproductions, and we found an Act of
> 1976 that was very good. We formally petitioned the Ministry of Culture
> for permission to edit the paintings, in total 100 works. The reason?
> Because we intend to provide to the State and the national treasury an
> inheritance that is registered and protected permanently, in addition to the
> reproduction of images that existed only in a book that is barely published

and rare. Therefore it is a very important aesthetic recovery because the
[Chokwe works] impacted a great number of Angolan painters very
positively.[5]

The Ministry of Culture retains some of the post-independence laws written with the

intent to reclaim the cultural heritage of Angola. Globally, however, nation-states have

increasingly abandoned such laws in favor of international standards that keep up with

technological innovation, or "informatics."

Two intellectual property laws in Angola applied to the duplication and alteration

of *Paredes*. First was a type of fair use exception in its duplication. In Angola, this is

permitted in cases where the work is being translated into a national language of Angola

and transmitted within Angola or to its citizens abroad.[6] A second more philosophical

argument applied to Lunda Tchokwe in article 18, a moral copyrights law that punishes

those who alter or appropriate works. Under this law the triennial could, and did, argue,

that Redinha altered and appropriated the Chokwe artists' work without due credit. The

body of work would then become national heritage, under the protection of the state.

A condition this law is that the copies must be distributed to Angolans, whether at

home or abroad. The use of the internet is a seemingly perfect method of dissemination,

as it operates under the auspices of "openness." By removing Redinha's signature,

Lunda Tchokwe attempted to detach the image from previous colonial ownership and

circulated as cultural information and as an aesthetic image to be interpreted on its own

merits.[7] Their use of the Chokwe image, then, closely follows that of Viteix's, where the

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[5] Fernando Alvim, "Press." Accessed March 5, 2006: http://www.trienal-de-
luanda.net/2007/index.php?page_id=373&page=2 page no longer available.
[6] Artigo 30, "Regime de Licenças" Lei 4/90 de 10 de Março, Lei dos Direitos de Autor.
[7] Trienal de Luanda, "O Resgate, a Absorção e a Visibilidade." http://www.trienal-de-

image is wrenched away from its colonial context with the intent to popularize semantic

production, but in the process, obeys a strict logic and material format. Unlike Viteix's

modernist grid, the grid of the Lunda Tchokwe image is constituted by digital language

and the configuration of the pixilated computer monitor.

The Iconic Interface of the Lunda Tchokwe project

The triennial boasted an elaborate website constructed by the open source content

management system WordPress. The homepage of the triennial used as its visual

backdrop N'Dilo Mutima's *Manroja* (2004), a photo collage composed by a five by four

grid. Each photo shows a scene staged in a white cube with male dancers in various

poses and configurations (fig. 66). The triennial website exploited this configuration,

using several of these images into which to place their project links (fig. 67). Each

project link opened onto a host of pages successively viewed by clicking the "next"

button (fig. 68).

The triennial used the website in lieu of an exhibition catalog. Each page of the

website had the capability of being downloaded in PDF format. Theirs was an innovative

approach that allowed them to bypass the expense of an exhibition catalog and its

distribution. Using WordPress as a publishing platform gave the triennial additional

flexibility and directness in its ability to reach its audience.

WordPress is a free storage and publishing platform with an operational flexibility

that allows it to be hosted by any web server. Because it is an open source program,

authors can insert their own plugins, or functional add-on capabilities, compatible with

luanda.net/?page_id=101, accessed March 8, 2007, page no longer available.

the host application. Plugins allow users to personalize the functionality and appearance

of the website. For these specialized plugins, the triennial used WordPress Design

Praxis, a website that writes and hosts open source plugins. By compiling hundreds of

these programs into one site, WordPress Design Praxis facilitates bloggers as they build

their sites without having to write new code each time—it helps to exploit WordPress's

mix and match platform. Additionally, WordPress allows the authors and designers of

the website to operate in languages other than English, which addresses the criticism that

the internet imperialistically spreads "cyber-English." By running and writing the

website in Portuguese, the triennial could direct its content to an Angolan audience, at

least those literate in Portuguese and computers. With this, Alvim reiterates that his main

audience is Angolan and his conceptual platform is Angolan.

The homepage contained links to the triennial calendar, a sponsor page, select

pictures of the included visual art, the cinema project, and a section on the education

initiative that featured drawings by local children. As I previously discussed, the

homepage linked to photographs of the triennial's logistical work, one being the "spaces"

section that displayed a succession of Mutima's photographs of galleries in various stages

of renovation. The website was exhaustive in its inclusion and conceptual layout.

Content portals such as the one that features 20-30 pictures of their billboard project were

included alongside schematic computer aided mockups for sponsors such as the Angolan

airline TAAG. On that same portal, the triennial staff included iconic black figures in

basketball uniforms, labeled Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson (see fig. 69). Their

inclusion of Jordan and Johnson in the promotional materials was part of a wide-ranging

definition of, and attempts to include, "performance artists."

The online exhibition of Lunda Tchokwe was a key medium through which to increase the visibility of the images scanned from *Paredes*. To the extent that they stayed online and were available to those with internet access, the digitized images could be seen and distributed infinitely. As image files, they could be downloaded and stored on any number of hard drives—mine included—and kept for various purposes. Lunda Tchokwe was the site of the project's impermanent presence, as fleeting ephemeral images on computer screens. The digital image of the Chokwe murals was the apotheosis of the opticality described throughout the present study, the ultimate visual detachment of image from medium and material process—where image is a visual effect of computer protocol.

The staff altered and exhibited each image from *Paredes* and put them onto the website in the same order in which they appear in the book. Some images only removed Redinha's signature and some images were cropped in and/or rotated, as in *Estampa 5A* (fig. 70 and 71). The cropping and/or rotation results in the images as though they were modernist formal compositions, able to be rotated to any degree and still remain compositionally clear. In fact, Fernando Alvim mused about how much the Chokwe images look like modern European art in their treatment of form.[8] The image cropped to this extent creates part-images dependent on the digital medium itself. Their syntax was one enacted by the mouse click.

For example, in the Lunda Tchokwe version of *Estampa 1,* the image excludes the top of the image in the *Paredes* version—five human figures floating above three lines—

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[8] Interview with author, October 5, 2008.

and the bottom, three groupings of lines/shapes (figs. 72 and 73). The cropping and removal of Redinha's signature visually and materially detaches the Chokwe image from its previous format, the physical book *Paredes*. On the one hand, the Lunda Tchokwe's alterations recapitulate Redinha's appropriation of the wall murals in Lunda North by removing his signature, what I argued previously was a sign of its format. On the other hand, we can think of the Lunda Tchokwe project as being another layer of meaning added to the image that depends on a progression of appropriations, silences, and media.

Rosalind Krauss previously argued that techniques of manipulation such as cropping, solarizing, and mirroring in photography were meant to highlight the visual sign within the photograph as dependent on syntax to create meaning.[9] The manipulation of images in Surrealist photography in the 1920s emphasized the dependence on the frame of the photograph, as it is in a structural dialogue with the image. In the case of the Surrealist journal, the frame also indicates a relationship between images as their syntactical progression that robs them of their "sense of presence."[10] Unlike the surrealist photos, the images on Lunda Tchokwe are not truncated in order to create a doubling *within* the image or a collage with each other. Rather, their incompleteness on the web page is part of a digital spatio/temporal logic in which the operation is never finished; the "surfing" never completes itself. In this digital iteration of the part-images, this operational logic both veils and depends on the complex relationships at work behind it—technical, political, and material.

Krauss' argument rests on the general linguistic argument by Lacan and Derrida,

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[9] Rosalind Krauss, "Photographic Conditions of Surrealism" in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986).
[10] Ibid., 107.

who both understood the syntactical progression of language to be propelled forward by absence, or language's removal from and desire for the "real." Absence is also the condition upon which digital interfaces work. That is, the logic of digital culture is the hypertext, non-referential and horizontal. Alexander Galloway argues that web-based images and, really, the entire conception of a network, should be based on an examination of what it *does* and not what it *is*.[11] The truncated Lunda Tchokwe images added to the constant interactivity and play of the internet, the progression from webpage to webpage with periodic pauses to consider an image or text for a short length of time. By isolating not only one figure from within a composition from *Paredes*, but one part of a figure, the online "Lunda Tchokwe" changes the time element of Redinha's visual composition: it is instead one momentary stop within the forward and backward clicking of the page succession.   It is a part-image, never complete and never stable.

On the triennial website, each image was part of an interface. The structural depth below the visual surface that Redinha read through his quasi-structural analysis is, in the web configuration, a mere visual threshold that opens up onto yet another flat image, and so forth. It is an image that performs a function, instead of revealing a hidden structure. Within each webpage/image is embedded another link to an image, ad infinitum. In that sense, the aesthetic consideration of an image is de-emphasized. Instead, the image acts with other images within a "content management system."

In another sense, the image was part of an overall ethical argument made by the triennial. The transparency of aesthetic decisions in "Lunda Tchokwe" was aided by the

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[11] Alexander Galloway, *Protocol: how control exists after decentralization* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), xv.

transparency of interactivity and infinite hypertextual activity available to the viewer/user. The website followed the logic of the internet, which increasingly generates an iconic language that can be universally read. In the 1960s, Marshall McLuhan famously theorized the transformation to a universal digitally based culture in which medium and message elide. When media becomes the message, he famously asserts in *Understanding Media*, "[w]e return to the inclusive form of the icon."[12] Like Viteix's use of the Chokwe symbol, there is a promise in universal legibility and functionality by the masses.

Here, a distinction needs to be made between symbol and icon. Recall that Viteix read into the Chokwe visual corpus the existence of symbol-making, the negotiation of consensus over meaning in Angolan society. On the website, and icon refers to McLuhan's sense of a universally recognized visual element, like a symbol. But in the historical use of the term icon, as in its religious function that enacts a transmission to and from God, the icon here creates a movement and physical change in the technology. Therefore, the superficial interplay between structure and image is not unlike Viteix's paintings that included textual and paratextual information, or the grid frame and the representational internal register. In Lunda Tchokwe, however, the paratextual elements of the image are underpinned by a technically dense and dispersed system in which function and image increasingly elide. Each image on the Lunda Tchokwe online exhibition was embedded into the format of the triennial's entire website. The image was on the left side of the webpage and changed with each click of the forward or backward button just at the top of the image. The "Trienal de Luanda/Lunda Tchokwe" heading

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[12] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media* (Berkeley: Gingko Press, 2003), 24.

and the "Portugués/English" setting were to the side.

The functionality of each page is thus the frame, the paratextual information that instructs us to how to use the website. In the Lunda Tchokwe project the "frame" is the generalized icons of the internet, or the visual naturalizing of the digital interface. The textual, or content-based, element is the scanned image of "past" icons, non-functional and dependent on "tool" icons.

There are an infinite amount of combinations and actions available as we interact with the interface. It is also, however, a nexus for various functions of technology itself. Alexander R. Galloway argues that the interface should be thought of in terms of the "layer model," which encompasses both the "significant surface" of the screen, ATM, phone keypad, etc., as well as its status as a threshold onto something else, another screen but also another type of media.[13] He explains, "media are essentially nothing but formal containers housing other pieces of media," like layers of an onion.[14] These layers not only refer to our encounter with various iconic and verbal environments, but also to packets of digital information, or as he calls them "globs of code." To understand Lunda Tchokwe in terms of the layer model is to account for its appropriation of previous images and media such as the book *Paredes*, and the Chokwe murals themselves. The layer model assumes a materiality of digital culture and a more media-specific analysis of images today.

To understand the full spectrum of the digital presence of the Chokwe images requires a shift in understanding how the image operates within a formal and social

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[13] Alexander R. Galloway, "The Unworkable Interface" *New Literary History* (2009), 931-955.
[14] Ibid., 936.

system, beyond simply operating on a referential absence as in the surrealist photos. On the one hand, the logic of the internet exhibition entails gathering together images and structuring a sentence, the way we click through the images on the Lunda Tchokwe portal. On the other, each image/webpage is only a fleeting trace of a whole other set of operations of computer code, what Katherine Hayles calls the "unconscious" that underlies the legibility of what we see on the screen.[15] In addition to the succession of images as a semantic relation of signifiers, they are also within a systematic relationship both seen and unseen. Where Krauss attends to the index as a physical process of light and chemical change, or the index, the digital image encompasses a more complex process of the materiality of the image—it is a process that, if finished, disappears.

The images are syntactically propelled forward because of the absence of a referent, as they were in *Paredes*. But also, their movement derives from the absence of any direct indexical relationship to what is pictured, or even a permanent connection to their host technology. The images we see on Lunda Tchokwe are only the fleeting manifestation of protocological operations on the computer screen, and image that in turn acts within an interface that facilitate the operation of technology. In fact, the ephemerality of the Lunda Tchokwe project was evidenced in the sudden disappearance of their project from the web, which in truth was the evaporation of the project itself. Most users are only aware of this unconscious when there are glitches in the flow of code, much like the description of psychic breakdowns in the breakdown of the mind's internal dialog.

Digitization and Data Transmission

Rather than the Lunda Tchokwe framing an Angolan logic, as Viteix attempted in

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[15] N. Katherine Hayles, "Traumas of Code" *Critical Inquiry* (Autumn 2006), 137.

the grid series, the Chokwe image is, on a functional level, subordinate to the "universal" logic of digital networks and connectivity. The conception of free access relies on technology that standardizes images to a universal language of transmission and connectivity. The ways in which binary has constituted computer code, however, are notoriously diverse and non-standardized. The historical challenge in computer programming is to make separately authored globs of code compatible with each other. Then that code must be compatible with the hardware that makes possible the visual interface—only one example being the computer monitor. The history of the information age has been largely defined by the pursuit of technological standards. Ironically, the rationality and accessibility of digital information is as much a fantasy as Diamang's rational Scientific Colonialism.

The digitization of Redinha's book is perhaps the most profound gesture of the Lunda Tchokwe project, as it "liquifies" Angola's cultural capital in order to circulate it. It converts the media object of colonial capital, the book, into an even more ephemeral media operation, the electronic-based internet. Again, the removal of Redinha's signature is a metaphor for this transition as it did not erase authorship, but profoundly dispersed it. During each step of its conversion and transmission, the Lunda Tchokwe images are constituted both directly and indirectly by a matrix of owners, from software engineers to hardware producers, to internet broadcasters.

For example, Lunda Tchokwe used software to convert the scanned book to a digital file that was likely proprietary software and hardware. Those programs are a patchwork of code packets that are recycled from one program to another, assembled under constantly shifting ownerships and authorships. The intellectual property war over

software is now notorious, as Microsoft quickly patents various combinations of those globs of code. Program files now not only contain the data that runs the program but also have written into the code various digital signatures and/or watermarks to indicate ownership and to ensure licensing payment for the product. To the extent that an image program like Adobe Photoshop is the industry standard, the Lunda Tchokwe image somewhere bears the mark of that corporate ownership as it is converted into digital information. Further, it is a sanctioned transaction in multinational commerce.

Biopower and Computer Protocol

Like psychoanalytic analysis of the subconscious, code is only analyzed and operated by those with special knowledge, who since the early 1990s have been called the "digirati." Those outside of that specialized cadre use the computer through the mediation of the computer monitor or other devices. While the structure of computer code is based on a simple binary, code itself is today an immense patchwork that is unknowable to any one person in its entirety, even computer programmers. The incredible dispersal of information is the ultimate challenge to the notion of a monolithic owner/author but ironically, those claims have intensified with the proliferation of intellectual property laws.

In digital information transmission, control is under the domain of protocol, the algorithmic sets of instructions for creating and moving digital information. The technical and cultural aspects of protocol are inextricable, as Alexander Galloway explains. He describes protocol as a patchwork of codes and transmissions, written by a committed specialized cadre of programmers. He writes "…*protocol is a type of controlling logic that operates outside institutional, governmental, and corporate power,*

although it has important ties to all three."[16] According to him, the opacity of code language to the majority of computer users is not the enemy of the "utopian" access and functionality of information. Rather, it is institutional, corporate, or governmental infiltration from the outside that chokes its transmission. Because these entities are outsiders to those who speak code, they interrupt the efforts of those whose work deals with disinterested algorithms. In other words, protocol does not know its own content.

I will share one example of the relationship between protocol and content salient to the current study. While doing a general YouTube search using the keyword *gampeiros*, what appeared on the screen was the video of an informal pit mine with laboring workers and, to the side, an ad banner for the De Beers diamond company (fig. 74). Ad banners are automatically generated using an algorithm based on key words typed into the search parameters. What resulted from a disinterested mathematical function could not be more ironic in its content. On the same page was generated a documentary image of bodies digging in the dirt, what the description of the video describes as "black ants on a crater ridden landscape," and the brand image of the end product.[17] Despite the diamond industry doing all it can to shroud the connection between bodies piercing the ground and "forever" romance, here they appear collaged back together by an instantaneous mathematical operation.

Irony is endemic to biopower after decentralization. Galloway explains that the logic of new media depends on the fact that protocol is now distributed but not decentralized. "A distributed architecture is precisely that which makes

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[16] Galloway, *Protocol,* 122.
[17] Recall Philostratus' description of the "pygmies" that attack Hercules as an "army of black ants" discussed in V.Y. Mudimbe, *The Idea of Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 1.

protocological/imperial control of the network so easy. In fact, the various internet

protocols mandate that control may *only* be derived from such a distributed

architecture."[18] Revealed by this operation, and by the "free" forum of Youtube that

occupies so much time and mind power, is surveillance is available to all with access, but

control is elusive. Control is, and always has been, in the realm of protocol. Though the

exploitation of bodies and material is no longer safely occluded from our view, it is

spectacle. Hardt and Negri, per Guy Debord, argue that "the spectacle destroys any

collective form of sociality—individualizing social actors in their separate automobiles

and in front of separate video screens—and at the same time imposes a new mass

sociality, a new uniformity of action and thought." [19] Youtube is a key example of

spectacle that is "both diffuse and integrated."[20] Moreover, this same technology allows

regimes to use brute force on already targeted populations, as our self-surveillance is

coterminous with the exploitation of resources, material and intellectual. Protocological

control enjoys an ethical veneer, but it does not ultimately require democratic

participation to perform its operations.

Open source, closed system

When Angola emerged from its war, it had very little infrastructure from which to

host and produce intellectual capital. Recall Viteix's lamentation that Unap had no

money, no materials, and no teachers. He recognized that cultural production teeters

uncomfortably on the pitching and falling material infrastructure of Angola. Alvim's

project was likewise directed to insert the cultural sector into the building of

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[18] Ibid., 25.
[19] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 321-322.
[20] Ibid., 323.

infrastructure. Part of creating "structures that can impact on self esteem" was the ability to transmit Angolan intellectual property.

In the transmission of data, protocol couples with physical infrastructure. In the process of scanning, the images were transformed from light to electricity through a charge-coupled device. This electric charge, registered as either positive or negative, is the binary 1/0 that constitutes the language of computer code. In that sense, the transference of visual information is circulated in the same physical form—electric charge—as any other digital information. However, the realization of the image very much depends on a physical network of computers, servers, lines, satellites, and so on. As the flow of electricity is often interrupted in Luanda, so is the entire image.

The triennial's internet connection was at the time hosted by Internet Technologies Angola. One of the first companies to enter Angola after the war, the small start-up company from Namibia was the first major internet service provider in the country. They were instrumental in setting up Angola's first WiMax (Worldwide Interoperability Microwave Access) network, a long-range wireless broadband connection solution for countries without wired infrastructure such as Angola. MAXNET, Internet Technology Angola's WiMax network, was established in 2005. Since Angola "arrived" on the internet in 1995 with the domain ".ao", it has seen a huge increase in internet service that coincides with its economic boom. Internet users have risen from 30,000 in 2000 to over 550,000 in 2009.

By the end of the war, the telecommunications infrastructure in Angola was severely damaged. Angola Telecom had to repair the existing cabling for telecommunications and essentially start from scratch on internet infrastructure. There

was no legislation that allowed for telecommunications, especially those based on

wireless connections. While that provided an open market for companies like Internet

Technologies Angola, it also came with huge logistical obstacles, not the least of which

was shipping in computers and equipment and securing the satellites and servers. ITA

charged around $500/month at the time of the first triennial because of their extraordinary

expenses and near monopoly of the ISP (Internet Service Provider) market. At the time

of writing, ITA was securing broadcast rights from a major satellite installation by

Isabella dos Santos (Sindika Dokolo's spouse) who has now bought a major share in a

Portuguese cable television company. She will then be the majority owner of most of the

television broadcasting in Angola.

Between the near monopoly on media and telecommunications in Angola and the

enormous obstacles in importing technology products, connectivity is anything but a

given. Media theorist María Fernandez argues that a major misunderstanding has

developed in the idea of the internet as a utopian zone of free access. In addition to its

lack of accessibility to the majority of citizens in countries in the global south, she

presents the dystopian view that the internet is a neo-colonial tool. She explains,

"utopian rhetorics of electronic media occlude the practical project of creating new

markets and work forces for capitalist enterprises. In electronic media this applies to all

levels of production, from writing code to the assembly line."[21] Building Angola's

infrastructure after the war has mainly been achieved through trading China exclusive

futures of volatile markets such as oil and diamonds.

In order to afford important telecommunications infrastructure, many African

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[21] María Fernández, "Postcolonial Media Theory" *Art Journal* (Autumn 1999), 60.

countries have had to agree to the demands of the World Bank to deregulate the industry. Before infrastructure is even secure, those communities that will not be profitable, usually rural communities are left out of the communications loop. Under the direction of the World Trade Organization and several telecom investors, the first underwater fiberoptic cable to circle Africa, SAT-3/WASC, was laid in 2001. The cable connected countries along the coast from Portugal to Cape Town (see fig. 75). The cable was, according to most, necessary for Africans to do international business. It has also raised fundamental questions about monopoly in telecommunications access, which is essentially access to the global economy. Angolan companies have in part bypassed those problems of access to the cable by erecting satellites that directly communicate with Brazilian hosts, but the few access points on either of these networks keeps the internet out of the financial reach of most (see fig. 76).

Recalling post-Independence Angolans who petitioned for a powerful state, there are those now who speak of the great need for the government to provide materials and educational infrastructure to Angolan artists. Alongside them, internet activists and policy makers petition states to regulate telecommunications access. Patricia McCormick argues that the African states are responsible for overcoming the larger infrastructural obstacles to ensure education, accessibility, and what she calls "indigenous content" in telecommunications.[22] Only then, she and others argue, will the internet be a force for social good. As of now, it only exacerbates the information gap between the global North and South. The diminishing borders of nation-states, she concludes, are not only contributing to disadvantages in access. Since most African nations depend on servers in

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[22] Patricia K. McCormick, "Internet Access in Africa: A Critical Review of Public Policy Issues," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 22 nos. 1 & 2, (2002).

the United States to host their databases, their national security is wholly dependent on the United States.

Protocological control gives the global North control over the transmission and storage of information. Additionally it controls how its physical material is produced and disposed of, as the time between technological obsolescence is at an all-time low. One of digital theory's other rhetorical occlusions is the mining and disposal of the material of digital communication. For instance coltan, a mineral necessary for microprocessing, has compounded the historically devastating mineral wars in Congo. E-waste is becoming a daunting problem for countries that make deals to receive it, such as India, China, and Nigeria.[23] These two realms of the digital revolution are all but silent in critical digital studies. Even biopower is discussed in terms of digitally connected bodies, the Deleuzian notion of the *dividual* in the various devices and realms of life in the digital age.[24] The non-digital body is silent in large part because of its disconnection, its residence in the non-usable zones that James Ferguson discusses. But it can also be considered the digital equivalent of the scatalogical or the *informe*—that part of the digital age that is beyond theorization. However, all of these realms are part of the networking of the digital domain. All of them are results of protocological exchange that depends on abstract information and metaphors, as well as microchips, light pulses, microwave transmitters, fiber optic cables, and the laboring body.

It is acknowledged by those who control protocol that its logic has no ethical content, much like the computer generated image on YouTube of the DeBeers ad and the

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[23] See Charles W. Schmidt, "Unfair Trade: e-Waste in Africa" *Environmental Health Perspectives* (April 2006).

[24] Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control," *October* 59 (Winter 1992).

garimpeiro. Speaking about noxious waste disposal in Africa in 1991, the then chief economist of the World Bank Lawrence Summers argued that the poorest countries should receive health-impairing waste and pollution industries, because those residents will likely not live long enough to develop the illnesses those materials cause. In an infamous statement contained in a leaked internal memo for the World Bank, Summers reasoned, "I think the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste in the lowest wage country is impeccable and we should face up to that."[25] The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have used this type of logic in their structural adjustments and shun the "moral reasoning" that would stand in the way of nearly every project of the World Bank-IMF. As James Ferguson so aptly puts it, "The World Bank-IMF structural-adjustment programs that have been forced down the throats of African governments in recent years are based on precisely the sort of spurious economistic 'proofs' and implausible suspension of moral and social values that are displayed so conspicuously in the memorandum."[26]

The collapse of the state in Angola after Independence has evolved into a situation where its role as a check on capitalist exploitation is non-existent. In reality, mineral extraction takes place within physical and political enclaves, whether offshore oil rigs or in militia-protected diamond fields, without any connection or benefit to the Angolan "nation." And yet the rhetoric of nationalism is at an all-time high and featured in the triennial's outdoor project and other of its initiatives.

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[25] Lawrence Summers, quoted in Global Policy Forum, "Larry Summers' War Against the Earth" *Global Policy Forum* 1999. Accessed: http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/212/45462.html

[26] James Ferguson, *Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 71.

On this note of contemporary biopower, I conclude by returning to the diamond industry, the Chokwe, and the body. There remains one more version of an online Chokwe image project to discuss. It has a strikingly similar interface to the triennial's Lunda Tchokwe project, using the WordPress information management system and the same plugins for the navigation (see fig. 77). The website is authored by Fernando Alvim under the auspices of TACCA (Territórios de Arte e Cultura Contemporânea Africana), his foundation that is now subsumed in the Sindika Dokolo Foundation. The website, unlike Lunda Tchokwe, is still live. It is entitled "Cultura Lunda Tchokwe" and presented by ITM, a diamond-mining consortium that operates in Lunda North. ITM has operated in the Lundas since 1993 and, like all diamond companies there must do, partners with state-owned Endiama to process, mine, and develop alluvial deposits.

ITM was one of the triennial's major sponsors before Sindika Dokolo and Catoca. With Fernando Alvim's help, ITM launched their Cultura Lunda Tchokwe project at the same time he launched Lunda Tchokwe in 2005. The opening sentences of the introductory page read:

> When the ITM Mining Limited conceived the idea of launching a website
> on the cultural aspects of the Lunda and Tchokwe, we did not and still do
> not intend to transform these cultural aspects to a commodity or a vehicle
> for self-promotion. The basic idea is to help spread the different angles of
> a lively and thriving culture that exists in areas where we develop our
> mining operations. We believe that these cultural aspects are,
> unfortunately, unknown in the rest of the country and abroad.[27]

In a language strikingly similar to the Catoca sponsorship statement on the Lunda

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[27] ITM, "Apresentação," *Cultura Lunda Tchokwe*, available http://www.culturalunda-tchokwe.com/.

Tchokwe project introduction, ITM claims that theirs is an ethical project. It goes on to explain that rather than publishing a book, the use of the web makes the information more available to a young generation of Angolans who are online.

The website is truly a content management system, as it has transcriptions of studies by Redinha, Bastin, and João Vicente Martins. The subject headings read much like the texts they copy: Geography and History, Family, Social Organization, Rituals, Culture. There are two headings that are characteristic of contemporary web culture, however: News and Forum. Ostensibly, readers of the website can contribute their comments and reflections in an "interactive" setting for what is essentially a reiteration of colonial scholarship. Unlike a book/container, it is a web of previously researched and published information—information that is dehistoricized. Another characteristic of web culture, Redinha's fifty-five year old research is presented as if it were the contemporary condition in Lunda North, and is left floating on the site without an explanation of the context under which it was produced. There is no "original" research here, no physical containers of scientific knowledge, only ephemeral links, transcriptions, and "globs of code."

As with the Lunda Tchokwe project, each of the images from *Paredes* appears on Cultura Lunda Tchokwe. Some of Redinha's images have been manipulated to remove his signature and some have not. The images are accessed by a hyperlink attached to a transcription of the entire *Paredes* text (fig. 78). Instead of scrolling through the images one by one, they are brought up in a small pop-up window by clicking on the title of the plate. Unlike the Lunda Tchokwe project there is no indication of indignation about colonial conquest or the presence of the diamond industry, which surely would not have

been conducive to ITM's image-making in this project. Instead the colonial project is neatly packaged as a contemporary cultural initiative by ITM, a company that wishes to be seen as having humanitarian goals, as did Diamang in the 1950s.

Cultura Lunda Tchokwe repeats the occlusions and silences of the Diamang scholarship, most notably the contemporary history of the Lundas. For instance, the "migrations" section contains information about migrations during the colonial period due to the Portuguese and Belgian incursions into the African interior. Nothing is mentioned of the recent forced migration of "illegal" inhabitants of Lunda enforced by both the Angolan military and the diamond industry private militias. No mention is made of the postcolonial civil war and the disturbance of Chokwe society due to skirmishes between UNITA and the MPLA, among others. In ITM's outline of Chokwe political organization, contemporary political parties are absent, the most obvious being the Partido de Renovação Social.

The ITM Chokwe project was published at the same time as the earlier Lunda Tchokwe essay in which Alvim argues that Redinha performed a "theft" of the images by excluding the names of the Chokwe artists. With these two major online projects, then, Alvim gifted the digitized images to the Angolan government via the Ministry of Culture and to a company representing the powerful diamond industry. While both projects operated under the ethical auspices of disseminating the pictures to a larger public and having educational benefits, they indicated instead the enormous amount of repression involved in fantasizing a unified resolve, whether "Angolan" or corporate.

And so we ask what might it mean to have Alvim's copyright on the triennial's website that "contained" the Lunda Tchokwe images. Alvim suggested that he intervened

into capitalist resources in Angola in order to redirect its resources to the cultural sector of Angola. In this case a true evocation of the multitude, or what Viteix called the "peasant masses," is constantly brought back under ownership of some sort, however scattered. Because of the implications that this sponsorship has on a societal level, this project suggests that the "post" in postcolonialism has not meant an infrastructural rupture from colonialism, at least not in this story. Instead, the postcolonial condition is contemporary with a labyrinthine Angolan diamond industry—its owners, investors, contracted laborers and its relationship to the Angolan state.

What I have focused less on, but what is equally at play, is the mental "state" of identification in the process of group identity—whether ethnic, national, human, or racial. Speaking of how nation-states formulate identity in relation to history, Freudian literary critic Jacqueline Rose explains that collective identification of a common history "relies on spots of blindness—one link recognized, another immediately put back beyond memory, pushed underground."[28] On the one hand, this applies to the machinations of protocol and power that were largely invisible in the Lunda Tchokwe project, or the triennial generally. The silencing of the continued violence, especially in the Lundas, was the other more disturbing aspect of nationalism in the Lunda Tchokwe project. The clarity and legibility of iconic language today necessitates an accompanying suppression of societal structure and history. It is a constant haunting of the nation memorialized in Viteix's *Construção Civil* and Alvim's *Memórias, Íntimas, Marcas*. I would suggest that the Lunda Tchokwe project did antagonize power at the same time as it relied on blind spots, presumably to be able to even operate a successful cultural project in Angola.

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[28] Jacqueline Rose, *States of Fantasy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 52.

The removal of Redinha's signature signals the dangers of presentism as the project flattens the history of colonialism to a signature-free Chokwe image while remaining silent about the immediate history and conditions of the project. Likewise, when art is judged according to postcolonial ethos, it if often measured as a success or failure according to its social integrity, which leads to contorted attempts to nominally correct and thus veil power structures that are structurally entrenched. The "self-esteem" of a nation is attended to on a metaphorical level.

Postscript on the Body: The Icon of Amputation

The question of silencing moments of history and standing apart from the traumas of violence brings me to my final question about the relationship of the body to symbol formation. The relationship between the (tortured) body and representation has a long history in Western art history. Recently, it has been discussed in relation to biennial exhibitions, as the current trend is to include copious amounts of documentary art about geopolitical conflict and societal trauma. The representation of violence reaches a point of saturation, Susan Sontag argues, and indicates the pleasure we attain from looking at the tortured body. She asserts that the public has historically been attracted to images of mutilated bodies, not the least of which is the subject matter in Christian art of Christ on the cross.[29] If hyperrealist images of violence serve a function of pleasure that borders on the pornographic, how do we interrogate the parallel need to normalize the idea of violence as we are awash in those images?

In 2008 a Norwegian artist, Morten Traavik, organized the first Miss Angola Landmine competition in Luanda. In 2004 he traveled to Luanda for personal business

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[29] Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2003).

and saw countless landmine survivors. Traavik also noticed Angolans' love of the beauty

pageant. It occurred to him that having a beauty pageant with (female) landmine

survivors would begin to address the psychological "self esteem" issues of the survivors.

Billed under the tagline "Everybody has a right to be beautiful!", the competition brought

together female amputees from each of the ten provinces of Angola.[30] American Apparel

outfitted the women who were paid $200/day to participate. The competition was held at

the CineTropico in Luanda and attended by Angola's first lady Ana Paula dos Santos.

The contestants, most of whom did not have formal employment, spoke about their hopes

for themselves and other landmine survivors in Angola. In the end, Augusta Huríca from

Luanda won the competition. Her prize: a custom fit golden prosthetic limb.

The puzzling choice of presenting a jobless landmine survivor with a golden

prosthetic leg aside, the formal language the competition developed for its website and its

press materials reiterates the discussion of icons, symbols, and the "people." The header

on the homepage of Miss Landmine depicts a curved horizon line with five palm trees, a

landmine warning sign, next to a hypertext-activated icon to buy a t-shirt. On the left

side of the banner is a sunrise with piercing beams behind the icon of the female

landmine survivor (fig. 79). The symbol is the "universal" female pictogram: head,

triangle body, and legs. One of the legs of the Miss Landmine pictogram is truncated, and

the artist has added a sash and crown to the pictogram. Whether the manipulation of the

icon was a subversion to normative gender symbols, or whether it was a crass

simplification of a geopolitical tragedy (the competition was also held in Cambodia in

2009), the traumatized body is flattened to a superficial icon detached from visceral

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[30] See project website http://miss-landmine.org/. The organization recently staged the Miss
Landmine Cambodia in 2009.

suffering. That is, "everyone has a right to be beautiful" might be rephrased, "everything is apt to become an icon."

What is remarkable about the Miss Landmine contest is what it reveals about the need to normalize, even correct, systemic violence on the level of the visual. The icon serves neither a representational nor a functional purpose, as both are frustrated by the nonsensical image of a mutilated body on an image that depends upon normalization. The conflict rests there, at the level of the icon. As it is dysfunctional representationally, it is dysfunctional functionally. The icon not only exacerbates the feeling of distance that separates the viewer from an effective activism, but also demarcates the conceptual borders of material networks, momentarily showing us their limitations and their possibilities.

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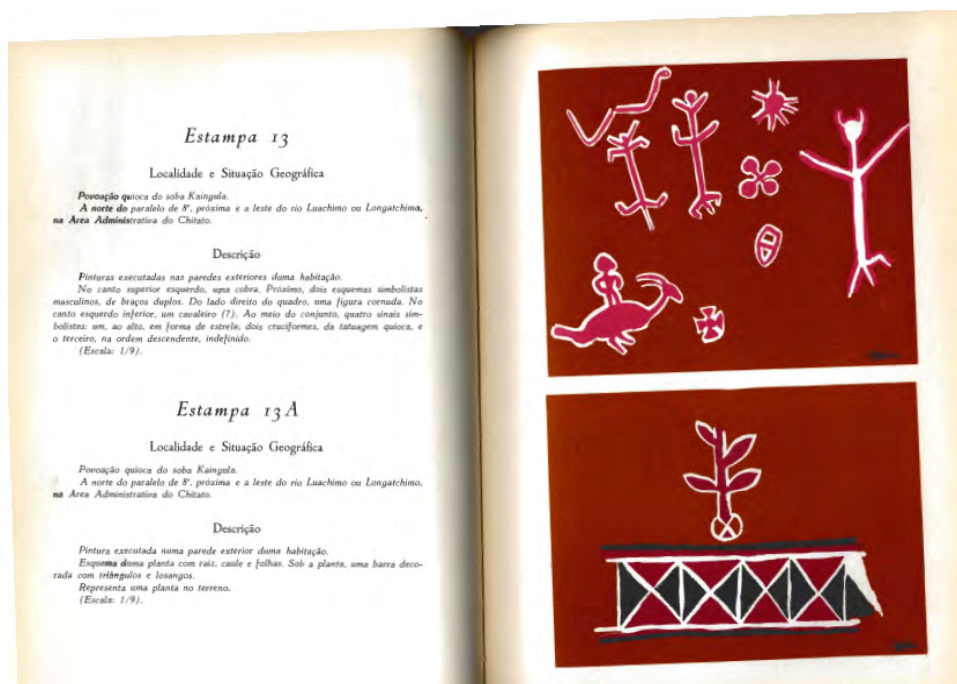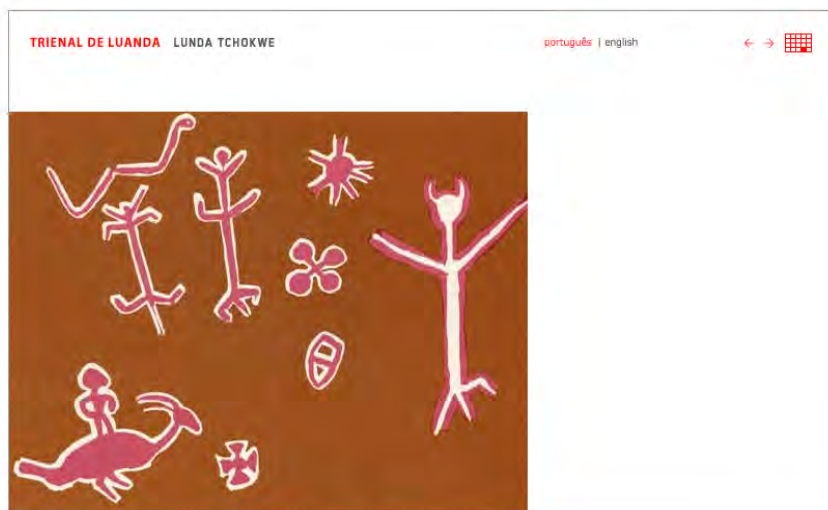
Fig. 1 (top). Page from Lunda Tchokwe online exhibition. Image on page is *Estampa 13* from José Redinha's *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* with Redinha's signature removed.

Fig. 2 (bottom). Page of José Redinha's *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* (1953) showing *Estampa 13* and *13A.*
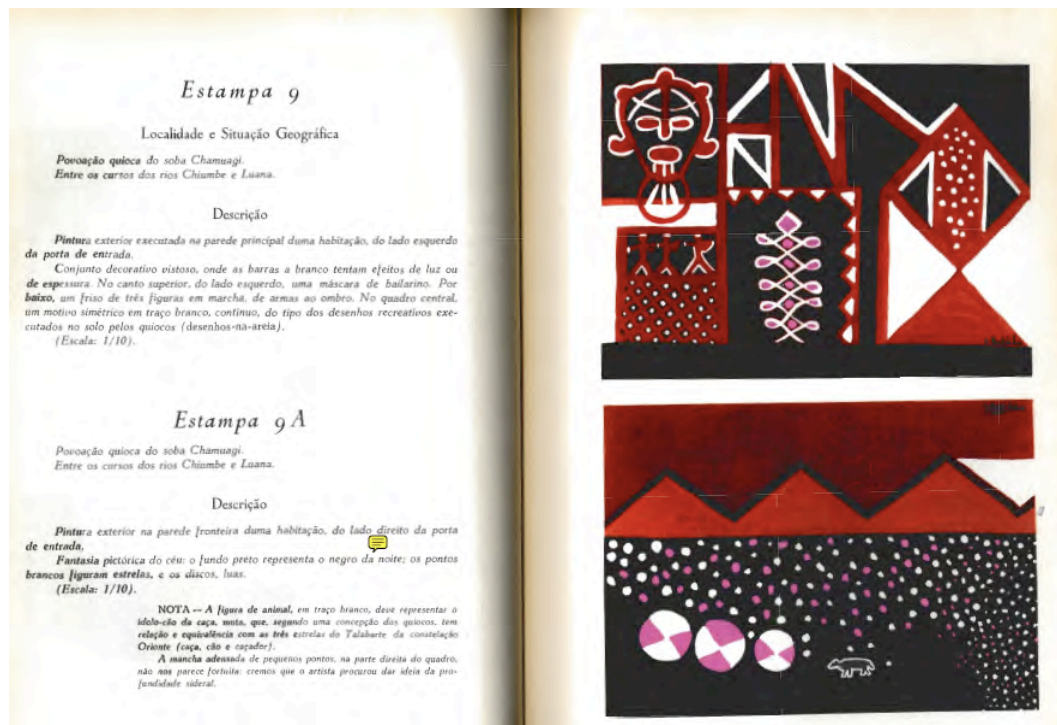
Fig. 3. Page from *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* showing format.
Bottom right image is discussed in relation to the installation
of wall murals at the Museu do Dundo

Fig. 9. Offices of the Trienal de Luanda in March 2006 with specs on the wall behind the desks. Office located in the *Cidade Alta*, site of the government offices and presidential palace.

Fig. 13. Miquel Barceló, installation at Unap created in conjunction with workshop given to art students in Luanda, February 2007.
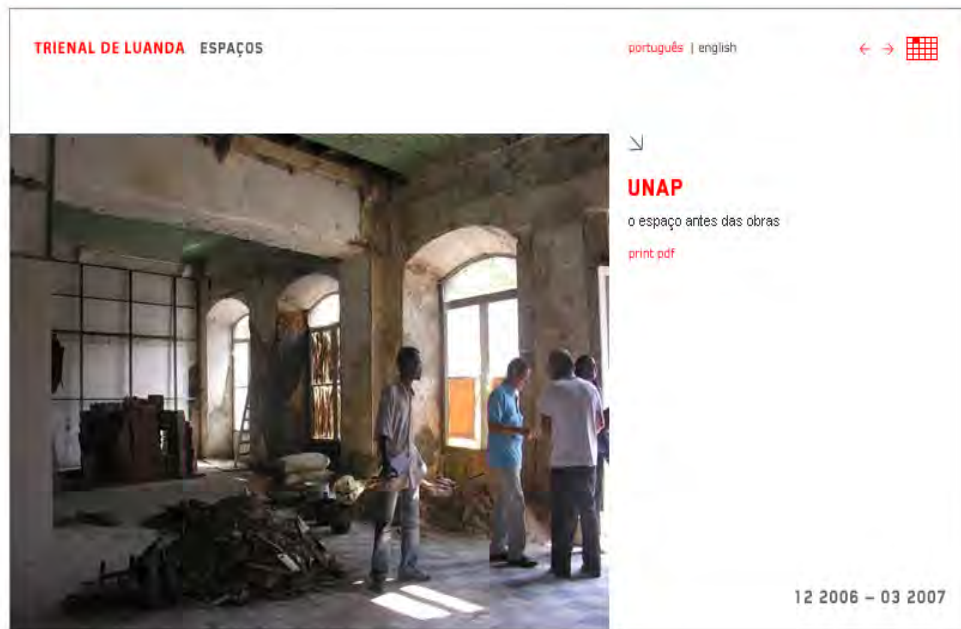
Fig. 12. Section of Unap building before and after renovation for a gallery space for the Trienal de Luanda. The rest of the building is in bad repair, with major structural problems.

Fig. 11. Photograph by N'Dilo Mutima featured on the Trienal de Luanda website showing the opening of the SOSO Gallery.

Fig. 10. SOSO Gallery space before, during and after renovation as photographed by N'Dilo Mutima, 2005.

Fig. 8. "Conceitos" page of the Trienal de Luanda website showing a configuration of the various spaces that intersect in the exhibition.

Fig. 6. Jan van der Merwe, *Soldier's Bed* 1998, from *Memórias, Íntimas, Marcas*, 1994-2000.
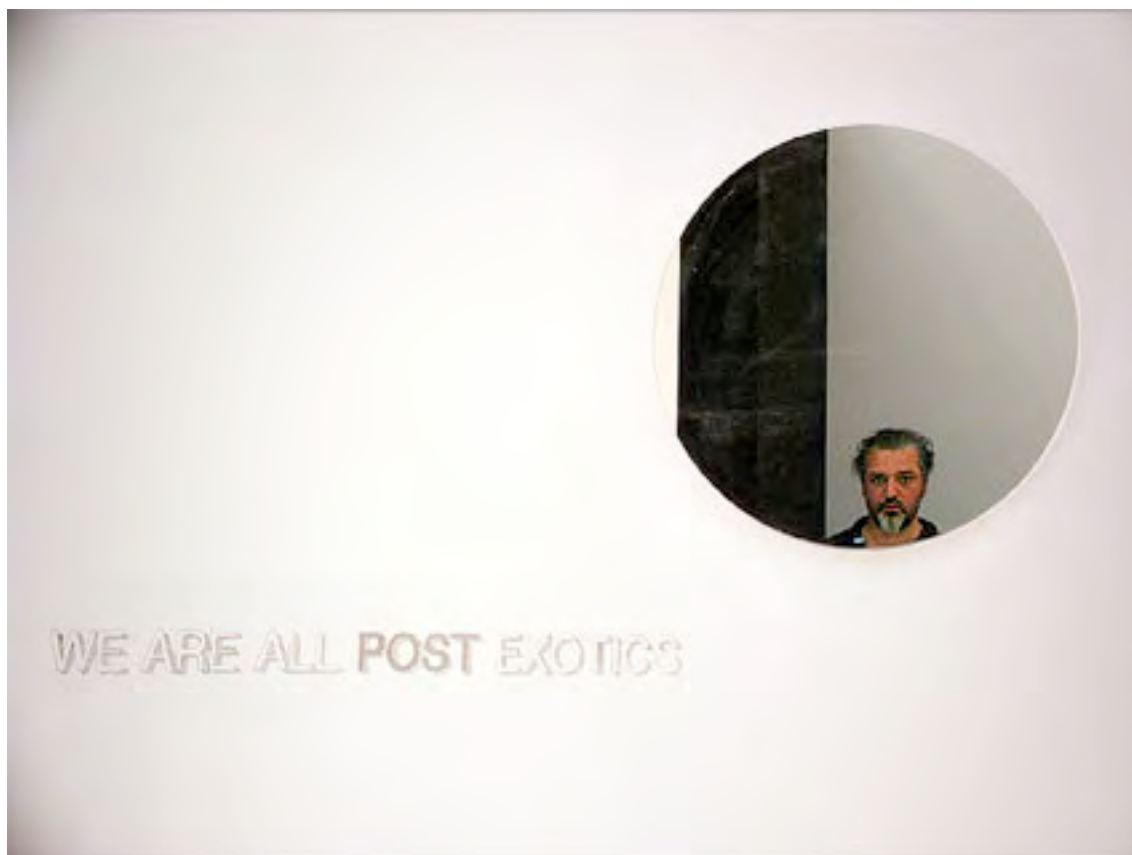
Fig. 7. Fernando Alvim, *We Are All Post Exotics*, 2004.

Fig. 4. Fernando Alvim, *Untitled* from the *Memórias, Íntimas, Marcas*, 1994-2000. Project organized by Fernando Alvim to commemorate the South African/Angolan conflict. Included artists from Angola, South Africa, and Cuba.

Fig. 5. Carlos Garaicoa, performance view from site-specific filmed performance in the battleground of Cuito Cuanavale, Angola where Cuban, Angolan, and South African forces fought. Part of the project *Memórias, Íntimas, Marcas*, 1994-2000.

Fig. 14. Figure representing the legendary hunter Chibinda Ilunga. 19th century. University of California San Diego.

Fig. 15. Chokwe Pwo mask, early 20th century, Angola, Xassenge region. Collection: Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Fig. 16. Map of Angola showing Lunda Norte and Lunda Sul, with Dundo and Cuilo on the norther border with the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Fig. 17. Memorial dedicated to Ernesto de Vilhena in Dundo, Lunda North, Angola in 1969.

Fig. 18. An image from *Flagrantes* showing a surgery being performed on a Diamang worker. Used to prove the company's "concern" for the health and well-being of the "native."

Simulacre de l'ancienne coutume de l'exécution du prisonnier («mussuico») pour fin d'hostilités (Cacongos du Nordeste).

Simulacro do antigo costume da execução do prisioneiro («mussuico») para termo de hostilidades (Cacongos do Nordeste).

Representation of the ancient custom of executing a prisoner («mussuico») to put an end to hostilities (Cacongo of the Nordeste).

Ouverture d'une route et placement de pont métallique par la «Diamang».

Abertura de uma estrada e lançamento de ponte metálica pela «Diamang».

The making of a road and the erection of a metal bridge by «Diamang».

Fig. 19. Two facing pages from *Flagrantes da Vida na Lunda*. Shows two staged views of "life" in Lunda under Diamang.

La scène obéit aux meilleures traditions; seulement avec l'intervention d'un nouvel élément: le savon! (environs de Dundo).

A cena obedece às melhores tradições; apenas com intervenção de um elemento novo: o sabão! (arredores do Dundo).

A scene in the best traditional manner; with only one new element: soap! (Dundo neighbourhood).

Fig. 20. Page from *Flagrantes da Vida na Lunda.*

TABLEAU 1

PRINCIPAUX MOTIFS DECORATIFS DE LA LUNDA

Motifs	Appellations vernaculaires	Traduction	Références
Points	*mujiko*	feux, foyers	IV.C.f.1.
	tutanga	points, vernis	id.
	jipeka	taches	id.
	soli	scarifications	id.
	tongonoshi	étoiles	IV.B.a.1
Droite(s) quelconque(s)	*mukala (imkala)*	alignement(s), ligne(s)	IV.A.2.
Droites longues	*miruala*	chaîne (d'un nattage)	IV.C.d.1
Droites courtes	*mbara*	trame (d'un nattage)	IV.C.d.2
	masoli	larmes	IV.C.b.1.
	mujila / mujika)	trait(s)	IV.C.e.2.
Verticale(s)	*kangongo (tangongo)*	canal (axe demi-du petit)	IV.B.c.1.
Horizontale(s)	*mukano (mikano)*	filet(s), procession(s), caravane(s)	IV.C.f.3.
Oblique(s)	*mukala*	alignements, lignes	IV.A.2.
	mbandwala	diagonales d'un nattage croisé régulier	IV.C.d.3.
Diagonales, sautoir	*khaka*	postes	IV.C.f.2.
Croix	*mujila*	traits fermés	IV.C.e.2.
Angle(s)	*kakuna (tukuna)*	racine(s) caudée(s)	IV.C.b.1.
Ligne brisée	*yenge*	vipère du Gabon	IV.B.c.5.
Chevrons	*mahenga*	sinuosités	IV.A.1.
	mafwi a cishiki	feuilles d'une sorte de fougère	IV.B.b.4.
Zigzags obliques	*mahenga*	sinuosités	IV.A.1.
	loepe	chaîne (coiffure en)	IV.C.c.4.
Arête de poisson	*cisonge ca jiishi*	arête de poisson	IV.B.c.3.
Triangles	*mupembe*	dessins de la vipère du Gabon	IV.B.c.7.
Dents de scie	*yenge lya kamba*	«vipère de la vignogne»	IV.B.c.6.
Champ de triangles en quinconce	*mahala a lekoka*	écailles du pangolin	IV.B.c.8.
Triangles rectangles	*mupembe*	dessins de la vipère du Gabon	IV.B.c.7.
Croix gironnée	*mafwi a manioko*	feuilles de manioc	IV.B.b.2
Losanges	*mupembe*	dessins de la vipère du Gabon	IV.B.c.7.
Losanges concentriques	*liso lya cikanga*	œil de la natte	IV.C.a.2.a
Champ de losanges	*mazao a jisukala*	treillis des cages	IV.C.d.7.
	meso a tongonoshi	yeux des étoiles	IV.B.a.3.a
Entrelacs cruciforme	*cinga(cengalu)*	pendentif cruciforme	IV.C.e.5
Réseau, réticulé, quadrillé	*mazao a jisukala*	treillis des cages	IV.C.d.7.
Rectangles concentriques	*liso*	œil	IV.C.a.2
	mondo a mbaci	plaques de la carapace de la tortue	IV.B.c.2
Damier, échiquier	*mondo a mbaci*	plaques de la tortue	IV.B.c.2
Gaufrage, guillochet, billette, pointes de diamant	*mitumo*	coiffure en «bouclettes»	IV.C.c.3.
	cana	flèche de bois	IV.C.e.2.
Quadrilatère à côtés incurvés	*mutwe cikunga*	couvercle de la boîte-calebasse	IV.C.e.3.
Pied de poule	*mano ja tutundi*	empreintes des poules	IV.B.c.10
Sinuosités	*mano wa congolo*	empreinte du myriapode	IV.B.c.9.
Motifs de somme divers	*ana a jikanga*	enfants des nattes	IV.C.d.4.
	mahenhena	idem	IV.C.d.5.
	futila	couvercle de ruche	IV.C.d.6.
	mazao a jisukala	treillis des cages	IV.C.d.7.
	mondo a mbaci	plaques de la tortue	IV.B.c.2.
	mupembe	dessins de la vipère du Gabon	IV.B.c.7.
Arc	*uta wa nzenga*	arc	IV.C.e.1.
Arcs ou courbes jumelés	*mahenga*	ondulations, sinuosités	IV.A.1.
	mtulumua	froncements	IV.C.b.2.
Courbes concentriques	*mahenga*	ondulations	IV.A.1.
	ngwina	tatouage féminin	IV.A.1.
	hangumua	courbures	IV.A.1.
	mkundi	courbes	IV.C.b.1.
	mtulumua	froncements	IV.C.b.2.
Courbes en hélice	*mahenga*	ondulations	IV.A.1.
	khaka	postes	IV.C.f.2

Fig. 21. Page from *Art Deocoratif Tchokwe* by Marie-Louise Bastin (1961) with a legend of Chokwe symbols, their corresponding Chokwe names, and their French translations.

Fig. 22. Diamang's unpublished documentary photograph of the installation of wall murals inside the Museu do Dundo in 1953. From the Diamang archive, University of Coimbra. Exact copy of *Estampa 9A* in disk on upper wall.
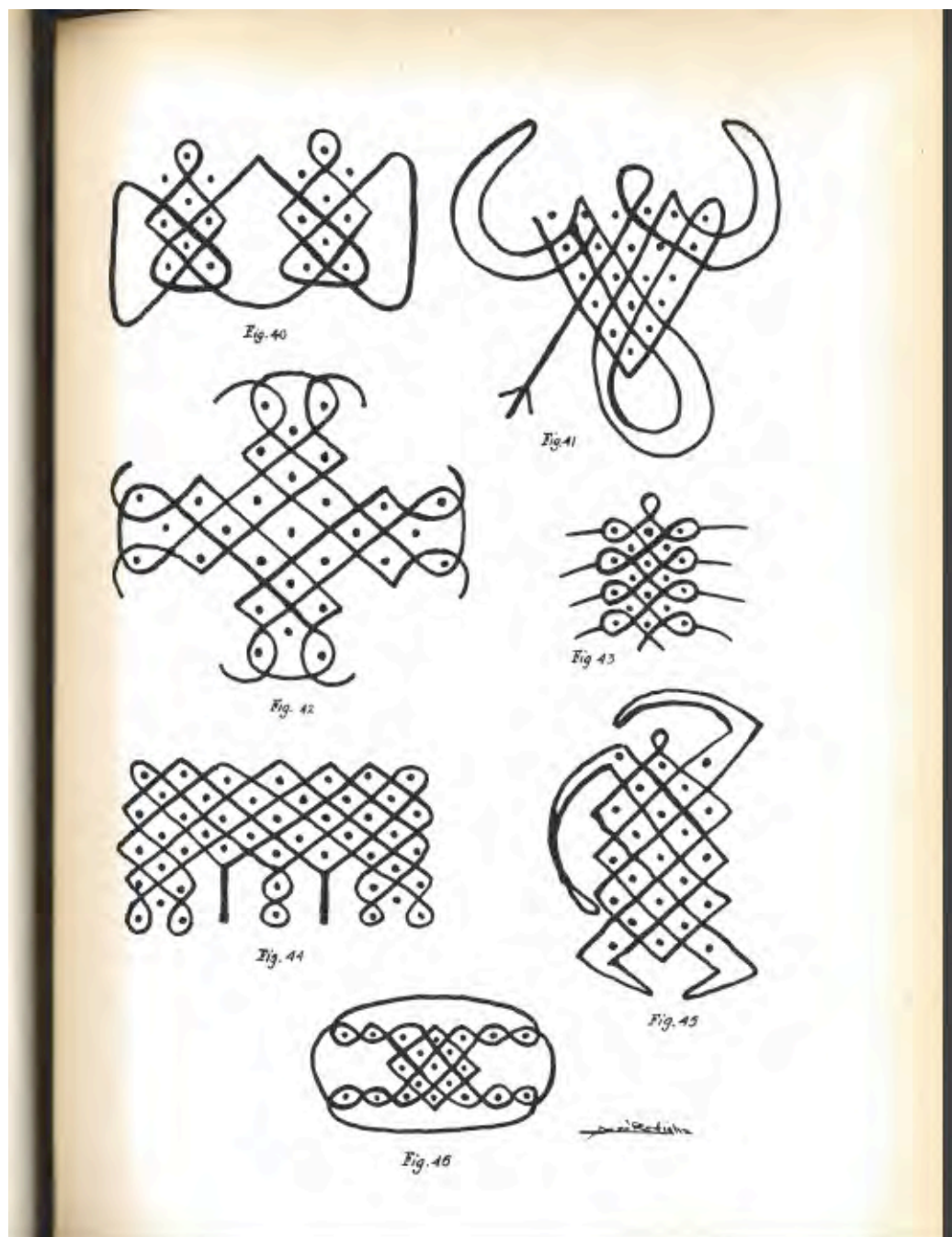
Fig. 23. Page from *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* showing a sampling of *sona* figures Redinha illustrates in the wall murals.

Fig. 24. Jimu Kapandulula drawing the "Kampulu" *sona*. The outer dots may represent gnus defending themselves against attack, indicated by the line that circumscribes them. From Gerhard Kubik, *Tusona—Luchazi Ideographs: a graphic tradition of West-Central Africa* (Wien: Lit Verlag, 2006).
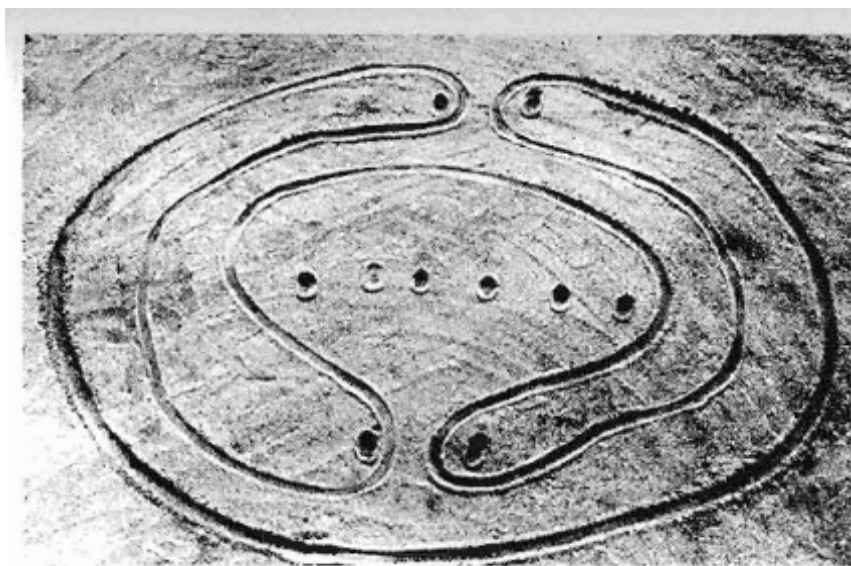
Fig. 25. Illustration of the *mukanda* camp to teach young initiates about the demarcation of space during the ritual. The children and guardians are inside the camp and the others are outside. This *sona* is especially concerned with the topology of the camp and the production of social space.

Fig. 26. *Kusu* (parrot) *sona* drawing.
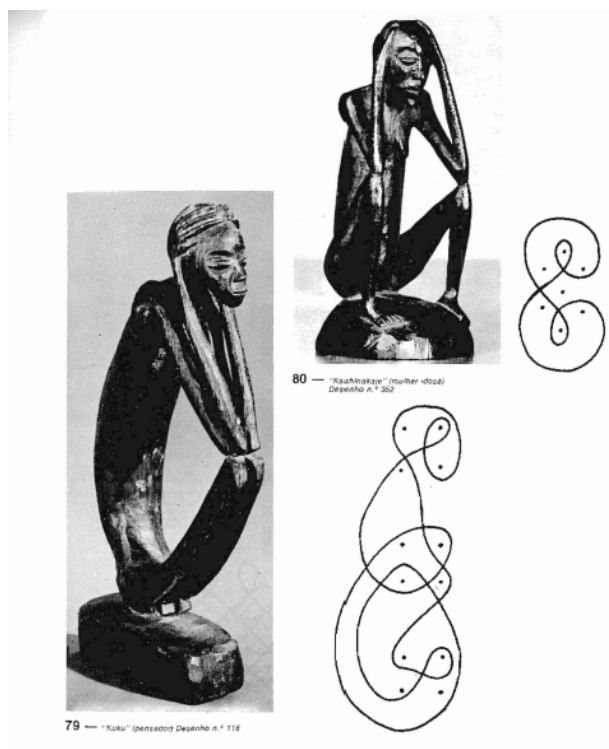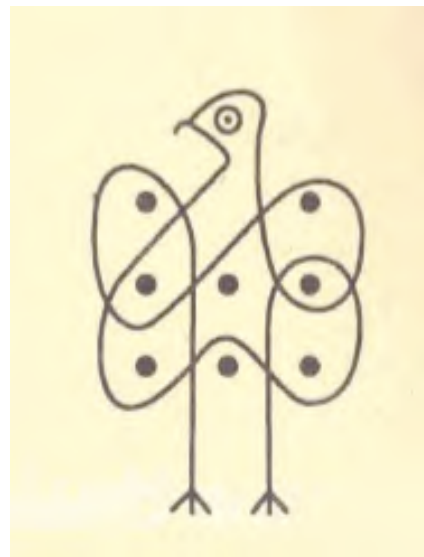
Fig. 27. The popular Chokwe "thinker" sculpture and its *sona* corollary. Taken from Mario Fontinha's *Desenhos na Areia dos Quiocos do Nordeste de Angola* (Lisboa: Instituto de Investigação Cientifica Tropical, 1983).

[Fontinha, p.263]
Figure 105

a

b
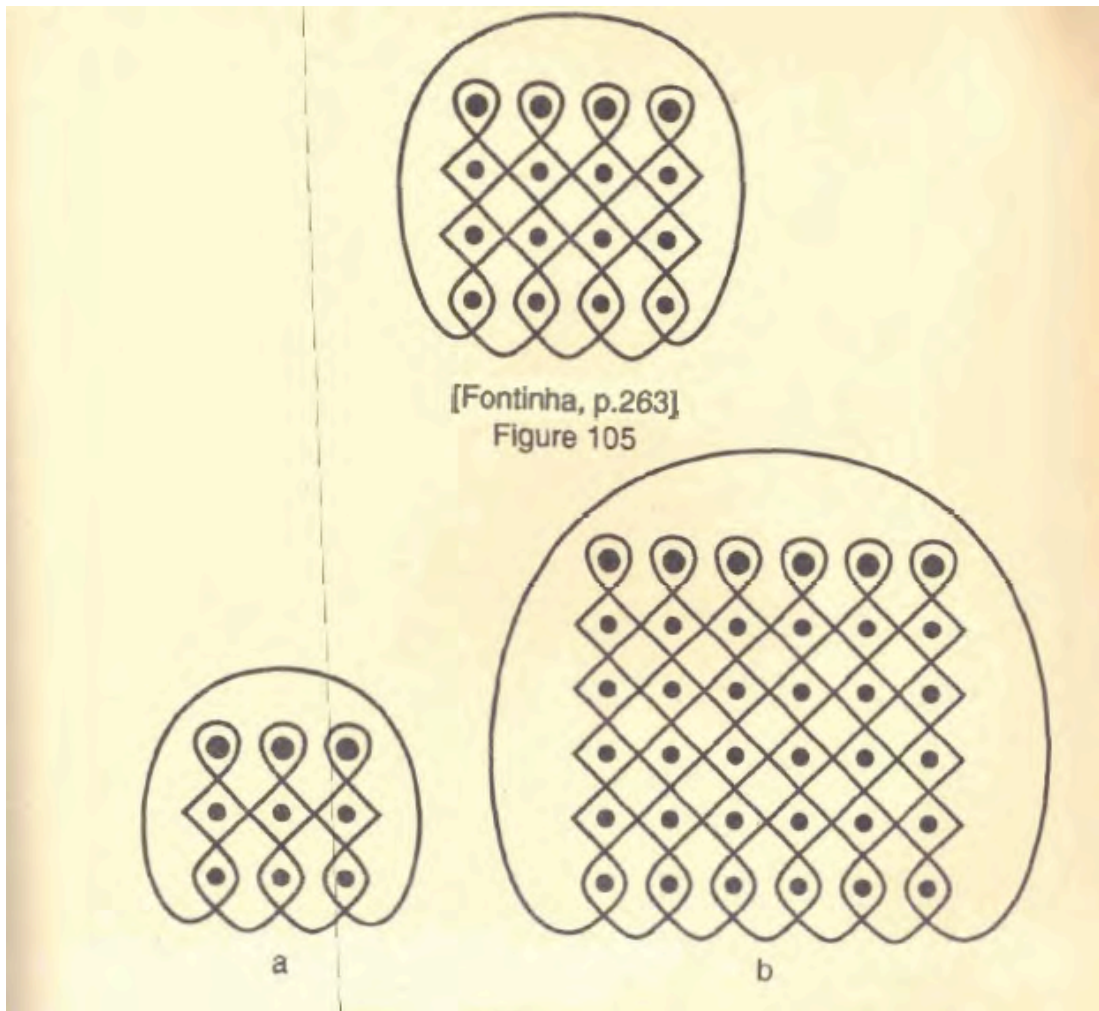
Fig. 28. The "protected settlement" *sona* with the constant graphic element being the looped line that signifies the protective fence. This formula can be amplified or reduced based on an algorithm.

Fig. 29. Diamang archive photo # 18634957: "Painted Indigenous Habitation."

Fig. 30. Detail of *Estampa 9A* from *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda* (horizontally oriented).

Fig. 31. The *Hamba wa nzambi* sculpture. Kramer states that "the oblong frame is a quotation from the frame of a European saint's portrait."

Fig. 32. Diamang archive photo # 19098959: "Workers' 'Studio' of Museum Sculptors."

Fig. 33. Unlabeled Diamang archive photo showing Chokwe visitors to the Dundo Museum and, according to Redinha, being taught to "look."
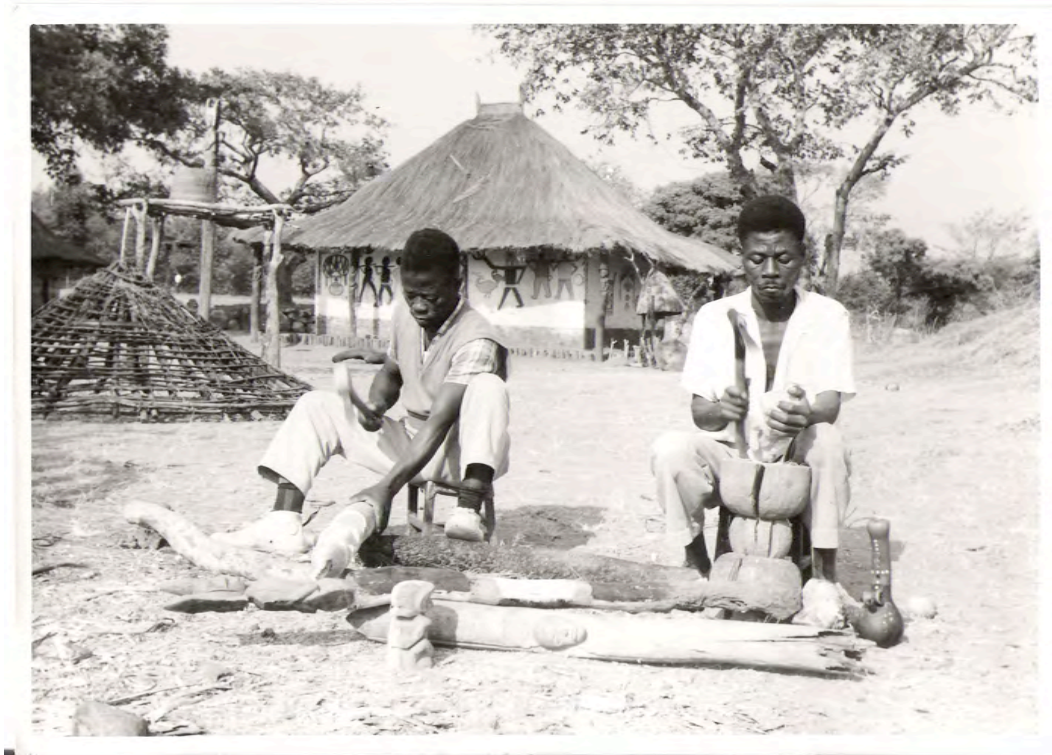
Fig. 34. Diamang archive photo # 21333962: "Sculptors of Wood Muatonge and Comboia Working on the Restoration of Religious Assemblies"
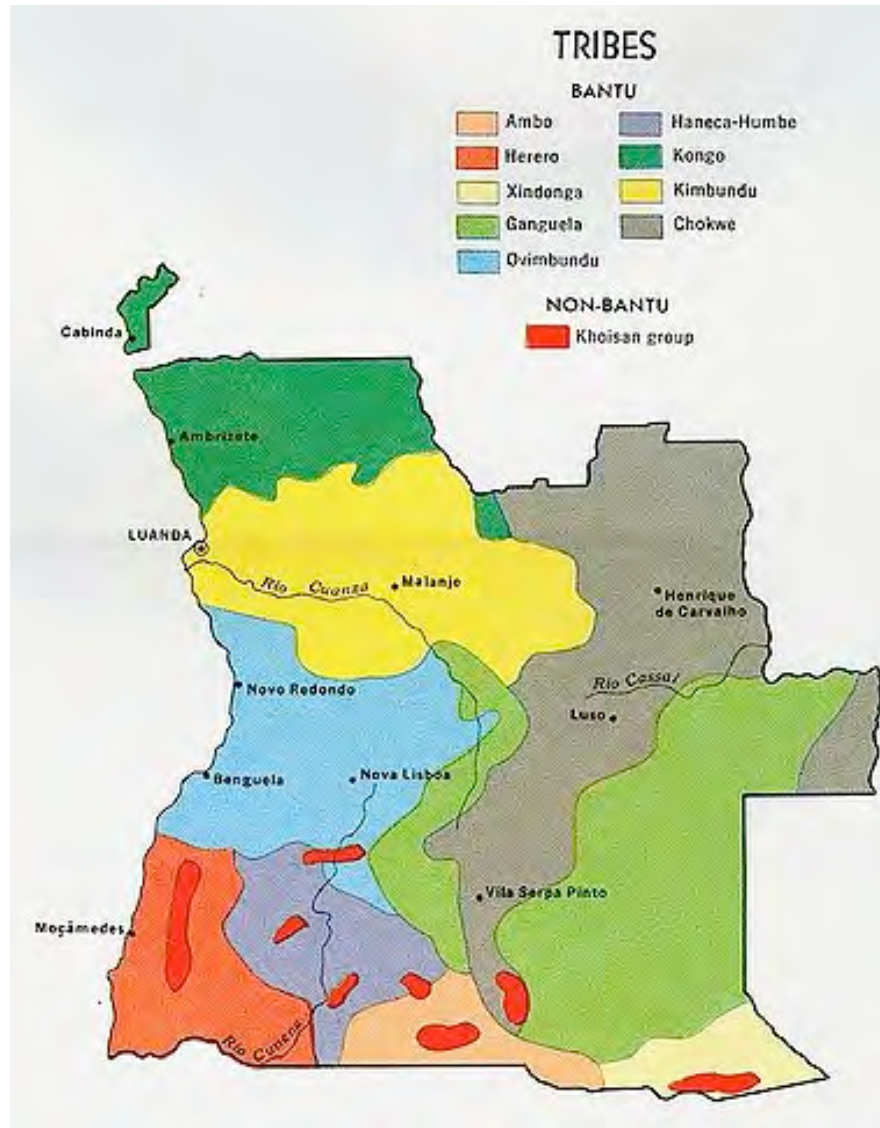
Fig. 35. Map of "Bantu Tribes" in Angola in 1970.
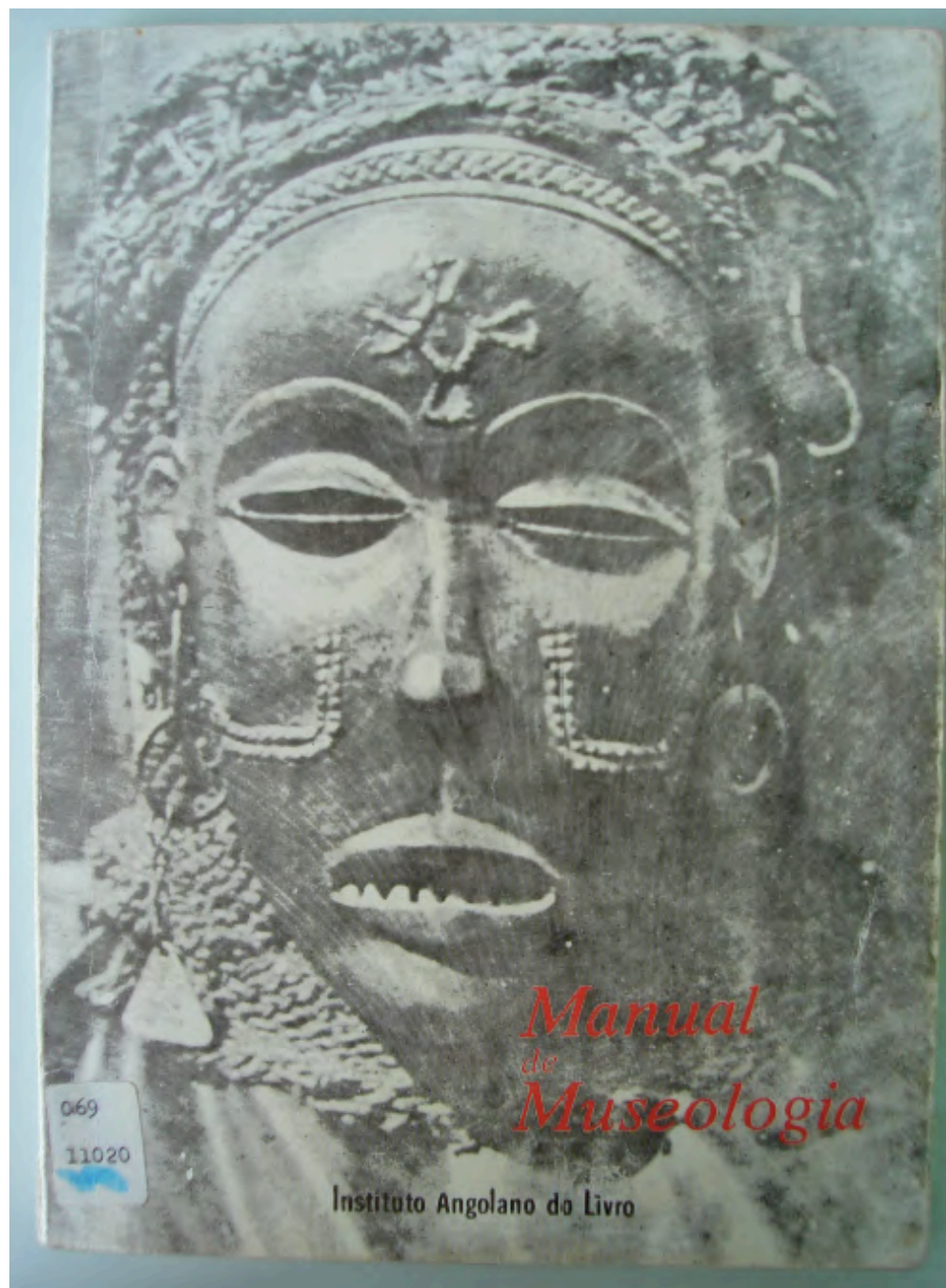
Fig. 36. Cover of MPLA Museum Manual featuring the Chokwe Mwana
Pwo mask, 1979.

Fig. 37. António Ole, *Sobre o Consumo da Pilula* (1970).

Fig. 38. Viteix, *Os Mergulhadores* (1986).
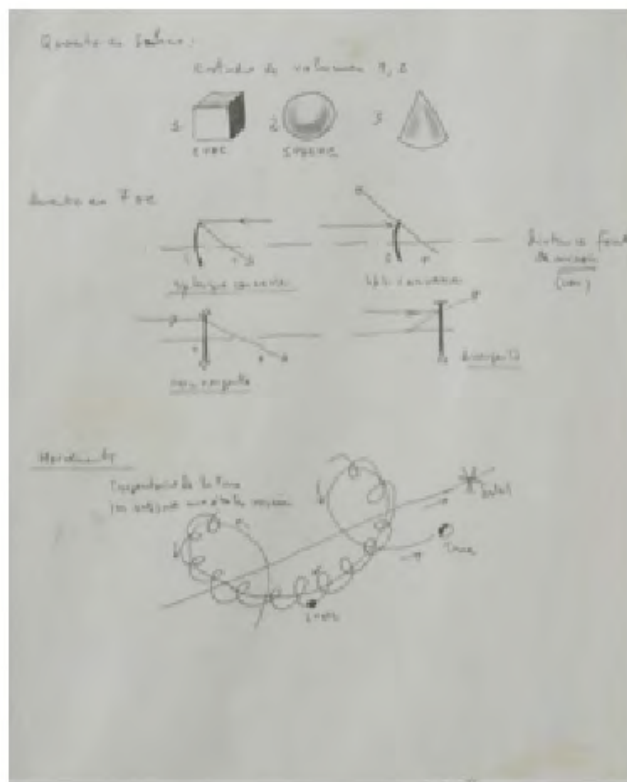
Fig. 39. Viteix, sketch of principals of volume, movement, and trajectory, n.d.

Fig. 40. Viteix, *Canção Para Luanda* (1985).

Fig. 41. Paul Klee, *Legends of the Nile* (1937).

Fig. 42. Viteix, *Sem Titulo* (1992).

Fig. 43. Uche Okeke, *Owls* (1962).

Fig. 44. Viteix, *Estudo II* (1992).

Fig. 45. Viteix, *Construção Civil (Antonio Cardoso) Tarrafal 2/10/71* (1985).

Fig. 46. Viteix, untitled engraving, 1969.

Fig. 47. Picasso, *Guernica* (1937).
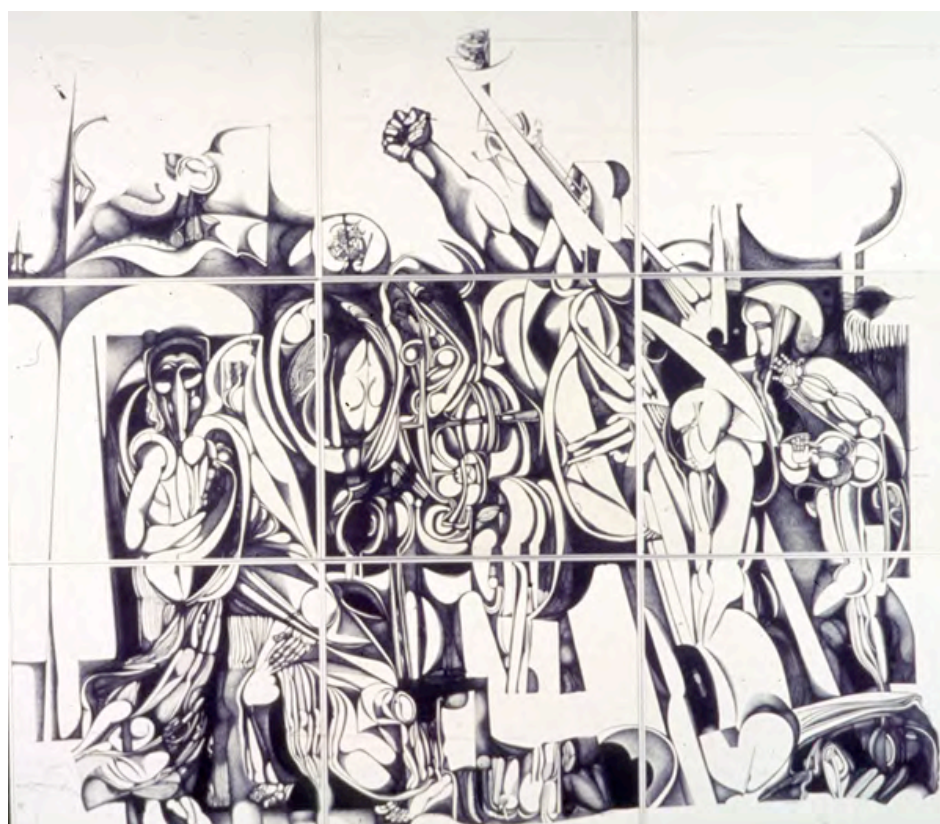
Fig. 48. Ibrahim El Salahi, *The Inevitable* (1984-1985).

Fig. 49. Viteix, *Luta Armada*, early 1970s.
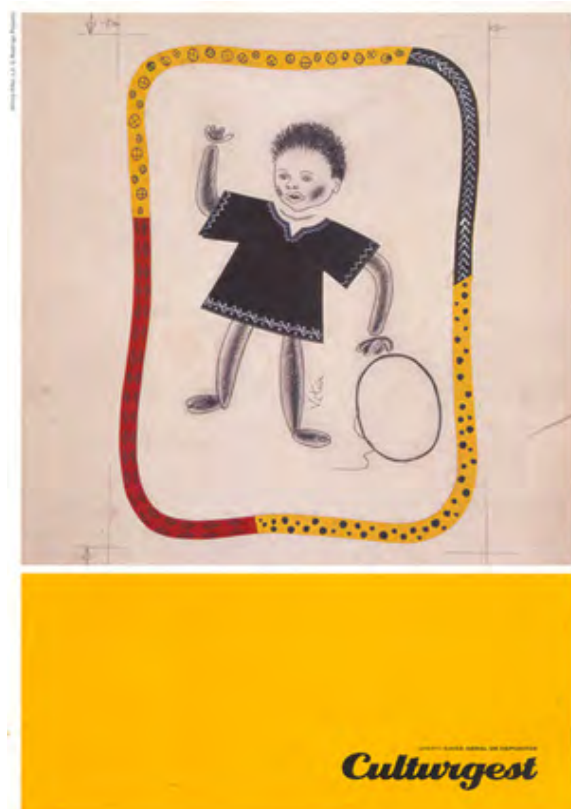
Fig. 50. Cover of 2004 exhibition "Viteix: Obras de 1958 a 1993" at Culturgest, Lisbon, Portugal. Image on cover is *Estudo (N'zinga)(Minha Filha)*, n.d.

Fig. 51. Viteix, *Sem Titulo* (1992).

Fig. 52. Viteix, *Maternidade II* (1973).

Fig. 53. Viteix, *Sem Titulo* (1983).

Fig. 54. Joaquim Rodrigo, *Suffrage* (1960).

Fig. 55. Joaquim Rodrigo, *M.L.* (1960).

Fig. 56. Joaquim Rodrigo, *19S* (1961).

Fig. 57. Francisco Domingos "Van" Van-Dúnem, no title (2000).

Fig. 58. Fransico Domingos "Van" Van-Duném, *Miragem Mística* (2002).

Fig. 59. Jorge Gumbe, *Variações* (1987).

Fig. 60. Albano Neves e Sousa, mural in Aeroporto Quatro de Feveriro, Luanda, Angola depicting various ethnic groups of Angola.

Fig. 61. Albano Neves e Sousa, mural in Hotel Lobito, Lobito, Angola. Date unknown.

Figs. 62 and 63. Some of the typical tourist art sold in Angola. Photos taken at a bar/nightclub "Chill" on the Ilha de Luanda (Luanda Island), 2006. Photos taken by author.

Fig. 64. Eleuterio Sanches, *Familia* (2003).

Fig. 65. Guy Tillim, *Court Records, Lubumbashi, DR Congo, 2007*, 2007.

Fig. 66. Guy Tillim, *University of Lubumbashi, DR Congo, 2007*, 2007.

Fig. 67. N'Dilo Mutima, *Manroja*, 2004.
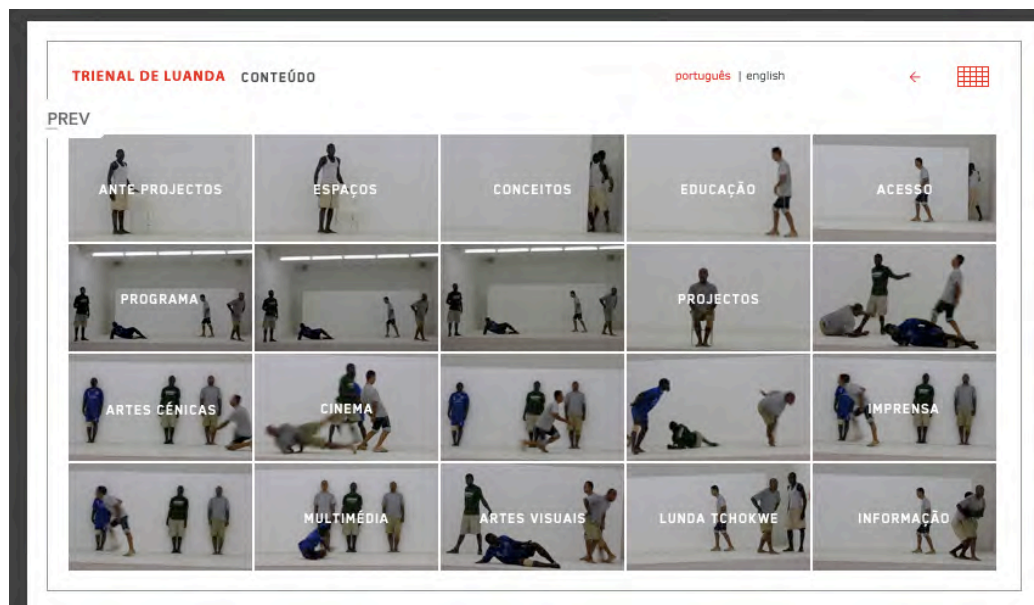
Fig. 68. Trienal de Luanda homepage.
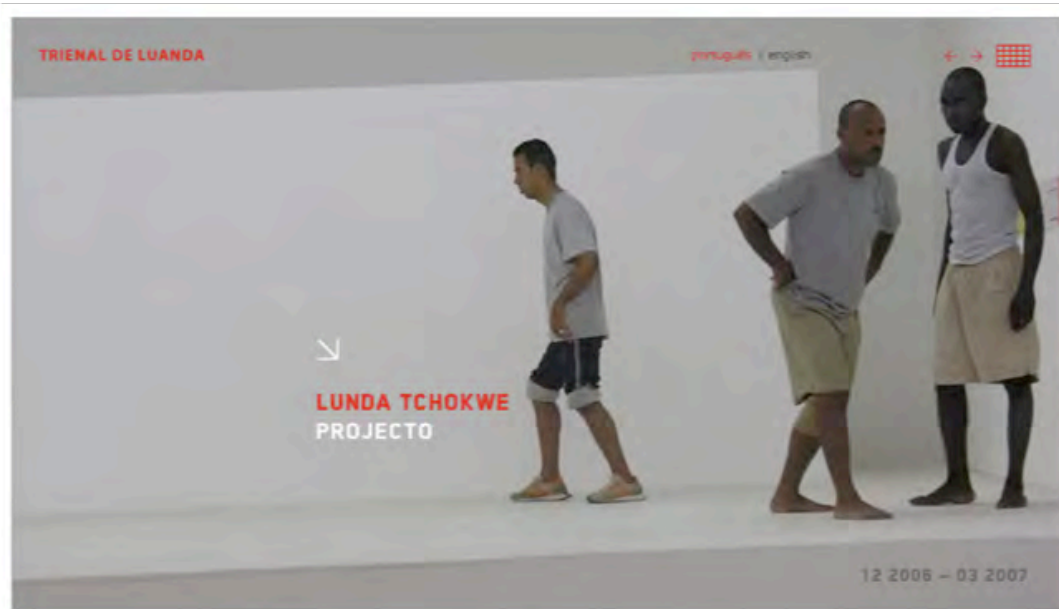
Fig. 69. Lunda Tchokwe project homepage with navigational arrows on the upper left. The grid symbol next to the arrows was a hyperlink back to the Trienal de Luanda homepage.

Fig. 70. Concept layout for the branding of the Trienal de Luanda. Alvim invited Jordan and Johnson to Luanda as he argued that their work should be considered performance art.

Fig. 71 (top). *Estampa 5A* on the Lunda Tchokwe project website. Image has been rotated and cropped to remove Redinha's signature

Fig. 72 (bottom). *Estampa 5A* as published in *Paredes Pintadas da Lunda*. Signature in upper left hand corner.

Fig. 73 (top). Lunda Tchokwe project alteration of *Estampa 1* in *Paredes*.

Fig. 74 (bottom). *Estampa 1* in *Paredes*.

Fig. 75. Ad banner generated during a YouTube search of diamond mines in Angola.
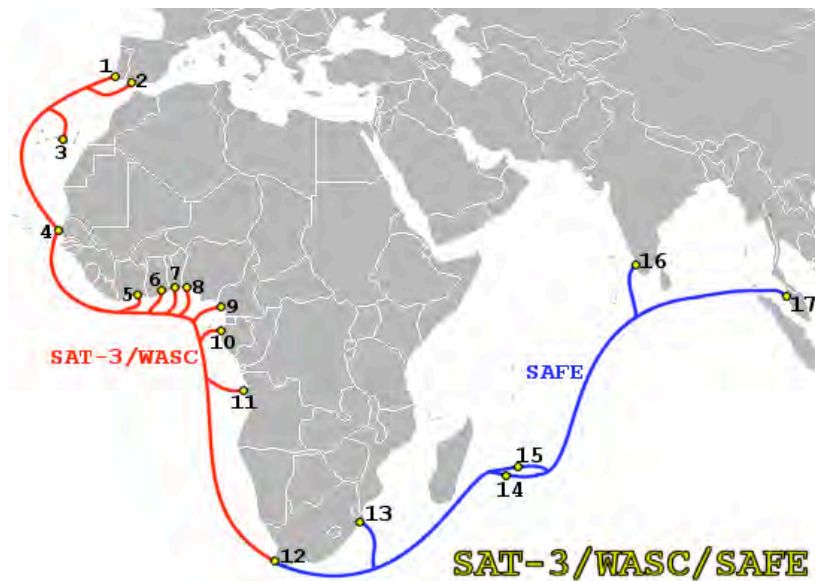
Fig. 76. SAT-3/WASC underwater fiberoptic cable laid in 2002. Eastern African SAFE cable laid in subsequent phases.

Fig. 77. Wireless transmitter used by Internet Technologies Angola, ISP of the Trienal de Luanda. Broadcasts from atop the BPC building in downtown Luanda and is received by a satellelite that communicates directly with Brazilian hosts.
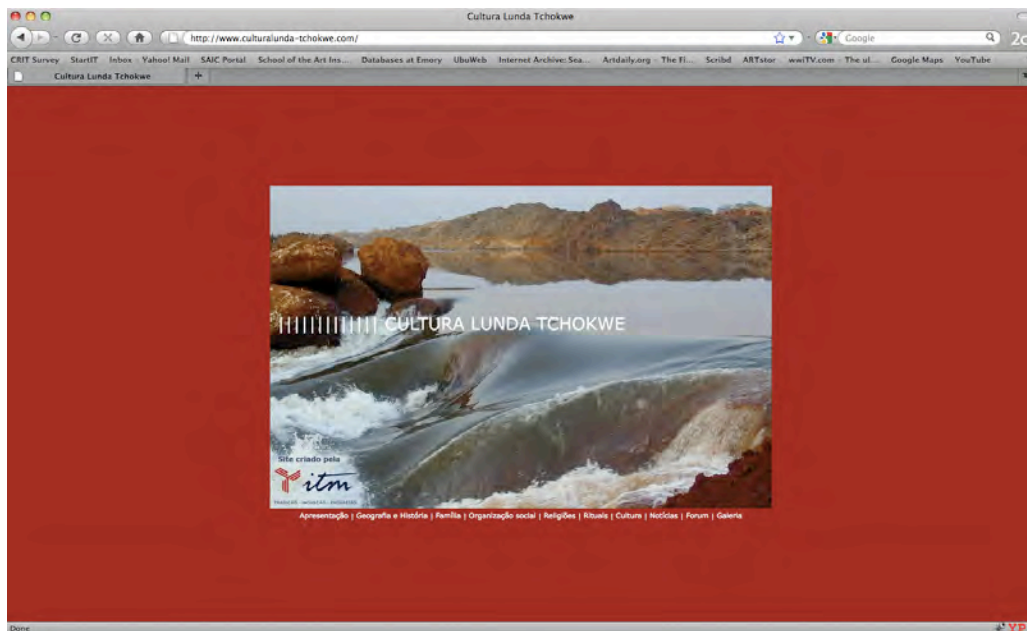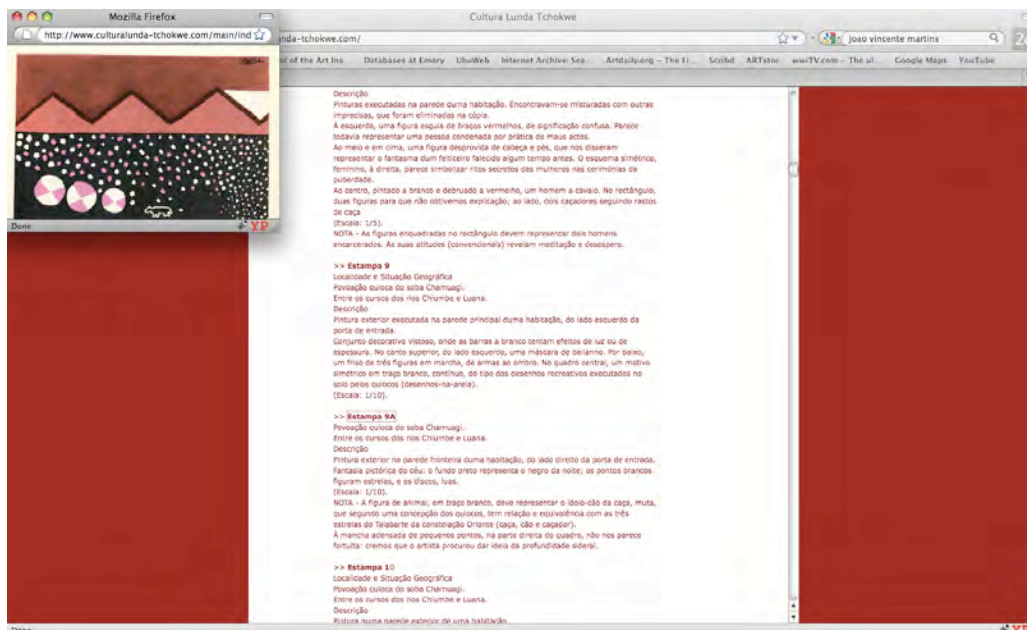
Fig. 78. ITM "Cultura Lunda Tchokwe" website.

Fig. 79. *Estampa 9A* as it appears in the "ITM Cultura Lunda
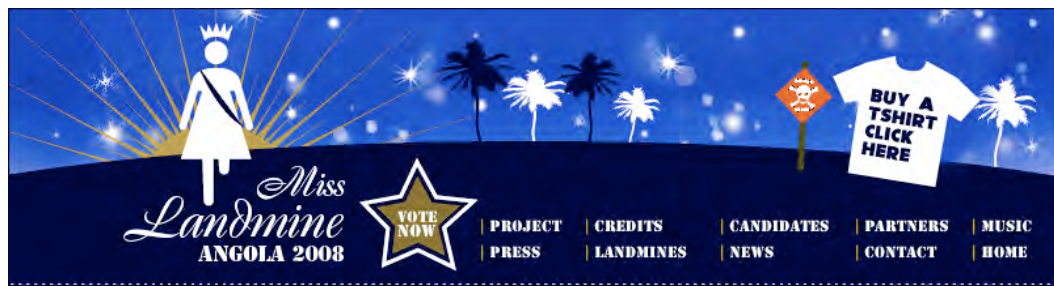Tchokwe" website.

Fig. 80. Page header for Miss Landmine Angola 2008 website. Shows manipulated female pictogram with a truncated leg.