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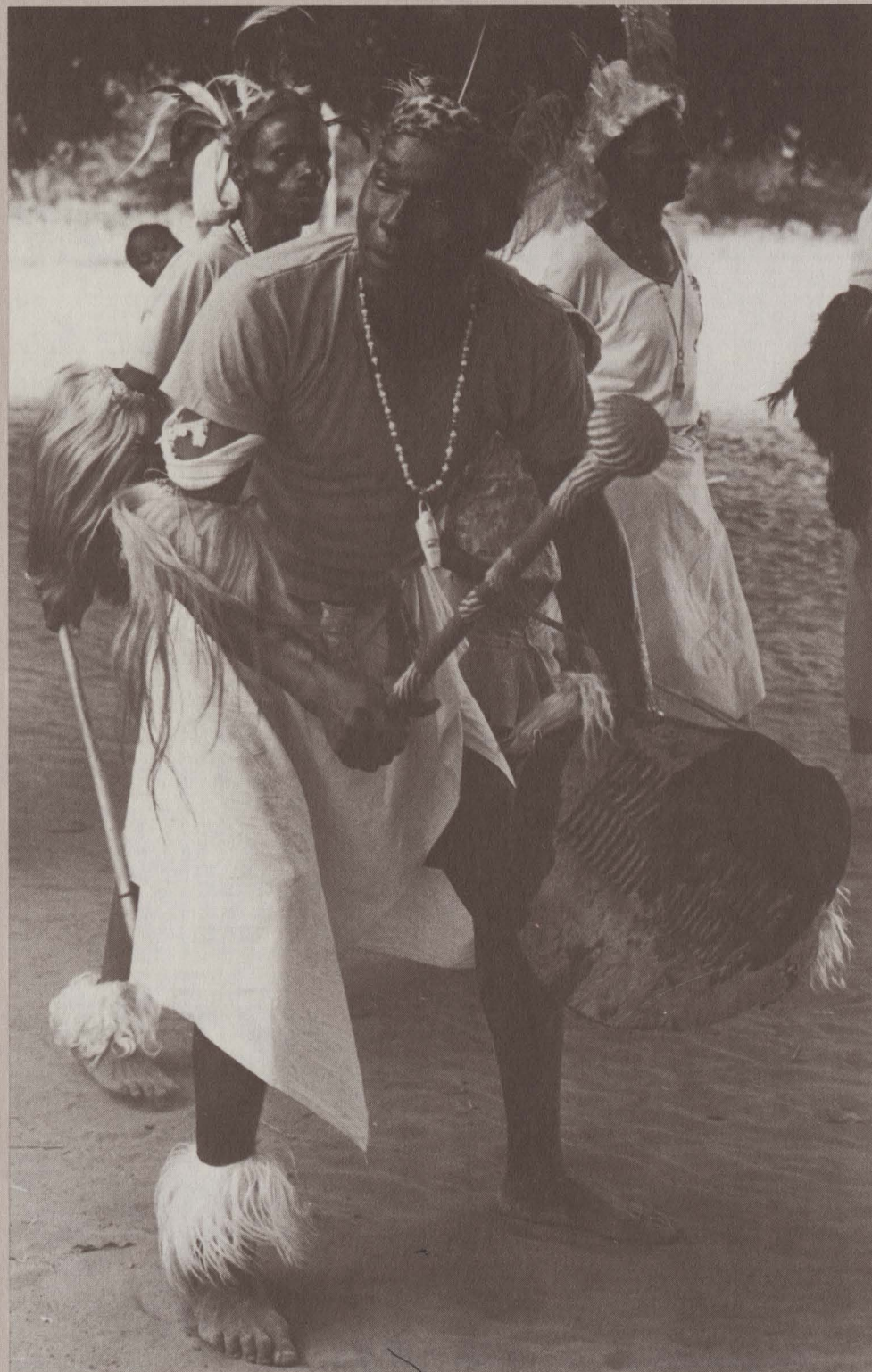
MUSIC FROM MOZAMBIQUE

1981

CHOPI TIMBILA

Two Orchestral Performances recorded in Zavala, Inhambane Province

Produced by Ron Hallis and Ophera Hallis



COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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CHOPI TIMBILA

SIDE 1

Band 1 Shinyeta-Shissibuka 21 minutes,
16 seconds.

Band 2 Zavalene 4 minutes, 20 seconds.

SIDE 2

Zavalene continued, 26 minutes, 30 seconds.

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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CHOPI TIMBILA

Two Orchestral Performances

Recorded in Zavala, Inhambane Province, Mozambique 1981

Produced by Ron Hallis and Ophera Hallis
Recorded by Ron Hallis, assisted by Francisco Banze
Photographs by Ophera Hallis
Notes and translations by Ron Hallis

(Captions for numbered photos are on page 6.)

Introduction:

I wish to begin by mentioning Harry Smith, the American Film-maker and Musicologist who has been a constant source of inspiration, information, and useful criticism. Harry once said to me during a visit I made from Maputo to New York in 1979, "If you leave Mozambique without ever having gone to Zavala to record Chopi Timbila, don't ever darken my door again!" I told that story to the musicians of Shinyeta-Shissibuka before recording the performance that is presented on this record. The leader of the group, Shipune Wilissene, said that he was happy to hear that there were people across the seas who like their music.

The recordings on this disc were made in late 1981 on trips that I made to the District of Zavala to research a film that I subsequently shot in April of 1982. I worked with seven Timbila orchestras during that period; Buque-Zandamela, Mutulene, Shissibuka, Zavale, Banguza, Mavalula, and the Maputo city group of Xipamanine composed of street-cleaners and garbage collectors of the city sanitation department. The Xipamanine players used tin cans as resonators below their instrument's keys and not the Masala fruit shell that is traditional. The Timbila makers of Zavala claimed that there were no more Mwenji trees left in the region and they could only use the slightly inferior MUNUNGWANE wood to make their keys.





The 1981 cashew harvest in Zavala was a disaster. The blossoms had been seared by the unseasonal heat and lack of rain. The Chopi were disappointed and could only look forward to the citrus fruit season. In April 82, the fruit trees were laden and it seemed that every household had a mini-distillery out back condensing potent 'Thon-Thon-Tho' from the steam of boiling fermented fruit mash. Apparently, the characteristic sound of the liquor dripping from the condensor into a metal pot first suggested the name, 'Thon... Thon....Thon...'. While shooting my documentary film in Zavala, I often thought of the line from the hollywood movie, The Big Sleep: "Drinks between shots and shots between drinks".

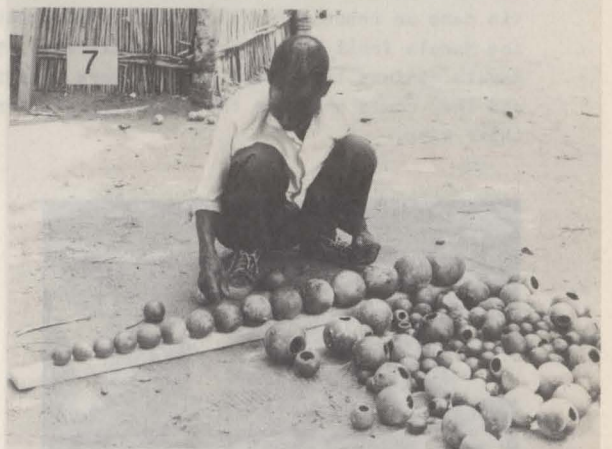
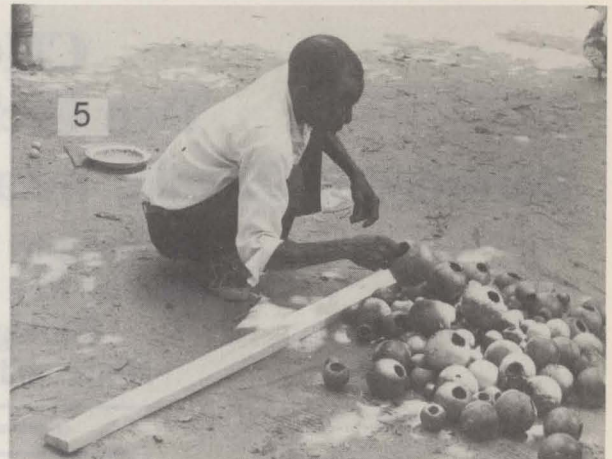
Most of the musicians I got to know survived by subsistence farming, working in their 'machambas' in the mornings, cultivating casava, sweet potatoes, maize, ground nuts, and beans. The musicians would get together once a week to play and discuss up-coming engagements. They were often invited to play at weddings, 'Missas' ('Masses' for ancestors) and on national holidays.

As a final note, I would like to recommend Hugh Tracy's book 'Chope Musicians'-Oxford University Press. Two films that I have produced on Chopi music are available from Icarus Films, 200 Park Avenue South, Room 1319, New York. These recordings were made with a Nagra IS recorder using an omni-directional and cardioid condensor microphone.

SIDE ONE

Shinyeta-Shissibuka orchestra
Chopi lyrics:

Ngonani motsene vhan kandene	Everyone from Kanda
Mutapfa timbila atia timbila	Come listen to Timbila, this Timbila.
Tchikossana tchini badi	The old man is feeling hateful.
Hingapfa mussakano kutsamba	Let him listen to this sweet music.
Concorico wemba mukuku	Cocorico sings the rooster.
Ngonani motseno madota	Come all you villagers
Hitapfa muzeno hilavha	Listen to our songs.
Kumiguela vha Shissibuka	We want to tell you
Vha siquile timbila	That we have founded good Timbila.
To tsamba	
Hingapfa maboi ngu	The unmarried women listen
Maha ngu kutsambula	And even remove their capulanas.
Timguwo	
Nhelanhela	Begger,
Ngonane motseno tchitsungo	And all you people, come listen
Mitapfa muzeno	to our songs, soft and beautiful.
Wo tsamba ni kulombela	
Hotsethu ha tchi zivha	Everyone remembers Palmatoria.



Tchipakane Moçambique
 Tchipakane Moçambique
 Ngu tchona tchinga hi heta
 Hitipekua vha
 Tchi pha vha tchi unaia
 Hani uya mangala.
 de Ruvuma até Maputo ahi
 Sinhene timbila hi
 Alakanha Mondlane ni Josina
 Hambi kua vhanga
 Puata ni salane yo ha
 Tsula tchiwulane hya
 Guimba mudjeke

Chopi lyrics:

Salazar a ningwa ni kutsanuka
 ngu ku thava nkoma

Vha tchi makuhu ndjani tchi-
 tsungo tchi si tsamuki.

Mondlane atchi wahemba Moçambique
 Unahininga.

Tchilambana ngu massochua
 Moçambique manga sala
 Matchi bamba.

Massochua matsanissile
 Kuleula tchitsungo

Massochua mabuakile
 Npfumene ni kona Machel

Vha putukezi vha tsulela
 Mboene vhamuane vha tsula
 Ngu maviaon vha muane vha
 tsula ngu luandje.

Vha guvera vha mutima
 Kutsurelua ngu kufuma
 Wukoma vha to wu
 Dunukela.

Hanhane vhanango mutchi
 engueta.

In Mozambique, Palmatoria
 Almost did us in.
 They beat us, then asked:
 Where will you go to complain?

From Ruvuma to Maputo,
 Let's dance Timbila.
 Let's celebrate our heroes
 Mondlane and Josina.
 Do not dismiss us
 Raise the flag.

Our leader gave Salazar convulsions.

Why did the people not get
 that sickness?

Mondlane just said:
 Give us back our Mozambique.

We thank the Liberation Army
 That tenaciously resisted.

The Liberation Army defends
 the people's freedom.

It arrived in Maputo
 Led by Samora.

The whites have fled to Lisbon.
 Some went
 By plane
 Others by sea.

The black government
 Sits well in power
 Strong from the struggle.

My children, you have survived
 And are now advancing.

Notes on the Shinyeta-Shissibuka performance

This is a short performance by eight Timbila players and eight singers that I recorded on my first visit to Shissibuka. I did two more recording sessions with these musicians but did not again capture the same level of energy and spontaneity. For this recording, the dancers sat on the ground in front of the first row of Timbilas. The group's leader and composer, Senhor Shipune, did his solo introduction and then the full orchestra begins. Along with various whistles, ululations, and vocal interventions from the on-lookers, a side-blown horn of the Impala can be heard. Shipune told me some time later that he plays his solos at a blurring speed to confound the 'spies' that other less-developed orchestras send to steal his techniques.

The song begins with a reference to KANDA, a remote region in the District of Zavala that has an exceptional Timbila orchestra. Unmarried women, listening to Timbila, become so excited and liberal that they remove their traditional African cloth, or Capulana, thus exposing their knees.

PALMATORIA was a form of torture-punishment used by the Portuguese colonialists. A wooden stick with a cluster of sharp points was used to beat the palms of the hands of offenders. It often was not only painful and humiliating but permanently damaging to the nerves and muscles.



'From Ruvuma to Maputo' signifies the need to overcome tribal divisions in a country of twelve linguistic groups. From the Ruvuma river in the north to Maputo in the south, Mozambique must be united. The liberation war began in 1964 and ended in 1974 with the formation of a transitional government of which Joaquim Chissano was a part. He later became Minister of Foreign Affairs of the FRELIMO government. (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) FRELIMO's first President, Eduardo Mondlane, was assassinated in 1969 in Tanzania by Portuguese agents. The charismatic Samora Machel became the new leader and later President of The Popular Republic of Mozambique. Machel's first wife, Josina, died during the war, operating an orphanage in a liberated zone.

Zavalene orchestra

Chopi lyrics:

Simeon Wele Cambane Zavale
Hilava kukhata kuveta timbila
Para ku vhana gravara
a vhavha vangata para ku
ta gravara.

Wa emba mukuku
Wa emba mukuku Samora
Concorico.

Vhenguete vha Zavalene
Hingh vha wo testerele.

MANANHANOU! Wê.
No ku dana u tchi lamba
Ngu tchani?

Oh.....woni dana matsikiri
Mbuane ngu tcha?
Khutizivi to ni mhane wako.

Nanhane ni massale wako.
Wô lava kunani tchani matsi
Kirimbuane mua?

Nilava ku ku komba ahawa
Nimga sunga phongo.

SIDE TWO

Zavalene orchestra (continued)

Chopi lyrics:

Ngonane motseno tchitsungo
Mitapfa muzeno
Govera Mondlane anga dhawa
Tate Litule anata ni
Ndando yota dhila Mondlane
Totse titchi wiyssua
Ngu miloro

Chissano atchi dhila mirongo
e dhilela Mondlane
Anga dhawa ngu Simango.

Atchi bala ni dhipassi
Mondlane atchi salane
ni mukuku Machel

Vhathu vhanthima kutsurelwa
Ngu ku fuma wukoma.

Smith a wussile mubango
é manana ni mukuku Machel
é sala ku dhaissa mabuno.

My name is Simeon Wele Cambane
of Zavala. We would like to
play a little Timbila so that
these visitors who are here
with us can record.

The rooster sings
The rooster sings, Samora.
Cocorico.

Zavalenians repeat.
Look! They are in great form.

- Daughter-in-Law! -What?
-How come you don't come when I call?

- Ah.....What do you want with me
here in the forest?
Don't you know that I am your
Daughter-in-Law?

- And I am you Father-in-Law!
-What is it that you want
to do to me here in the forest?
- I just want to show you where
I tethered the goat!

All you people come and hear
our song.
Our leader Mondlane was murdered.
The father Litule turns
with a song coming from dreams
To celebrate Mondlane.

Chissano is in tears
Crying for Mondlane
Who was murdered by Simango

Mondlane, departing this world
Sent a letter saying
Follow Mukuku Machel.

The black race
Now sits well in power.

(Ian) Smith provoked a conflict
and found himself facing Machel
He went to contaminate the Boers.



Vha madj vha tsulela nboene
Ku sala mukuku Machel.

Ahi mulossene ngu viva Machel
Viva FRELIMO.

Miguel ani tchiwotisso alavha
Muanana wakue Litule
Anga dhawa ngu vha colonhi
Na wotissa kuanu tchitsungo
Ymani anga dhaia dzofu
ngu tchibaquela?

ZAVALENE orchestra

Chopi lyrics:

Y Mondlane ngu tcha
Anga chula vhakoma
Vhe tsula vheia dessee
Na wotissa kuanu vha Zavalenses
Ndjani mizumbissa ku maha
Marramba nhombe?
Ynna wussiwana.
Kufa kambe nguathu.

The Colonialists fled to Lisbon
And we are with Mukuku Machel.

Let's compliment him with Vivas!
Viva FRELIMO!

Miguel is despairing.
He longs for his son Litule
Who was murdered by the colonialists.

Ask the people
Who killed the elephant
with his bare hands?

It was Mondlane.
He beat the colonialists
And they are now powerless.
And how come the people of Zavala
seem crude?
It is because of our poverty
And death too is with us.

Notes on the Zavalene performance

This is a complete orchestral performance of nine Timbilas and fifteen dancers. The tuning and physical appearance of their instruments is superb, the leader Simeon Wele Cambane playing effortlessly over dark polished keys of Mwenji wood. The sound of the lead dancer hitting the ground with his shield begins the dancers' entry and song, reference to the omni-present rooster, symbolic too of the nation's leader, Samora Machel; Mukuku Machel. (That doesn't translate very well into english; Rooster Machel!)

Ian Smith fled to the Boers of South Africa after confronting Mukuku Machel during the struggle for Zimbabwe. Smith's forces made regular incursions into Mozambique in search of Zimbabwean freedom fighters trying to topple the Rhodesian regime. Mozambique found itself constantly at military odds with Rhodesia since it supported the liberation forces of Zimbabwe and allowed bases and refugee camps on its' soil.



Captions for the twenty photographs illustrating construction of the Timbila

1. Mbuziano, master Timbila-maker, carries home a trunk of MUNUNGWANE wood to make Timbila keys.
2. Treating the Munungwane wood over hot coals to expel moisture and homogenize the distribution of resin. The keys are then buried in the coals overnight to complete the process.
3. A rectangular hole with curved corners is made with hot spikes in the planed, shaped, and polished key about one-sixth the distance from the end.
4. Mbuziano collects Masala fruit shells that were hollowed and left to dry.
5. He begins selecting Masala for a two-octave Timbila he will build.
6. Arranging the Masala resonators on a board carved from Mukusu wood.
7. One more Masala for the board.
8. After marking the position of each Masala on the Mukusu backboard, Mbuziano begins making centering marks with a hot spike. Two dowels have been carved at each end of the backboard to accept the Timbila's legs.
9. The centering holes are widened with a brace and bit and widened further with a hot pipe.
10. The Timbila leg of Mukusu wood.
11. The leg is mortised to fit snugly onto the backboard.
12. End ribs have been added, fitting over the backboard dowels. Mbuziano ties a Masala resonator to the backboard with wet bark string. The bark string is passed through holes pierced on either side of the opening in the Masala and on either side of the backboard cavity.
13. Unearthing a ground-beehive in Mutulene, Zavala.
14. Extracting the honey from the hive. The bee's wax or Ipula (sometimes Muhula) is used to seal the space between the resonator and backboard, also resonator and trumpet.
15. Using a conical piece of polished wood, the tapered end inserted into a hole in the resonator, Mbuziano forms a small nipple of bee's wax.
16. He presses a piece of dried animal membrane over the wax nipple. It is made to adhere to the wax, stretched taut, adding the characteristic buzz to the note.
17. All the ribs are in place. The handle on. Mbuziano ties a cowhide cord that tensions the frame and will support the keys.
18. Striking a note on his standard Timbila and blowing into the corresponding resonator to determine if it is sympathetic. The pitch of the resonator may be increased by widening the hole in the Masala thus decreasing its volume or widening the hole in the backboard thus increasing the volume of the resonating chamber.
19. Each key is tuned to the standard instrument by removing wood from the underside center. The beater is headed with natural rubber.
20. The keys are tied down to the tensioning cords. A strip of goatskin, tied to the end rib, passes under the tensioning cord, over the key, down through the rectangular hole, under the tensioning cord, up through the hole, over the key, down and under the tensioning cord and so forth. The end of the key nearest the player is tied down in similar fashion only without the need to thread through a rectangular hole.