

9. Secular Affective Politics in a National Dance about AIDS in Mozambique

AARON MONTOYA

Imagine an hour-long dance performance where an African nation is represented by dancers playing the roles of lovers, schoolgirls, playboys, military men, businessmen, sex workers, intravenous drug users, traditional healers, peasants, and pastors. Then, throw onto the stage four dancers in full-body tights and masks that cover their faces. The tights are made using a batik wash technique that mixes many colors, but red and yellow dominate to symbolize blood and infection. Attached to the tights are strange spikes and nodes, calling to mind grotesque growths and sores. These four HIV/AIDS virus dancers threaten the unsuspecting characters from African social life, such as romantic partners who are dancing ballroom style in elegant suits and dresses.¹ The virus dancers infect more complicit, even villainous characters such as sex workers and traditional healers, who then transmit AIDS to others in society. Finally, a lone hero dancer enters wearing white tights and covered with white elastic fabric that forms a tip on the head and a circular rim around the dancer's knees. This condom dancer is backed by ten other character dancers wearing condom "hats" on their heads. Together they banish the virus dancers from the stage. It is a wacky performance but seemingly effective at communicating the national message to use condoms in the struggle against AIDS.

The preceding is a description of a dance called *Amatodos* (1998), produced by the Companhia Nacional de Canto e Dança (CNCD; Mozambican National Song and Dance Company). For at least five years, the CNCD consistently performed *Amatodos* in their tours around the country and abroad. This constant

reproduction made *Amatodos* one of the most widely circulated dances about AIDS that emerged out of the industry of information, education, and communication (IEC) campaigns about the epidemic. Early in the history of IEC campaigns, the industry recognized that dance, music, and theater were effective media for communicating to the Mozambican people about the dramatic spread of AIDS (ARPAC 2004).² The IEC campaigns were part of much larger AIDS-related programs that involved epidemiological surveillance systems, laboratory support, treatment, and the introduction of retroviral therapy. Under the recent push for multisector governance by powerful institutions such as the World Bank and the Clinton Foundation, AIDS communication projects have been prioritized in every sector of Mozambique, not just the health sector. Thus, Mozambicans have witnessed a lot of IEC campaigns and a lot of art about AIDS. Dance performances were constant features of these campaigns, and *Amatodos* was the most widely circulated and influential of all the performances.

Most IEC campaigns focused on seemingly simple messages about abstinence, condom use, and safe sex. *Amatodos*'s message, for example, was explicitly presented through the character of the heroic dancing condom and the final scene where the condom-wearing populace expels the viruses from the stage. Yet studies of IEC campaigns have identified how audiences interpret campaigns in surprising ways that diverge from the aims of health agencies (Bastos 2002; Carrillo 2002; Galvão 1997; Kalipeni, Flynn, and Pope 2009; Martin 1997; Matsinhe 2008; Parker 2000; Prolongeau 1995). In fact, the studies show that while many campaigns are ineffective at changing behaviors, they are good at disseminating powerful political discourses about the nation, race, class, gender, sexuality, and religion that stigmatize and marginalize social groups and regulate populations. The studies advocate for more ethnographically grounded understandings of how IEC campaigns are interpreted, how they circulate and gain signification, and how people respond to them through their daily cultural practices and behaviors.

This chapter examines how *Amatodos* was experienced and interpreted by audiences as well as CNCD members: the very people who choreographed and performed the dance.³ My interlocutors' experiences of *Amatodos* diverged significantly from its message about condoms and safe sex; they saw and felt scenes that pitted restraint against excess, reason against passions, where the clear aberrant behaviors and sensibilities were more closely tied to the body, and the superior ones were cerebral; the more appropriate behaviors were Christian faith based, and the more dangerous ones were African derived. For many, this split between rational, controlled citizens and unruly, backward subjects resembled Mozambicans' experiences of Portuguese colonialism, which constructed

racialized ideologies about nonnative citizens and nativized subjects (Cabaço 2010; Mamdani 1996) and set the stage for the centrality of performing racialized subjectivities through daily cultural practices, habits, and dispositions that were seemingly beyond colonial race discourses.⁴ My examination of *Amatodos*, then, is concerned with how the secular sensibilities and dispositions that were performed in *Amatodos* echo a longer history of secular-modern rule in Mozambique that instituted the secular relationally through other social formations of religion, race, class, gender, and geography (urban, rural, peri-urban). To illuminate *Amatodos* as a performance of secular-modern rule, I take an approach that investigates closely the kinesthetic and affective experience of dancing and watching dance. This embodied approach helps identify the racialized elements of *Amatodos* that mobilize antdance and anti-African aesthetics.

Amatodos communicated an overly simplistic and sappy message about AIDS, which many shrugged off; nevertheless, it became an important cultural hub for the Mozambican state, and other entities steeped in Christian and secular sensibilities, through which it attempted to regulate what counted as properly religious through making negative gestures toward ecstatic bodies, skilled dancing bodies. Therefore, one consequence of *Amatodos*, and the numerous campaigns that followed, was that Mozambican society fashioned an AIDS-free subjectivity that was tied to the daily cultural practices, habits, and dispositions of secular-modern rule. While AIDS dances like *Amatodos* did make immediate positive impacts with their messaging about condoms and safe sex, AIDS dances were limited in their ability to convince audiences, to win them over about how to positively change behaviors, because the dances' secular sensibilities toward the body were incompatible with how many Mozambicans experience movement and spirituality. Instead, my study of audience responses revealed how many people rejected IEC messaging about AIDS because it promoted a proper AIDS-free subjectivity bounded by secular-religious binaries. As an alternative, they frequently embraced AIDS dance choreographies for their ecstatic energies and spiritual experiences that emerged through heightened aesthetic states—the very thing that supposedly caused the spread of the epidemic.

The Antecedents to *Amatodos* and the Political Background

The CNCD is one of Mozambique's proudest cultural institutions in an oceanic panorama of dance groups and dance cultures. While the history of dance in Mozambique is incredibly diverse and has yet to be sufficiently examined and documented, one theme that recurs is how Mozambicans mobilize dance as a journey of transformational states. Dance summons ancestors, excites emo-

tions, creates psychological release, and brings people together. Dancing promotes heightened emotions from the social to intimate relations that are highly valued by people. Because of the significance of transformational states, the other theme in Mozambican dance history is that the nation-state, from Portuguese colonialism to the current neoliberal regime, has attempted to regulate dancing and direct dances for the benefit of its own political discourses. Skilled dancing bodies and the ecstatic scenes they invoke are the nexus of state-society engagement over what bodies best represent Mozambican identity. For more than three decades, the CNCD has been producing and circulating dance choreographies with the objective to move audiences and shape their behaviors. By the time the CNCD created and toured *Amatodos* in the late 1990s, performers and audiences were already accustomed to dance being used by the state to compel and educate, as well as being used by ordinary people as a platform to perform their own embodied knowledge and values. Simply put, the CNCD was a central hub in Mozambicans' contestation over the politics of representation.

The CNCD's aesthetic and pedagogical conventions were in large part forged through the struggle for decolonization. Dance was a significant medium for education and inspiration during the armed struggle (1962–1975), and dance ascended as one of the favorite state-sponsored cultural practices during the brief socialist period (1975–1986). Mozambique gained independence from Portugal only in 1975, after more than a decade of armed struggle organized by FRELIMO (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, or Mozambican Liberation Front), which conducted a guerrilla war from its military bases in northern Mozambique and neighboring Tanzania. Its military camps were extremely diverse places that consisted of rebellious missionary-educated men, dispossessed peasants from the north, and disaffected migrant laborers from the south, as well as Africans and foreigners from other revolutionary causes and socialist movements across the continent and globe. Music and dance happenings were routine in FRELIMO's military camps as entertainment and intercultural exchange, as instruction about FRELIMO's nationalism, and as part of military training and strategy. Upon independence, FRELIMO established a Marxist-Leninist government that was determined to reverse the legacy of apartheid and capitalist exploitation by Portuguese colonialism. One of the first actions of the new government was establishing cultural institutions, such as the Centro de Estudos Culturais (Center for Cultural Studies) in Maputo as well as community centers called *casas de cultura*, which would educate and animate the Mozambican people about FRELIMO's decolonizing revolution. The military camps of FRELIMO, and their use of dance music for mass mobilization and education, were the models for these cultural centers.

When the CNCD was officially established in 1983, the dance company instituted aesthetic and pedagogical conventions that had been forged through the armed struggle and then further developed movement, musical, and theatrical techniques to engage audiences, drawing them into its performances and inspiring a massive following on its tours within the country and abroad. The CNCD's most iconic choreographies often reproduced aspects of dances from ceremonial contexts that joined ancestral and material worlds to produce transformational states. The CNCD also drew on popular dances in other contexts of community participation, such as harvest festivities and coming-of-age rituals, to evoke moments of extreme rapture and fascination. Then, using techniques from modern theater, the CNCD skillfully integrated the aesthetic building of dance and music with narratives that were frequently linked to, or at least in dialogue with, political discourses. Thus, the CNCD was consistently producing choreographies where dancing bodies and the transformational states they induce instructed audiences about Mozambican history and citizenship.

For example, the CNCD's first productions—*Em Moçambique o sol nasceu* (1983), *As mãos* (1984), and *N'TSay* (1986)—displayed FRELIMO's revolutionary goals of transcending colonialism. *Em Moçambique o sol nasceu* (The sun is rising in Mozambique) was a versatile compilation of multiple dances easily identified as “traditional” but more accurately described as “neotraditional” because they were the CNCD's representations of folklore dances. The choreography ran through a list of Mozambique's most iconic folklore performances that were associated with particular ethnolinguistic groups and regions. The choreography invited audiences to valorize Mozambican culture and rituals that had frequently been marginalized and brutally repressed during Portuguese colonialism. It also implored Mozambicans to transcend regional and ethnolinguistic differences to form a nation united through its diversity. Another choreography, *As mãos* (The hands), was the CNCD's first dance to fuse the neotraditional dances that were its bread and butter with the internationally recognized genres of ballet and Cuban modern, which were the other two main techniques that CNCD members trained in. In *As mãos*, the lead male dancer, who was Black, specialized in African dance, and the lead female dancer, who was mixed race (*mestiça*), specialized in ballet and Cuban modern. *As mãos* is a love story based on a legend about the origins of humanity from the Makonde people in Mozambique. The two lead dancers performed together on stage, showing a mutual respect for the multiple dance cultures present in Mozambique. FRELIMO hailed the dance for its message of nonracialism, and audiences largely understand *As mãos* as a dance about how Mozambican society would surpass the legacy of racial segregation. Another choreography, *N'TSay*, is a dance about a mythic

goddess of the same name, who was also a deity for many people in central Mozambique. The choreography is an allegory of the armed struggle, telling the story of a mythic queen, N'Tsay, who saved her people from the foreigners who had corrupted the king and enslaved the population. N'Tsay encourages audiences to understand Mozambican nationalism as an epic struggle against foreign invaders and a corrupt male comprador class that sold out the people for temporary personal wealth. *Em Moçambique o sol nasceu, As mãos*, and N'Tsay were the CNCD's first well-received choreographies. They folded audiences into embodied experiences of moving beyond colonial society. These dances fused the aesthetics of transformational states, abundantly performed onstage, with political narratives about transcending the colonial mentalities of tribalism, racialism, patriarchy, and classism that were instituted by the Portuguese and continued to be relevant in the postcolonial wake.

The decolonizing goals of FRELIMO, however, were thwarted by harsh realities and mired in the party's own internal contradictions and failures. Mozambique's brief socialist experiment lasted only from 1977, when the government declared itself a Marxist-Leninist state, until 1986, when the government agreed to the first round of the International Monetary Fund's structural adjustment programs to deal with its ballooning debt from the civil war. During this period Mozambique was destroyed by a "war of destabilization," in large part propagated by apartheid South Africa and its Cold War allies, who supported a rebel army called RENAMO (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, or the Mozambican National Resistance; Hall and Young 1997; Hanlon 1986).⁵ While the civil war raged and FRELIMO's fiery rhetoric of rupture was contradicted by its policies of continuity with the colonial economy (Dinerman 2006; Pitcher 2002), the CNCD staged new choreographies embodying unity and hope for change. *A grande festa* (A great celebration; 1988) staged several festive scenes where dancers progressively built on each scene and enveloped themselves in feelings of high spirits. The piece was choreographed to honor Mozambicans' capacity to be resilient during crisis and find joy through their communal collaborations to make dance music. While *A grande festa* did not have one message that unfolded through its performance, it was amply framed by publicity and political discourses that urged Mozambicans to keep faith in the government, its war, and its party and argued that Mozambique would survive the injustices of Western capitalism's policy of "rolling back" socialist governments through fomenting armed insurgency.

In the 1990s the CNCD also played an important role in the transition to peace, a new era of multiparty elections, and massive national reconstruction projects funded by the international donor community. In 1992 peace accords

were signed by FRELIMO and RENAMO. While the armed conflict had halted, peace and security remained an unfulfilled goal (Cabrita 2000). The CNCD's *Ode à paz* (Ode to peace; 1992) addressed the country's fragility and people's aspirations for stability. The choreography culminated in an intense scene with two groups of dancers battling it out on the stage, each trying to outdo the other in agility, strength, and wits. Neither group was able to overcome the other. Instead, the choreography locked the dancers and audiences together in an anguished repetition of pulls, tugs, and leaps that devolved into disorder and exhaustion. Both CNCD performers and audiences reported how the dance brought them to tears with its reproduction of the energies of the war and feelings of being fed up with endless cycles of violence.

In sum, since independence, the CNCD has designed choreographies that astutely assembled aesthetic stimulation, folklore, and politics to communicate physically compelling journeys of transcendence. *Amatodos* was among the CNCD's next major choreographies in this lineage of dances that engaged the public in epic tales of strife, national struggle, and resilience. Like its predecessors, *Amatodos* mobilized kinesthetic and other sensory involvements and relations to draw audiences emotionally and physically into formations of citizenship.

Theoretical and Methodological Approach to *Amatodos*

Thus far, I have given a brief history of Mozambique and Mozambicans' aspirations for change through a few iconic choreographies produced by the CNCD. Rather than only recounting history through dance, I now move to an embodied approach to *Amatodos* to show how the CNCD choreographies performed secular sensibilities for dramatic effect. By the time of *Amatodos*, performers and audiences were accustomed to CNCD choreographies. They were used to making a material correspondence between the medium of the choreography itself (the dancing body) and the embodied subject (the audience and the larger public). Following the ideological framing of CNCD choreographies, Mozambicans were to embrace and mimic the aesthetic transcendences onstage, thus bringing about desired behavioral changes that would become diffused throughout society. Mozambicans themselves would take up the dance routines of transcendence as disciplinary techniques working in the body to then transform their society (Foucault 1975). However, dancers and audiences did not necessarily invest their performances of transcendence with the same normalizing techniques that the FRELIMO patrons of the CNCD would have intended. The embodiment of FRELIMO discourses was a slippery, unstable process.

My approach to power and embodiment is inspired by scholars in dance studies who have developed methodologies for studying the energies and agencies created by moving bodies (Castaldi 2006; Chakravorty 2008; Giersdorf 2013; Manning 2006; O'Shea 2007; Shea Murphy 2007). Dance scholarship has been dedicated to writing histories of dances and/or recounting history through dance. Many have focused extensively on the role of state agencies and elites in appropriating dances to shape nationalist ideology and to create national subjects (Daniel 1995; Handler 1988; Kaepler 1993; Ramsey 1995). Their studies of dance have countered the Eurocentric and logocentric biases that privileged written texts and audiovisual media. Instead, they demonstrate the significance of performative genres in nation making, and they document histories of people who have frequently been absent from or marginalized in official histories. In addition, dance studies have addressed how ordinary people and the most disadvantaged populations have been able to defend themselves and even hijack and reconfigure nation-state processes through their dance practices (Meduri 2008; Nájera-Ramírez 1997; Reed 2010). They argue that it is not enough to examine how dance is a vehicle for discursive practices. Studies must account for the experiential significance of the body as a responsive and creative subject, in contrast to the longer tradition in scholarship that “posited the body as an object, manipulated by external forces in the service of something” (Novack 1995, 179). Thus, critical and ethnographic approaches to dance emphasize the importance of kinesthesia and of somatic awareness in movement practice as a learning and transformative experience (Ness 1992). They emphasize a mobile model of subjectivity to examine how communication and sociality are derived from the body rather than exclusively from language (Godard 1996). They show how dancing bodies are not isolated from linguistic expression or bounded only to ephemeral moments; instead, dancing bodies are intelligent somatic practices that inform and are informed by other sensorial experiences and signifying practices. The dancing body gets “written upon” by discursive practices but also writes on discursive and equivalent social processes (Browning 1995; Foster 1995).

These critical and ethnographic approaches to dance have contributed theoretical ideas about power and embodiment that I apply to *Amatodos* to illuminate the social effect of the choreography for the CNCD and audiences. I became skeptical about the effectiveness of *Amatodos* because in my interviews people were not that interested in the messages about condoms, other than saying that such messages depicted the obvious about AIDS transmission but failed to address the difficult issues of love and desire and the familial, social, and economic pressures that make sex and condom use so vexing (Manuel 2008).

However, they were keenly interested in describing the choreography and the sensorial and kinesthetic processes that made a particular consciousness about AIDS possible. *Amatodos* provoked strong sensations and sentiments about sex, about dancing at a nightclub, about dancing at a communal event that induced spirit possession. *Amatodos* had a profound personal and social effect that, on the one hand, evoked intense experiences of rapture and spiritual transcendence while, on the other hand, using these sexual and sacred emotions as foils to project negative characterizations of intimacy and spiritual life. This back-and-forth in *Amatodos* between excess and constraint, the dancing body and the controlled subject, caused an affective experience of the secular. It drew audiences emotionally and physically into formations of secular citizenship by dancing excesses and then negating the value of ecstatic, heightened states.

Scholars (Asad 2003; Hirschkind 2011; Mahmood 2005) have shown how despite the discursive efforts to construct public life into secular-religious binaries, secularism is in fact not necessarily in the business of eliminating religion from public life; rather, it delineates and fashions religious domains in ways that are conducive to liberal rule. Their scholarship frames my somatic analysis of *Amatodos*. I argue that *Amatodos* worked to promote a proper religiosity that was conducive to neoliberal rule by performing contrasts between proper AIDS-free subjects who were restrained, disembodied, and interiorized and complicit and downright criminal subjects who were unrestrained, ecstatic, and African. *Amatodos* participates in a secular-religious domain by performing a full sensorium of positive and negative behaviors to communicate its national message about condom use and safe sex.

Still, *Amatodos*'s performance of secular sensibilities was slippery and unstable. Many people discussed how they immersed themselves in *Amatodos* with little regard for its secular politics. To judge from my interviews, the dance failed to compel audiences with its secular message. That a secularist dance would fail to convince audiences is also consistent with what we know of history. Studies of dances in Africa and its diaspora have documented and analyzed dances considered sacred by the participants. Scholars document how sacred dances are participatory realms where interactions among dance movement and instrumental and vocal movement generate heightened aesthetic stimulation, experienced by the participants as transcendent or transformational states of being (Daniel 2011, 129–158). They analyze how sacred dances that produce heightened states of aesthetic stimulation can occur at many places along a secular-spiritual continuum (Daniel 2011; Gottschild 2003; Israel 2014; Welsh Asante 1985). They have taught us that while Africanist religious dance ritual

is frequently absent for many Africans and descendants, African ancestral heritage and sacred African legacies nevertheless resurface in numerous performative forms—not just in distinct African religious structures. Despite the history of compulsory Christianity and secular modernism, Africanist sacred ethical and aesthetic sensibilities are expressed through dance in many contexts, including popular, theatrical, ceremonial, and even official state ceremonies and tourist venues (Covington-Ward 2016; Daniel 2005; Israel 2014). *Amatodos* was celebrated for its ecstatic moments and sensuality, even though it was supposed to convince audiences to negate the sensuous body and promote a “secular sensorium” (Hirschkind 2011, 637).⁶

Thus, sacred sensibilities are powerful modes of social action in Mozambican politics and social life that are frequently in play with secular affective projects but also must be understood on their own terms. Furthermore, because the affective experience of secular politics depends on a negative gesture of othering embodied sacred practices, the secular politics is always unstable and emerges in the mode of failure.⁷

I now turn to how *Amatodos* promoted a secular sensorium and how this sensorium offended many participants because, in order to enact a proper AIDS-free subjectivity, *Amatodos* mobilized colonial structures of separate and unequal performative social formations. Then, in the final section, I investigate how many participants celebrated the spiritual experiences that emerged through ecstatic dancing bodies, thus immersing themselves in *Amatodos* with little regard to its secular politics. Both sections work to illuminate the relationality of secular and sacred embodied practices in Mozambique. Together, the sections show how IEC projects, and the biomedical and development projects that fund them, play the “secular game” (Asad 2003) in Mozambique and how many Mozambicans mobilize their bodies for alternative spiritual experiences.

Amatodos as Secular Dance

I studied *Amatodos* through my fieldwork experience when I helped create a professional development program at the Escola Nacional de Dança (END; National Dance School).⁸ For this program I cotaught the courses Documentation of Dance and History of Mozambican Concert Dance. In these classes we guided the students on how to do interviews, collect data, write field notes, and interpret interviews. We passed on these skills through action-oriented classwork in which students and teachers researched Mozambican dance history together. We brought in weekly guests to talk about their participation in the founding of the CNCD and END. Together we studied these institutions

and performances from 1975 until the present. *Amatodos* was one of the performances we examined more closely.

Initially, the class dismissed *Amatodos* as a crude and silly dance. Frequently, they would refer to it as “just an AIDS dance” (é só a dança do SIDA). The CNCD members would say it was just “something to show we are with FRELIMO” (para mostrar que estamos com a Freli) or “dances we do for the donors” (as danças que fazemos para os doadores). But, with time, the teachers and students demonstrated that they cared more about the dance than they initially let on. They zealously discussed each of *Amatodos*’s eight scenes, describing how sonic, visual, and kinesthetic elements created character types and debating what effect these theatrical elements had on their own experiences.

The choreography starts with a comforting prelude of traditional percussion, which is how the CNCD starts most of its performances. The prelude calls to mind an idyllic, rural setting that most audiences would expect in CNCD performances. This idyllic ambience gradually fades to the first scene, which depicts an urban environment with the stage lights illuminating dancers dressed in tuxedos and evening dresses accompanied by synthesized sounds. Even pulses and steely beats provide the rhythm for the performers, who are dancing a waltz. The heterosexual couples are elegant and dance romantically. One couple sits on a box at center stage under a light with their backs toward each other, as if they were held in suspension. The couple exists in their own bubble while around them swirl other dancers also dressed up for a night on the town. Then enter aggressive and agile virus dancers accompanied by icy, crisp techno sounds like water freezing. The viruses dance in Afro-modern dance patterns with grounded, low positions and heavyweight efforts—like slashing and punching. They fill the stage space with expansive arm and leg attacks and sudden, athletic jumps. Their faces are covered, resembling the masquerade dancers that are common in secret societies and coming-of-age ceremonies. The scene takes place against a carmine backdrop that amplifies the sense of a love affair as well as ominous trouble.

For this first scene, *Amatodos* presents the romantic couples as allegories of Mozambican citizens who must navigate this new world of AIDS. This allegory is made explicit by having a female and male dancer sitting on a box at center stage. This scene is a reproduction of the image from the “think about life!” (“pense na vida!”) campaign, an IEC publicity campaign produced by the Ministry of Health through the National STD/AIDS Control Programme. The image shows the silhouette of a man and a woman seated, apparently naked, back to back, and in a thoughtful pose. Above the image is written “think about life!” and below the image is written “avoid AIDS!” (“evite o sida!”). In the 1990s

through the 2000s, the “think about life!” poster was the most iconic of IEC campaigns.

In the second scene, a condom dancer enters the stage accompanied by the sound of a wooden flute that lightens the menacing atmosphere. This condom dancer executes a series of balletic moves around the couple. The dancer performs a *couru* and a *soutenu* and swiftly ends in front of the couple in an arabesque.⁹ Finally, the condom disappears from the scene by executing a *chainés*, leaving the couple at center stage sitting reflectively on the box.¹⁰ The light wind-instrument sound and the balletic dance patterns present the condom as the hero of *Amatodos*, in contrast to the African aesthetics of the villainous virus dancers.

In the third scene, schoolgirls fall victim to a male dandy, who judging from his suit, which matches the schoolgirl uniforms, might be a teacher. Traditional percussion and wind instruments, similar to the prelude, accompany the schoolgirls, while the mischievous playboy/teacher dancer moves to the clashes of sharp cymbal shots on a drum kit, as played by a heavy metal band.

The fourth scene displays three drug-addicted thugs experiencing heroin-induced elation, set to heavy rock drum-kit sounds. They wear costumes such as ripped denim jeans, a Tupac Shakur T-shirt, and an unbuttoned sleeveless vest that bares the dancer’s chest. As the scene develops, the male dancers move clumsily to the drum instruments and meander around the stage in drug-induced highs.

In these first four scenes, *Amatodos* leads audiences through scenarios where romantic partners, schoolgirls, playboys, and intravenous drug users are confronted by villainous AIDS virus dancers. *Amatodos*’s message was simple for many of those who participated in our class. Unprotected sex is risky. Men exploit younger women. Intravenous drugs are dangerous. Condoms save lives. Be smart and think about life is a sensible message. But for other participants the scenes established an accusatory tone and crude characterizations that they were uncomfortable with. The most suspect behaviors in *Amatodos* are presented by characters who are absorbed in the euphoric sensations of the body, such as the thugs and the romantic couples. The more ecstatic dancing bodies represent negative acts of flirtation, copulation, and drug-induced euphoria. Urban rhythms such as synthesized sounds and jazz-rock percussion ensembles accompany these riskier states, which have tragic consequences. The villainous viruses perform moves typical of Afro-modern dance, and they dress like masquerade dancers. In contrast, the hero condom dancer performs balletic moves. Those who were uncomfortable with these characterizations pointed out that from the start *Amatodos* presents hierarchical distinctions between “thinking

about life” and “feeling life,” or even “dancing to life.” *Amatodos* communicates a message about how people can avoid AIDS through somber, reflective “think about life” bodies, while those who are absorbed in their senses are at risk, or even at fault. As the next scenes of *Amatodos* unfold, its accusatory narrative increases. Proper citizens are portrayed as cerebral and restrained. Those who overindulge in sensual pleasures are responsible for the spread of the disease.

The fifth scene depicts urban African nightlife, driven by recorded South African pop and house music by Boom Shaka and then Brenda Fassie. The female dancers are dressed as sex workers, wearing miniskirts, crop tops, and brightly colored wigs. In contrast, the male dancers are dressed as sailors, soldiers, truck drivers, and businessmen. The women circulate around the stage while approaching the men, caressing them, and asking them for cigarettes. The men respond approvingly and stroke them on their shoulders, waists, and buttocks. Boom Shaka pounds with a pulsing African house bass beat. The dance music initiates collective joy among the dancers and the audience, who for the first time in the performance respond with hoots, hollers, whistles, and clapping. The dancers engage each other in playful bravado, showing off their dance moves. Men and women provoke each other with their sensuous sagittal hip pivots, bending ever lower to the ground as their legs touch and torsos grind together. Who can bend lower? Whose pelvis can pulse more strongly? The sensual stimulation continues to build as other dancers diverge from hot to cool sensuality that is expressed more subtly through soft hip gyrations that move through vertical, horizontal, and sagittal planes, which is common in popular partner dances such as *zouk*, *passada*, and *kizomba*. Adding another layer to the scene, many dancers perform quirky simulations of sexy movements. Bent low to the ground, knees flexed, and keeping their torsos fixed horizontal to the stage, the dancers make awkward leg kicks and flailing circular arm swings, all the while beaming goofy smiles. Together the dancers’ provocations border on competitions as each tries to outdo the other. Who can be raunchier, who can be sultrier, who can be more eccentric?

The class identified strongly with *Amatodos*’s representation of popular nightlife dancing as a participatory, communal event. The development of hot, cold, and eccentric sensuality accurately displayed what they valued most about popular nightlife dancing. When done well, such dance events promote collaboration among participants, who play off of each other’s unique dancing styles to collectively build aesthetic stimulation and create ecstatic moments. The students’ discussion confirmed what scholars have identified about how transcendence is the upmost sensibility for many African and African diaspora dance communities across secular and sacred contexts. The dance scholar Yvonne

Daniel, for example, in her book *Caribbean and Atlantic Diaspora Dance: Igniting Citizenship*, finds transcendent states to be paramount throughout many genres in the circum-Atlantic world:

Dances encourage performers to become totally at one with the movement such that the corporeal becomes the ecstatic, so that the ancestral world joins the present and transformational states of being preside, or so that dancers reach heightened levels of excitation where aesthetic responses overflow. . . . Performers and observers feel glimpses of the human/spirit connection and are inevitably affected; they are consequently transported to a realm of extreme fascination, engagement, and rapture. . . . Repeated transcendent experiences over time give the dancing community form and solidarity, and dancing itself encourages a virtual journey that makes the ephemeral moments of the dance usual, normal, the ideal. (2011, 38)

The *Amatodos* dancers create a transcendent experience by collaboratively adding layers of corporeal expression and building off each other's skilled body isolations and polyrhythmic movements. As the dancers' hot, cool, and eccentric sensualities boil over, *Amatodos* takes performers and audiences on a journey that makes the ephemeral behaviors in an urban nightlife dance the ideal.

Yet the scene takes a puritanical turn in the next song by depicting the sensuality performed in the nightlife scene as "lascivious" behavior, a depiction that is all too familiar in colonialist discourses about African dance. The second song in the fifth scene is a ballad called "Too Late for Mama," by Brenda Fassie. The performance changes from playful provocations to representations of raunchy multipartner heterosexual sex. The lyrics are heavy with a message of inevitability as Fassie repeats the refrain in English: "It's too late for mama, too late, too late." A mood of tragedy is also created because of the details of Fassie's fame and eventual death, which were widely known, as she was considered the most popular Afropop star at the time. Fassie was both a loved and controversial figure because of her erotic performances onstage and outlandish public persona. Fassie's life was tragically plagued with alcohol and drug abuse. When she died of a cocaine overdose in 2004, it was revealed that she was HIV positive. *Amatodos's* hypersexualized performance to Fassie's song "Too Late for Mama" renders the nightlife dancing as hedonism. All the lavish work to transport the musicians, dancers, and audience to a realm of rapture is quickly short-circuited by a scene that equates ecstatic dancing with promiscuous sex. For the group of Mozambicans who participated in the class, this scene provoked intense debate about why it was necessary in *Amatodos* to demean the

African body, popular dance forms, and African forms of transcendence. The next scene helped many resolve this question through a closer analysis of dance and colonial history.

The sixth scene focuses on mother-to-child transmission of AIDS and the role of Christianity in warning and caring for people.¹¹ The scene is introduced by a women's choir who sing in Changana "AIDS ends life" and "AIDS does not have a cure."¹² A woman who participated in the orgy in the "Too Late for Mama" scene has contracted AIDS, which is symbolized by abject growths on her costume. She carries a doll wrapped in cloth with virus outgrowths protruding. The choir creates a somber mood, but it turns more hopeful as a single male performer dressed in a brown habit with a large cross on the front comforts the mother. The pastor receives the infected child, who is rejected by a group of female dancers who retreat backstage, repulsed by the child. The pastor is a heroic character, similar to the condom who displayed balletic moves, wore white costuming, and danced to ethereal music. The pastor holds up the baby to the community of women onstage and to the audience to show them the consequences of the nightclub scene. In contrast to the nightlife dancing, the pastor is controlled and calm, standing erect and walking. His body movements are the opposite of the low-to-the-ground body positions, the flexed joints, the polyrhythmic body isolations, and the curvilinear body forms of the virus dancers and nightlife crowd. The spectacular dancing that induces transformational states in the nightclub scene now appears quite sinful. This sixth scene presents a different kind of transcendence that is cerebral, lyrical, and faith based. In this scene, transcendence—as in accepting the child and mother and coming to terms with AIDS—occurs through a steady belief in God and a pious following of his principles as written in the Bible. Unfortunately, *Amatodos* frames these two forms of transcendence as mutually exclusive. Only one promotes HIV-free lives, while the other spreads the disease. We are now deep into a secular sensorium as well as approaching white supremacist attitudes about African expressive culture and embodied spirituality, which emerged through the history of colonialism and compulsory Christianity.

Our classroom conversations evolved into heated debates regarding the different presentations of secular Christianity versus African aesthetics. Many students were emotionally taken by the sorrow in the scene of mother-to-child transmission. The sadness was enhanced by the beautiful women's choir, the shaded lighting design, the stillness after the excitation in the previous scene, and the empathetic paternal figure of the pastor who cared for the rejected child. This scene depicted terrible social problems, such as how women have been infected at higher rates and have borne the heaviest tolls and how infected

children have been abandoned or orphaned. The scene also recalled how faith-based charities have built orphanages to meet the rise in children infected with AIDS; in Mozambique the role of the Catholic Church in this has been particularly noteworthy. Many participants noted the effectiveness of this emotionally impactful scene. Others were more ambivalent and even demonstrated anger toward the scene. While agreeing with their colleagues about the importance of the social problems that *Amatodos* raised, they wished *Amatodos* could have raised these issues without mobilizing the history of racialized discourses about African dance and the superiority of faith-based practices over practice-based religious traditions. They described how *Amatodos* echoed this colonial history.

The Portuguese frequently used dancing bodies as markers of an inferior “native” (*indígena*) identity. Many dances were prohibited, and performers were subject to criminal penal codes that imprisoned them and justified the use of violence against them. The Portuguese believed that dancing excited aggression and violence.¹³ They described “Indigenous” dances (*danças indígenas*) as messiah crazed, idolatrous, libidinous, and lewd. Dances that performed healing ceremonies were seen as satanic or as promoting irrational false belief. Colonial perspectives on dance were foils against which colonialists created their own imagined identities as superior, civilized people. Ecstatic bodies symbolized abjection, and based on this, the colonialists projected their own positive understandings of themselves as still, rational, industrious people. Thus, such negative descriptions of dance cultures were crucial to European understandings of themselves as citizens ready for the demands of civil life, while nativized subjects had to prove themselves by working, paying taxes, and adopting nuclear families and secular Christian values before they could be considered as citizens of the Portuguese nation.

The Portuguese’s ethnocentric preoccupation with Mozambicans’ dancing illustrates the colonialists’ own struggles to turn themselves into a superior citizen class. While the citizen status of the Portuguese and other settlers was legally protected, the elaborate system of hierarchical categories for the people in the Portuguese Overseas Province of Mozambique in fact took enormous cultural and material resources to bring into being (Cabaço 2010). Secular sensibilities about the body contributed to the settler population’s attempts to shape themselves into a separate race deserving of privileged citizen status. Secular Christianity promoted a distanced relationship with the body. It favored faith-based practices that centered on the reading and recitation of scriptures and sermons about the “word” of God. Clergy led public worship in specific locations (churches and cathedrals), while at home practitioners continued to strengthen their faith through reflective scripture studies and solemn prayer.

Colonialists understood their faith-based practices as antithetical to the African embodied practice-based ceremonial traditions (Honwana 2002), and they used dancing bodies as the primary symbol of this difference. White settlers, and sometimes “assimilated” Africans (*asimilados*), confined their religious practices and maintained a “reserved” and “orderly” decorum, which meant ridding themselves (their souls and daily behaviors) of corrupting bodily influences. In contrast to the mind-body obsessions of Christian faith-based practices, African religious structures were experienced and expressed through the body, and worldviews, ideologies, and histories were transmitted through embodied rituals (Honwana 2002). Dancing promoted a special relationship with spiritual practices such that dance became a connection to the ancestors and cosmic entities. African dance practices moved people into the spiritual realm.

Dance was therefore a significant site for performing durable citizen-subject identity formations that naturalized a system of different modes of rule, different application of laws, different categories of humans, and different forms of divine transcendence. Despite the violence that the Portuguese colonial state directed toward dance cultures and people who danced, Portuguese colonial rule never eliminated African dance and religious practices, not just because the Portuguese state was weak but because dance was vital for the colonial state’s own project of shaping a proper religious domain of secular Christianity. Many decades later, secular liberalism, in the form of *Amatodos* and other IEC campaigns, continued making negative gestures toward African dance and popular aesthetic and spiritual traditions for its own project of fashioning properly religious subjects. *Amatodos* remained an important link in the chain of cultural production and signification that has fashioned a performative system of citizen-subjects.

For many class participants, *Amatodos* was a contemporary revision of this ugly history of using the dancing body to define and regulate what can be considered religious. Up through the sixth scene’s Christian chorus, *Amatodos* made negative gestures toward those dance cultures that were most impassioned, ecstatic, communal, and transformational. These negative gestures were foils for an imagined responsible, AIDS-free citizen. Through this visual, aural, and kinesthetic material, *Amatodos* advocated for Mozambicans to be reasonable, to be orderly and not give in to corporeal pleasures. Secular emancipation from religion—understood as the error of irrational, emotional, unscientific belief and corporeal passions—was implicit in *Amatodos*; it was the visceral reasoning that gave *Amatodos* dramatic effect. Yet, just as scholars have challenged the idea of secular-religious binaries (Asad 2003; Mahmood 2005) by arguing that secular rule did not eliminate religion but delineated and refashioned it

in ways conducive to liberal rule, so too *Amatodos*'s illusory binary between the secular body and ecstatic bodies was bound to fail. *Amatodos*'s secular sensorium propelled into motion the imaginary of an AIDS-free subject and an AIDS-guilty subject, an imaginary that mobilized older separate and unequal performative social formations to enact neoliberal rule. The class participants used their own knowledge of Mozambican history and politics to identify how few Mozambicans would have benefited from such secular imaginaries; only those with historically accumulated privileges were well situated to articulate themselves through secular-religious binaries to solidify their status as proper citizens. Only FRELIMO, ex-patriots living in Mozambique, the well-educated and well-connected, were able to forge ahead using the ecstatic moving body as prime material to fashion their own imaginary of a future-oriented thinking subject. Still, the class participants had their own sensibilities about the ideal subject, which generated an alternative reading of *Amatodos*.

Amatodos as Sacred Dance

Despite *Amatodos*'s accusatory narrative, audiences perceived the power of the dancing body as an ideal beyond the secular, as an energy with its own social action and effects that were on a different register of human experience from the secular. In the last two scenes of *Amatodos*, the class participants critically studied *Amatodos* for its ability to “go beyond”—to produce transcendent states. They were emotionally moved by these moments of aesthetic excess that approached the spiritual, even though such moments were intended to be interpreted as negative behaviors that ought to be reformed. Their alternative readings of *Amatodos* confirmed that audiences valued *Amatodos* for how the dancing encouraged the “journey to make the ephemeral the ideal,” as Yvonne Daniel wrote, no matter the simplistic characterizations, the accusatory tone, and the secular sensorium to “think about life.” *Amatodos*'s failure to elicit the proper emotional response among audiences illuminates the insecurity and indeterminacy of secular projects (Hirschkind 2011, 643).

The seventh scene of *Amatodos* is an accolade to the CNCD—it appears precisely to display the dancers' skills and choreographic acumen. Eighteen dancers perform choreographic combinations that create geometric shapes onstage. The combinations build into a final apotheosis of solos and duos accompanied by seven musicians on traditional percussive instruments who produce an immense buzz, train-like energy charging forward. Collectively, the dancers and musicians push themselves to the brink, as if the train will fly off the tracks. Finally, the scene does derail when one male dancer slows down, his movements

falter, his timing is off, and eventually he falls to the ground. In silence, the other dancers gather around him. From stage right emerges a woman dressed in a long black sarong. She has upper-arm cuff bracelets made of shells with black ostrich feathers. She is wearing a blonde wig. She places herself above the fallen dancer and shoos away the other dancers who are standing over their colleague. She stares at him, stretches out her arms, and makes sweeping arm circles around the dancer on the floor. The other dancers and audience members shout cheers and ululations. We have now moved into the eighth scene. The mood has shifted from festive to ceremonial, from heightened aesthetics to religious energy. The lead dancer is a traditional healer, or *nyamusoro*, who guides the community in a healing ritual.

As the *nyamusoro* dancer executes the scanning and sweeping arm movements around the fallen dancer, she starts to travel in a stomping motion. Eight male and female dancers join the *nyamusoro* dancer. They repeat the same movements through several rotations, adding hand claps at the end of each cycle. The audience responds with increased wailings and cheers. Then the dancers drop to the ground to execute bowed kneeling positions. Their backs are vertical and their heads bowed slightly downward. The solemn moment is broken by a female singer offstage who sings a repetitive high-pitched chant. She cycles through two measures, and then on the third the dancers join the chanting refrain as they add hand claps, cupping the hands instead of leaving the palms flat, to produce a hollow sound. The percussion joins with a timbre that is lower, heavier, as if closer to the ground, than the percussion during the festive scene, which was higher, airier, and cleaner. Dancers stomp and clap, singers chant refrains, and musicians create deep percussive grooves; they all collaborate to produce the rise and fall of cyclic ground-heaven rhythmic movements that build like oceanic currents.

As the scene nears its culmination, the dancers continue executing highly repetitive, simple sitting and kneeling movement patterns, bouncing up and down, which causes their heads to flop and their hair to fly around. The *nyamusoro*, however, travels freely on the stage and varies her movement patterns frequently. She holds a flat metallic object, a gigantic razor blade, as she stomp-travels through the bowed-kneeling dancers, twirling as she holds her healing instrument in the air. She stands over the ill dancer and drops the razor blade down on him for four counts; then she raises the razor blade high in the air for another four counts. She repeats the pattern several times, traveling, twirling, cutting, and raising the razor blade high. The intensity continues to build. Finally, another dancer, who was the playboy/teacher in the schoolgirl scene, enters the stage with sores on his suit and walking in a discombobulated way.

He falls to the ground. The nyamusoro dancer slices down on him with the prop razor blade and then travels to other patients to do the same cutting action on them. The scene continues with the nyamusoro infecting other dancers with the cutting ritual until finally three female dancers enter and stop the healer. They take her razor blade and smash it on the floor, bringing the ceremony to a crashing halt, like an ocean wave breaking on a shore.

The scene depicted a traditional healer performing a cutting ceremony that aimed at curing the ailment of the fallen dancer but unwittingly contributed to the spread of AIDS. No matter this negative framing, the class participants thought the eighth scene was the most sublime for its reproduction of a healing ceremony. For the class participants, the seventh and eighth scenes replaced the message of “think about life!” with “dance life.” No matter what *Amatodos* had communicated earlier about sex, drugs, alcohol, promiscuity, and the importance of refined, restrained Christian values, the energetic and rhythmic bodies in the last scenes were perfection. Their energies neared the celestial. Even though the whole discursive field for *Amatodos* was the negation of the sensuous body and the promotion of a secular sensorium to overcome rapturous religious bodies, the class participants cut across secular sensibilities to register their own experiences of the sacred.

Scholars of dance and religion in Africa and its diaspora have consistently documented how sacred sensibilities have been registered in secular contexts. Religious values and practices have been preserved and reinvented through performances in seemingly nonsacred genres (Askew 2002; Covington-Ward 2016; Daniel 2005, 2013; González 2010; Straker 2009). Many Africans and African descendants participate in sacred practices of ancestor veneration, mediumship, food offerings, animal sacrifice, divination, herbalism, libations, and bloodletting and hold entrenched beliefs in mystic powers (Stewart 2005). Yet what is most obvious, but too frequently overlooked or underanalyzed, is that the dancing body, the intelligent moving body—in conjunction with song and music and all produced through communal participation—is the source of knowledge for these practices and cultivates the sensibilities that reproduce the practices. Dancing is not simply an ephemeral manifestation of more durable cultural structures. The dancing body speaks ritual practices, expresses spiritual states, and communicates knowledge in corporeal sequences and simple or virtuoso displays.

Ritual practices are “spoken” through specific movement characteristics, which have been analyzed by scholars such as Robert Farris Thompson (1974), Kariamuwelsh Asante (1985), Brenda Dixon Gottschild (2003), and Yvonne Daniel (1995, 2005). Sacred sensibilities start with the essential body positions of soft, flexed knees and divided torsos (when the body moves independently

from the waist down) that create the “grounded,” low, or readied stances that are necessary for enacting and receiving the spiritual. The natural bends are essential body mechanics from which participants can mount elaborate body isolations that create aesthetic stimulation. Sacred rituals create the compounding of aesthetic stimulation through skilled body isolations reproduced polyrhythmically both in movement and in music. One body isolation pulses to a specific beat pattern, while another body part is synced to another sequence. Or, as often occurs in highly skilled performances, a dancer will play with the musicians by syncopating or counterpointing with the musicians. Thus, sacred dances encourage, and even enforce, a hierarchy of the senses where the kinesthetic and sonic are closely associated with the divine. Corporeal intimacy with musical complexity is something celestial and therefore is frequently one of the most valued sensual experiences. Dance therefore plays a significant role in constituting the sacred and the self-fashioning attitudes, embodied dispositions, visceral reasonings, patterned hierarchies of the senses, and beliefs of religious people. Corporeal intimacy and complexity can call forth deities and evoke transcendent or transformational states of being at many places on the secular-spiritual continuum.

The last scenes in *Amatodos* exemplified how the sacred was registered in a secular venue. The context was not just a theatrical venue but a dance that was highly committed to a secularist affective experience of AIDS. The sacred was registered both by the performers onstage and also by the audiences. Onstage, the performers displayed something similar to what Nathanael Homewood (in this volume) calls “embodied resistance,” where the performers’ bodies resisted the modernist state’s negative scripting of African performances. Offstage, audiences also demonstrated resistance to the scripting in a way that resembled what the dance scholar Priya Srinivasan (2009) calls the “unruly spectator,” where audiences, in the context of the Indian dance Bharata Natyam, refused to view performances from the discourses of authenticity that falsified history and concealed labor. The participants in our class, many of whom were also performers, refused to be fashioned into a proper religious domain scripted by secular sensibilities and bounded by secular-religious binaries. Instead, they immersed themselves in the aesthetic and spiritual elation performed by the unruly bodies. Like the nightlife dancing and festive scene, the rhythmic and energetic body elevated them beyond the narrative framing of “think about life!” In these scenes, they understood that other knowledge was being enacted and transmitted. In the context of *Amatodos*, the participants identified how these kinesthetic elements took them beyond the secular rhetoric and instead made the ecstatic energies the ideal.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed how our classroom inquiries into *Amatodos* revealed how the choreography embodied the affective experience of secular politics. I analyzed the visual, aural, and kinesthetic elements in the performance to understand how *Amatodos* created sensibilities that shape a secular body, or what Charles Hirschkind (2011) called the *secular sensorium*. *Amatodos* engaged the performers and audiences in a progressive amplification of heightened states of sensual pleasure—flirtations, copulation, mood-altering elation, compounding body rhythms, religious trances—while contrasting such heightened states with more restrained, cerebral actions. Its affective force relied on continually producing a contradiction: it displayed intelligent moving bodies, and the lush energetics and rhythms they produced, while then inscribing these bodies as sinful and threatening. This was the secular sensorium that *Amatodos* pulled audiences into and that caused many to react ambivalently to the choreography. Therefore, *Amatodos* was a much more complicated dance than it would seem just judging from its message about condoms and “think about life!”

Amatodos provoked favorable, ambivalent, and ireful responses from the participants. Performing *Amatodos* gave CNCD members and others opportunities to engage in social action as representatives of national and international projects and to contribute to raising awareness about social problems associated with the epidemic. The CNCD dancers were proud to tour and raise awareness about these problems among audiences, especially since such conversations had not yet started in many communities in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The CNCD members were also pleased about gaining employment, which offered relief from a harsh environment of prolonged austerity.

However, most also agreed that the secularist hierarchies were inappropriate and counterproductive to the task of creating awareness about AIDS. The negative gestures toward African dance cultures and spiritualities were cheap moves that reflected the long history of colonial attitudes toward African dancing bodies and religious practices. *Amatodos* mobilized racialized music and dance elements to create characterizations of heroes, victims, and villains in Mozambican social life. The sonic and kinesthetic elements added dramatic effect by rendering African aesthetics and spirituality as dangerous in an era of AIDS. Audiences were presented with a secular ideal, which was interpreted as representing FRELIMO and donor ideals about citizenship. These ideals were fundamentally incompatible with how many Mozambicans lived and worshipped. Thus, *Amatodos*'s narrative created a gap between secular ideals and most Mozambicans' spiritual and aesthetic lives.

Through this case study of *Amatodos*, this chapter shows how dance, since colonialism, has been an important cultural hub for linking together formations of the secular and state modernizing projects within a larger chain of body politics that included social formations of race, class, gender, ethnicity, geography, and sexuality, to construct who counted as citizens in Mozambique. *Amatodos*'s secular narrative failed to convince audiences, which demonstrates how IEC campaigns have betrayed their informational, educational, and communication goals and what kind of unplanned effects the campaigns have had (Bastos 2002; Carrillo 2002; Galvão 1997; Kalipeni, Flynn, and Pope 2009; Martin 1997; Matsinhe 2008; Parker 2000; Prolongeau 1995). *Amatodos* also demonstrated the instability of the modern neoliberal state, which has failed to foster secular sensibilities through its projects.

Instead, *Amatodos* gave many people opportunities for social action through performing sacred sensibilities that were not necessarily subject to the play of secularism. The sacred sensibilities had an affective force of their own that promoted other corporeal and spiritual dialogues. While *Amatodos* was a failure in many respects, performers and audiences were able to feel proud of the choreography for its scenes of heightened aesthetic states, which joined performers and audiences together in spiritual convergences.

In 2011 a different dance project emerged, called *Pós-Amatodos* (Beyond *Amatodos*), which involved many of the same CNCD dancers but with ten years of IEC campaigns behind them. *Pós-Amatodos* was organized differently, with a focus on dancers' experiences of living in an era of AIDS. *Pós-Amatodos* supported artists to experiment with how to express their experiences and ignore the heavy didactic and evangelical scripts pushed by donors and FRELIMO. As a result, *Pós-Amatodos* performances explored other aesthetic and ethical experiences of the body that were worthy of attention, such as the significance of intimacy and touch in corporeal/human relationality as well as the significance of the moving body in cultivating compassion and maintaining relations with the immaterial world.

NOTES

1. While HIV is the virus and AIDS is the condition or syndrome, for brevity and in keeping with the way most people in Mozambique speak about the disease, in this chapter I use the term AIDS to refer to both. I rely on the reader's knowledge that HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is the specific virus that may cause severe damage to the immune system and lead to the condition of AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome).

2. In 1986 the prevalence of AIDS in Mozambique was believed to be below 1 percent of the adult population, although there was no way to measure rates yet (Matsinhe 2008, 38–39). A decade later, infrastructure was in place to measure how the rate reached a countrywide average of around 10 percent of the adult population between the ages of fifteen and forty-nine, with rates much higher, at around 25 percent, in the central provinces (38–39). The most recent studies show that by 2016 the prevalence hovered at 13 percent of the adult population, 15 percent among women and 10 percent among men, with an estimated 1.9 million Mozambicans living with AIDS (USAID 2021).

3. I studied *Amatodos* while working with Maputo dancers, artists, and educators, many of whom were CNCD members, in educational and performance projects between 2009 and 2012.

4. For a discussion of the legacy of the citizen-subject system in dance during Mozambicans' dramatic shifts between colonialism, socialism, and neoliberalism, see my dissertation, "Performing Citizen and Subject: Resistance and Dance in Mozambique" (2016).

5. By the 1990s, the two warring factions, FRELIMO and RENAMO, had created an environment where, out of a total population of 16.3 million, an estimated 2 million Mozambicans were refugees in neighboring countries, 3 million were displaced within Mozambique, and 800,000 had perished (Finnegan 1992).

6. Charles Hirschkind describes the secular sensorium as the "sensibilities that give shape to a secular life" (2011, 637).

7. Hirschkind (2011) argues that we need to keep the relationality of secular and sacred embodied practices within our methods of analysis. Attention to sacred and secular sensibilities helps us understand how the secular is always subject to instability and indeterminacy. As Hirschkind argues,

The analysis of the secular I am developing here directs us less toward a determinant set of embodied dispositions than to a distinct mode of power, one that mobilizes the productive tension between religious and secular to generate new practices through a process of internal self-differentiation. The boundaries of our categories religious and secular do not preexist this process but are continuously determined and reciprocally redefined within it. Moreover, inasmuch as the identity of a secular practice owes to a particular dynamic relation established between these two categories—that every secular practice is accompanied by a religious shadow as it were—then the secular will always be subject to a certain indeterminacy or instability. This instability, ensured by the in principle impossibility of bordering off the secular from the religious, is not a limit on secular power but a condition of its exercise. (643)

8. I worked with my partner, Yula Cisneros Montoya, who is a Mexican-born dancer and educator with experience in Mozambique, as well as faculty and dancers at the CNCD and END to create a professional development program called Programa de Apoio à Dança (Program for the Support of Dance) with funding from a Mozambique/Norwegian Professional Development Grant, through the Norwegian embassy in Maputo, Mozambique. I cotaught the Documentation of Dance and History of Mozambican Dance classes with Lúcio Chumbitico, a dancer and educator from Grupo Milhoros and a graduate of the Universidade Pedagógica (Pedagogical University). In addition, I helped in the creation of the dance project *Pós-Amatodos*, which organized a dance contest,

production, and tour with support from the US embassy of Mozambique and the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Through this experience, I came to know more about how *Amatodos* came into being, both practically as a CNCD dance work and also as a complex performance that participates in state ideologies, displays secularist sensibilities, and gives opportunities for sacred social action as well.

9. *Couru* is a ballet "running" step in which the dancer stands high on the balls of the feet and underpart of the toes. It can be done in place or used to travel in a swift running motion. *Soutenu* is a classical ballet term meaning "sustained" and describes a ballet dancer turning in fifth position *en pointe* and ending up with the opposite foot in front. The arabesque is one of the basic poses in ballet. It is a position of the body, in profile, supported on one leg, which can be straight or bent, with the other leg extended behind and at right angles to it, and the arms held in various harmonious positions creating the longest possible line from the fingertips to the toes. The shoulders must be held square to the line of direction.

10. *Chaînés* is a ballet "link" step that involves a series of rapid turns on the points or demi-points. It is done in a straight line or in a circle.

11. The CNCD members reported that as they toured in the north, where Islam is more prominent, they added symbols of Islam in *Amatodos*. Therefore, in some performances Islam was presented as the proper religious form.

12. *Changana* is one of the most widely spoken languages in the south of Mozambique. It is part of the Xitsonga language group in southern Africa. The CNCD changed the verses of the choral group from *Changana* to other languages as they traveled to other areas of Mozambique.

13. My summary of Portuguese and European colonial attitudes toward dance cultures and communities in Mozambique is drawn from personal interviews with Mozambicans who lived under colonialism. I also draw from numerous published resources in Mozambique, of which I mention only a few here, such as nationalist writings by lusophone Africans (see Andrade 1997), biographies (see Jesus 2010; Matuse 2004), Mozambican poetry (see Craveirinha 1980; Santos 1984; Sousa 2001), and colonial texts preserved in archives and libraries (see Pereira 1966). In addition, descriptions of colonial perspectives toward African dance cultures can be gleaned from works by contemporary Portuguese scholars (see Matos 2013).

REFERENCES

- Andrade, Mário de. 1997. *Origens do nacionalismo africano: Continuidade e ruptura nos movimentos unitários emergentes da luta contra a dominação colonial portuguesa, 1911–1961*. Lisbon: Dom Quixote.
- ARPAC. 2004. *Impacto das mensagens sobre o HIV/SIDA nos programas de informação, educação e comunicação*. Maputo: ARPAC (Arquivo do Património Cultural).
- Asad, Talal. 2003. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Askew, Kelly. 2002. *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Bastos, Cristina. 2002. *Ciência, poder, acção: As respostas à SIDA*. Lisbon: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa.
- Browning, Barbara. 1995. *Samba: Resistance in Motion*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Cabaço, José Luís. 2010. *Moçambique: Identidade, colonialismo e libertação*. Maputo: Marimbique.
- Cabrita, João M. 2000. *Mozambique: The Tortuous Road to Democracy*. New York: Palgrave.
- Carrillo, Héctor. 2002. *The Night Is Young: Sexuality in Mexico in the Times of AIDS*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Castaldi, Francesca. 2006. *Choreographies of African Identities: Négritude, Dance, and the National Ballet of Senegal*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Chakravorty, Pallabi. 2008. *Bells of Change: Kathak Dance, Women, and Modernity in India*. Calcutta: Seagull Books.
- Covington-Ward, Yolanda. 2016. *Gesture and Power: Religion, Nationalism, and Everyday Performance in Congo*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Craveirinha, José. 1980. *Xigubo*. Lisbon: Edições 70.
- Daniel, Yvonne. 1995. *Rumba: Dance and Social Change in Contemporary Cuba*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Daniel, Yvonne. 2005. *Dancing Wisdom: Embodied Knowledge in Haitian Vodou, Cuban Yoruba, and Bahian Candomblé*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Daniel, Yvonne. 2011. *Caribbean and Atlantic Diaspora Dance: Igniting Citizenship*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Dinerman, Alice. 2006. *Revolution, Counter-Revolution and Revisionism in Postcolonial Africa: The Case of Mozambique, 1975–1994*. New York: Routledge.
- Finnegan, William. 1992. *A Complicated War: The Harrowing of Mozambique*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Foster, Susan Leigh. 1995. "Choreographing History." In *Choreographing History*, edited by Susan Leigh Foster, 3–24. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Foucault, Michel. 1975. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Penguin.
- Galvão, Jane. 1997. "As respostas das organizações não-governamentais brasileiras frente à epidemia de HIV.SIDA." In *Políticas, instituições e AIDS: Enfrentando a epidemia no Brasil*, edited by Richard Parker, 69–108. Rio de Janeiro: ABIA (Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS) and Jorge Zahar.
- Giersdorf, Jens Richard. 2013. *The Body of the People: East German Dance since 1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Godard, Hubert. 1996. "Singular, Moving Geographies." In "The French Issue." *Writings on Dance*, no. 15: 12–21.
- González, Anita. 2010. *Afro-Mexico: Dancing between Myth and Reality*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Gottschild, Brenda Dixon. 2003. *The Black Dancing Body: A Geography from Coon to Cool*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hall, Margaret, and Tom Young. 1997. *Confronting Leviathan: Mozambique since Independence*. London: Hurst.

- Handler, Richard. 1988. *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Hanlon, Joseph. 1986. *Beggar Your Neighbor: Apartheid Power in Southern Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Hirschkind, Charles. 2011. "Is There a Secular Body?" *Cultural Anthropology* 26 (4): 633–647.
- Honwana, Alcinda Manuel. 2002. *Espíritos vivos, tradições modernas: Possessão de espíritos e reintegração social pós-guerra no sul de Moçambique*. Maputo: Promédia.
- Israel, Paolo. 2014. *In Step with the Times: Mapiko Masquerades of Mozambique*. Athens: Ohio University Press.
- Jesus, José Manuel Duarte de. 2010. *Eduardo Mondlane: Um homen a abater*. Coimbra: Almedina.
- Kaepler, Adrienne L. 1993. *Poetry in Motion: Studies of Tongan Dance*. Tonga: Vava'u Press.
- Kalipeni, Ezekiel, Karen Flynn, and Cynthia Pope, eds. 2009. *Strong Women, Dangerous Times: Gender and HIV/AIDS in Africa*. New York: Nova Science.
- Mahmood, Saba. 2005. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Mamdani, Mahmood. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Manning, Susan. 2006. *Ecstasy and the Demon: The Dances of Mary Wigman*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Manuel, Sandra. 2008. *Love and Desire: Concepts, Narratives and Practices of Sex amongst Youths in Maputo City*. Dakar: Saint Paul.
- Martin, Denise. 1997. "Mulheres e AIDS: Uma abordagem antropológica." *Revista USP*, no. 33 (March–May): 88–101.
- Matos, Patrícia Ferraz de. 2013. *The Colours of the Empire: Racialized Representations during Portuguese Colonialism*. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Matsinhe, Cristiano. 2008. *Tabula Rasa: Dynamics of the Mozambican Response to HIV/AIDS*. Maputo: Kula.
- Matuse, Renato. 2004. *A paixão pela terra*. Maputo: Macmillan Moçambique.
- Meduri, Avanthi. 2008. "The Transfiguration of Indian/Asian Dance in the United Kingdom: Contemporary Bharatanatyam in Global Contexts." *Asian Theatre Journal* 25 (2): 298–328. <https://doi.org/10.1353/atj.0.0017>.
- Montoya, Aaron. 2016. "Performing Citizen and Subject: Resistance and Dance in Mozambique." PhD diss., University of California, Santa Cruz.
- Nájera-Ramírez, Olga. 1997. *La Fiesta de Los Tastoanes: Critical Encounters in Mexican Festival Performance*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- Ness, Sally Ann. 1992. *Body, Movement, and Culture: Kinesthetic and Visual Symbolism in a Philippine Community*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Novack, Cynthia Jean. 1995. "The Body's Endeavors as Cultural Practices." In *Choreographing History*, edited by Susan Leigh Foster, 177–184. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- O'Shea, Janet. 2007. *At Home in the World: Bharata Natyam on the Global Stage*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

- Parker, Richard. 2000. *Na contramão da AIDS: Sexualidade, intervenção e política*. Rio de Janeiro: ABIA (Associação Brasileira Interdisciplinar de AIDS) and Editora 34.
- Pereira, Alberto Feliciano Marques. 1966. *A arte em Moçambique*. Lisbon: n.p., 1966.
- Pitcher, M. Anne. 2002. *Transforming Mozambique: The Politics of Privatization, 1975–2000*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Prolongeau, Hubert. 1995. *Une mort africaine: Le SIDA au quotidien*. Seuil L'Histoire Immediata. Paris: Seuil.
- Ramsey, Kate. 1995. "Vodou and Nationalism: The Staging of Folklore in Mid-Twentieth Century Haiti." *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 7 (2): 187–218. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07407709508571216>.
- Reed, Susan Anita. 2010. *Dance and the Nation: Performance, Ritual, and Politics in Sri Lanka*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Santos, Marcelino dos. 1984. *Canto de amor natural*. Maputo: Associação dos Escritores Moçambicanos.
- Shea Murphy, Jacqueline. 2007. *The People Have Never Stopped Dancing: Native American Modern Dance Histories*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Sousa, Noémia de. 2001. *Sangue negro*. Maputo: Associação dos Escritores Moçambicanos.
- Srinivasan, Priya. 2009. "A 'Material'-ist Reading of the Bharata Natyam Dancing Body: The Possibility of the 'Unruly Spectator.'" In *Worlding Dance*, edited by Susan Leigh Foster, 53–75. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Stewart, Diane. 2005. *Three Eyes for the Journey: African Dimensions of the Jamaican Religious Experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Straker, Jay. 2009. *Youth, Nationalism, and the Guinean Revolution*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Thompson, Robert Farris. 1974. *African Art in Motion*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- USAID. "Controlling the HIV/AIDS Epidemic," accessed January 6, 2021, <https://www.usaid.gov/mozambique/fact-sheets/controlling-hiv-aids-epidemic>.
- Welsh Asante, Kariamu. 1985. "Commonalities in African Dance: An Aesthetic Foundation." In *African Culture: The Rhythms of Unity*, edited by Molefi Kete Asante and Kariamu Welsh Asante, 71–82. Westport, CT: Greenwood.