

# 4

## Body

### Illness, Memory, and the Dynamics of Healing

There is a veritable cult of health among the Southern Bantu, but the physician is more a physician of the soul than of the body.

Rev. Denys Shropshire (1938: 107)

When residents of Chimoio and Honde talk of the forceful and potentially perilous dimensions of spirits, healing, and illness, they frequently relate them to *tchianhu wo atewe*. Spirits, which embody various potencies and capacities, are integral to diurnal and nocturnal lives in urban and rural contexts alike. As shown previously, a wide range of spirits exhibit dynamics of re-/deterritorialization. Further, people relate to ancestral spirits, so-called *vadzimu*, in annual private rituals to secure the well-being of their *dzindza* and household, or they participate in more elaborate communal rituals led by authorities like the *tchirenge*, who invoke the ancestors' protection from drought. In these rituals, the territorial ancestral spirits (*gombwa*) constitute (assemblages of) persons without bodies that participate, shape, and intervene in the social practices, all while being integral to the soil and the very landscape and its yields, as we saw in chapter 3.

In this chapter, we will turn to another crucial dimension, namely how in times of illness, distress, and recurrent problems people frequently elicit non-biomedical assistance from various forms of healers. Analyzing bodily and spiritual afflictions and their remedies, this chapter will describe a contested topography of healing and argue that this

social field is one characterized by spirits and healing potencies constituting forces that inherently upset hierarchical and structured sociopolitical orders of the state kind. Specifically, this chapter will analyze the categories of *n'anga* and the *profete*—two powerful figures who intervene and are implicated in the domain of bodily and spiritual healing.

Often entitled *curandeiro* (male) or *curandeira* (female) in Portuguese, the *n'anga* may be described as a “healer-diviner” with multiple spirits at her or his disposal (or mercy, depending on perspective).<sup>1</sup> Approaching a particular spirit and eliciting its power is undertaken in ritual settings by the *n'anga* to locate causal patterns and attempt various treatments of a range of individual or collective afflictions. However, during the last decades, the *n'anga* has in these regions of Mozambique been challenged by a second figure, the so-called *profete* (see also Maxwell 2006; Luedke 2011). The *profete* treats less by means of autochthonous or nonautochthonous terrestrial spirits, being more fully integrated within a Christian framework wherein, especially, the power of the Holy Spirit, the force of God or energy in various versions of scripture, is tapped directly in healing rituals.<sup>2</sup> Whereas the *profete* is related to that broad variety of Christian-oriented congregations dubbed African Independent Churches—and often Zionist churches among those—the *n'anga*’s healing authority is situated within the context of remedial plants and substances, insights into the malevolent forces employed by the *muroi*, and knowledge of what is perceived as the *tchianhu wo atewe* of treatment.

The vibrant and expanding practices of the *n'anga* and the *profete* capture key cosmological relations between body, spirit, and the past that are ubiquitous in people’s everyday lives: the production of food and the construction and repair of houses, the circulation and movement in the rural-urban continuum of Honde and Chimoio, the toiling in *machambas* or urban markets, the cycle from birth to death—all also concern the well-being of the living by addressing the specific and tangible transformation of bodies into spirits, spirits reinserted into bodies in their possessive states, or the needs for bodily protection and evasion of danger.<sup>3</sup> Being central to sociopolitical realities in Chimoio’s *bairros* and Honde both, the *n'anga* and the *profete* address the vitality of life on several planes as well as the import of body and spirit and the potencies involved in the configuration of these.

Specifically, this chapter will substantiate and elaborate further the argument of deterritorialization that characterized the *mhondoro* and other spiritual forces and argue that the domain of spirit, illness, and ritual is largely rhizomically directed. Through exploring cases of healing and suffering in the context of *n'anga*, *profete*, and family rituals, it will be evident how these are irreducible to the private, personal, or

individual domain. Rather, in these settings the violence of the state and the processes of capture and deterritorialization described earlier are experiences both inscribing themselves in the landscape as well as sedimented in practices related to illness, spirits, and ritual. This is not to say, however, that relations between spirits, illness, and ritual may be seen as unidirectionally conditioned by—or being depositories for—sociopolitical processes of state formation. Rather, the opposite position will be presented. First, by emphasizing the social forces inherent to the domain of ritual, illness, and spirits, the chapter will highlight that despite forces of violent territorialization and the perpetual becoming of state, the potentialities contained in this field remain one of perpetual change and redirection—often against forces of the state order. This will particularly be evident in the case of the *n'angas* and the *profete*. Second, the chapter questions two related dominant trends in analyses of illness, healing, and spirits. For one, it aims to broaden the scope of earlier works that, albeit rich in ethnographical material and important detail, tend to rest on insular analyses of bodies, spirits, and matters, often confining them as a result to the spaces of the ethnic, the traditional, or the religious.<sup>4</sup> Also, the chapter will contrast analyses that, despite frequently being well-attuned to sociopolitical trajectories and evidencing theoretical sophistication, might nevertheless be said to subscribe to a vision of commodification and marketization of the whole field of healing practices—often also interpreting these practices within a framework of an (alleged) global onslaught of neoliberalism with (again alleged) universally comparable expressions or local forms.<sup>5</sup> While acknowledging the impact of neoliberal reform for reordering Mozambican society, this chapter will highlight the necessity of incorporating state practices and interventions for understanding these dynamics.<sup>6</sup>

Through presenting the historical trajectory of individual healers, this chapter shows that their formation and potentialities as well as private rituals of healing are intimately linked to the processes of deterritorialization and to historical instances of state formation—both described in previous chapters. On the basis of these points and the material that will be presented, this chapter will argue for the potentialities and dynamics of these fields comprising rhizomic forces of deterritorialization that upset and evade sociopolitical orders of the state kind.

## Bodies and Spaces of Healing and History

The narrow red clay paths and minor roads meander between households through the *bairros*. These maze-like neighborhoods encircle and

contrast the world of the urban center, the *bairro cimento*, with its rigid grid of paved roads that crisscross a landscape of cement houses, private cars, and businesses—the domain of politics, wealth, and the state. The glaring difference between the spatial orderliness and forced directionality of the *bairro cimento* grid and the non-grid of the paths and communication routes in the *bairros* constitutes an almost iconic spatial image of the state project and its encompassment by the social: changeable, dynamic, and “noncadastralized” paths versus the striated urban spaces of the state.

In contrast to such slightly romantic juxtapositions, however, it is important to note that Chimoio *bairros* have been forged by violent trajectories from the colonial period through civil war. These historical realities impinge on the present in ways that are irreducible to universalizing accounts of barren, postcolonial slums (cf. Davis 2006). Moreover, *bairros* are urban and sub-urban spaces replete with social organization, services, and facilities. The kiosks (*banca fixas*) selling basic goods in markets or along the paths are as ubiquitous as the businesses of making and selling *nipa*—the strong homemade liquor—in households doubling as bars. But there are also other significant, visible features of the *bairros*, namely the healing practices of *n’anga* and *profete*.



**Illustration 4.1.** Banner of a *n’anga* in Chimoio, January 2007. In addition to using the term “traditional healer” it also uses the Portuguese term “*curandeiro*”—probably to underline the *n’anga*’s versatility. The banner illustrates afflictions that may be cured, which are “tuberculosis, diarrhea, asthma, evil spirits.”

In many Sub-Saharan African contexts, an argument can be made for the commercialization of “traditional healing,” and that this trend has reached great proportions—especially in the cities (Sanders 2001: 174–77; Simmons 2006).<sup>7</sup> Many interlocutors also testify to the impurity of urban healers “soiled”—in a sense—by the lure of money, by severing relations with ancestral wisdom, or being suspected to also peddle in the dark arts of nebulous accumulation of which urban rather than rural areas are seen to be more prone. Expressed by the *tchirenge* above, in popular discourse many also equate the *profete* and the *n’anga* with the so-called “money churches” (*igrejas do dinheiro*)—churches widely believed to solely be set up in order for money to condense around its central preacher or leadership. For vitally important concerns of health and well-being, great care as well as skepticism is therefore taken by families and individuals to choose a *n’anga* or a *profete* that is “pure,” whose *mutombo* (medicine) is powerful, and whose treatment is effective.<sup>8</sup> In the rural-urban continuum of Chimoio and Honde, the skepticism toward urban healers frequently involves either the suffering to relocate to sites of treatment and power or to attract these healing agencies to the site of affliction by calling on *n’angas* and *profetes* to travel. But why such a prevailing connection between the urban and the impure?

For one, the notion of urban impurity relates to the practices by the immediate postcolonial Frelimo state, which included the cleansing and reordering of urban space—especially during its period of *Operação Produção* and its villagization campaigns in the early to mid-1980s. As detailed earlier, this entailed an ousting of traditional elements from the cities, not a total erasure of their social, political, and broader societal role as was Frelimo’s aim at the time. Rather, traditional elements of healing and authority shifted toward the rural areas, underlining the state- and Frelimo-centric aspects of the urban formation. Importantly—and this is a general point—state space is neither experienced as neutral nor should be analyzed in terms of neutrality. This is substantiated by the violence of state becoming in terms of the civil war, the postcolonial purging of urban domains, the Frelimo state’s subsuming and reorganizing of the social according to party doctrine—all processes testify to how dimensions of past state violence is also spatially embedded.

Moreover, the ousting from the cities of people deemed traditional intersects with the fact that for many in Manica Province (and generally in Mozambique), Gorongosa comprises the ultimate site of power and potentiality in terms of healing, power, and the traditional (see, e.g., Igreja 2014; Wiegink 2014). This territorialization or, rather, *spatialization* of potentialities of healing and power feeds into past and present

politics as Gorongosa was a zone dominated by Renamo during the civil war (and continues to be a hotbed of violent strife from 2010 onward).

In sum, the dual elements of a striating (urban) postindependent state and the locus of Gorongosa feeding into different national cosmologies of spiritual custodianship jointly produce a preference for and ideals of the rural in terms of healing. Constituting a particular tangible line of flight in a Deleuzian sense, these dimensions seem more salient for explanation than universalizing theories of commodification and neoliberalism (Pfeiffer 2006) or conceptualizations of an urban modernity undermining the existence of healers (cf. Englund and Leach 2000).

In generalized discourses, the trope of the *mato* or, at least, the nonurban is therefore represented as an ideal context for healers. This allocation of power to the nonurban may partly explain the skepticism toward urban healers frequently perceived as involved in money-making scams, being without real power (i.e. lacking the authority of autochthony), or being tricksters or malevolent characters altogether. However, in my material, most interlocutors seek assistance more or less in their immediate environment, identifying potential healers by a combination of following word of mouth, a healer's general reputation, a person or family group's kin relation to the healer, proximity, and the expenses involved. Although the nonurban ideal (and its epicenter often cast as Gorongosa) remains important, accommodation to immediate needs becomes the dominant social practice, entailing one to maneuver between alternative sources of addressing affliction.

In identifying a *n'anga* or a *profete*, there are signs to look for. For the *n'anga* this is often the *tchitumba tchonanga*—the characteristically circular building where the therapeutic sessions and consultations (*kugatsirwa pananga*) take place. It is considered that the *tchitumba tchonanga* structure more directly taps into the spiritual and traditional field and a similar circular design still dominates *muturica* (houses) in rural areas such as Honde.<sup>9</sup> In the *bairros*, however, square houses made of mud, wood, or (burned or unburned) bricks with roofs of plastic, thatch, or corrugated iron predominate.

In structural terms, the round shape may be integral to an overarching and regionally widespread aesthetic encompassing astronomical and geometrical dimensions, as the important works of Mozambican ethnomathematician Paulus Gerdes underline (see, e.g., 1991, 1993–94). A more immediate explanation, however, has been provided by people in Honde and Chimoio: the round shape evades the creation of crevices and corners—spaces of danger where *pfukwa* or spirit animals sent by *muroi* may lurk. This benign roundness of shape and smoothness of surface find their corollary in the notion of crossroads, as we saw earlier,



**Illustration 4.2.** *Tchitumba tchonanga* or “the house of the *n’anga*” with its typical round features. The house is made exclusively for *kugatsirwa pananga* or “consultation and healing at a *n’anga*.” Chimoio, 2005.

which are dangerous as they constitute intersecting lines and thereby potentially opposing and conflicting trajectories and forces. The malign potential in both crossroads and the rectangular hut are similar in the sense of being examples of what one may term “nonsmooth” space. Smoothness allows for general visibility, not in a formal Benthamian panoptic or in an institutional sense of bureaucratic transparency, but in a social sense: locating the round shape visible from all sides renders the space of the *n’anga* and others open to the gaze of the household, community, and neighbors. Given the ambivalent role of the *n’anga*—widely seen as potentially delving into as well as warding off *uroi*—visibility provides a potential check on his or her practices. Through being set apart from the rest of the household and the surroundings in general, the *tchitumba tchonanga* comprises a visible marker of the prospects of healing and of the potencies of the traditional, as well as embodying a powerful spiritual locus in the social and physical landscape.<sup>10</sup>

For the *profete*, the marker of their practice, abode, and place of healing is often in close proximity to the so-called African Independent Churches, where they frequently hold prominent positions as so-called *bishop* or *president* (see also Luedke 2006, 2011). The Zionist churches in Chimoio flourish (Pfeiffer et al. 2007; Seibert 2006), and new congregations are formed each year. The new churches often center around individual characters, and, given the ebbs and flows of powers to heal



**Illustration 4.3.** The Zionist church *Zione Jerusalem Kanaan Jehova*, where Shona is spoken and which in January 2005 had six *profetes* under the leadership of one of these who additionally held the position of *bishope*. The male entrance is on the left and the female entrance is on the right. Chimoio, 2005.

and obtain contact and rapport with God, congregations often disintegrate as followers dwindle. However, this rise and fall of congregations, the constant revisions and reinterpretations of scripture, and the novel practices also testify to the volatility, dynamism, and constantly mutating character of the African Independent Churches more generally.

Historical inquiry indicates that the penetration of Manica's urban and rural landscapes by, especially, the Pentecostalist movements has persisted for some decades. Maxwell, for example, examines the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God movement, which set up its first congregation in Chimoio in 1970 and by 1977 had fifty congregations in Mozambique (2006: 99). Further, research suggests that after World War II, African Independent Churches—many of them Zion-oriented—grew rapidly (Seibert 2006). The Portuguese colonial state, fearing that these could foment anticolonial activity, surveilled these closely (*ibid.*). Newitt also notes that after World War II, colonial police authorities had records of over thirty such churches in Manica and Sofala—the largest having three thousand members (1995: 478). Compared to other Southern African contexts—as in Angola which has had strong religious-political currents in, for instance, the so-called Tokoist Church (see Blanes 2014)—in

Mozambique, however, the presence of churches was not strong except in the south before the end of the Portuguese Republic and the formal creation in 1933 of Salazar's fascist *Estado Novo* ("New State") that lasted until 1974 (Newitt 1995: 436).

Combined, the comparatively weak standing of missionaries and churches set up by non-Africans together with the long-standing formation of African churches and congregations in Manica Province point to the force of deterritorialization and lines of flight that we saw earlier—processes exemplified by the constant migration to and from Southern Rhodesia, South Africa, and beyond as we also saw in the previous chapters.<sup>11</sup> In Manica (as elsewhere), both the Pentecostalist movement and African Independent Churches must therefore be approached in terms of historical origins, their appeal to communalities, and their creation of new socialities, rather than be reduced to African responses to the onslaught of neoliberalism, as some argue (see Pfeiffer et al. 2007; Pfeiffer 2002 in particular) where the churches are in effect represented as merely *reactive* to external intervention and force. This argument problematically resembles the colonial settler paradigm of state formation addressed in chapter 2 in that both allocate agency nearly exclusively to external, powerful, and formative forces in the guises of European colonialism or neoliberalism respectively.

Both *profetes* and *n'angas* are, thus, long-standing and crucial parts of the social and physical landscape of Chimoio. Their practices and their engagement with spirits also constitute forces that upset sociopolitical orders—also of the formal state kind—and thus bear resemblances to the *mhondoro* mediums of former polities as argued in the preceding chapter. The similarities rest with the centrifugal and upsetting capacities of the *n'anga* and the *profete* and how these capacities are met by the current state formation's attempts at control—attempts mirrored historically from Ngungwane to Dhlakama. Although similarities abound, the powers and capacities wielded by *n'anga* and *profete* diverge in significant respects, as we shall see in the subsequent cases.

## ***Profete* Healing: Extraction and Consumption**

Visits to the *n'anga* or the *profete* are made with prospects of healing, locating causal relations behind afflictions or misfortune, or warding off or protecting against further mishaps and disease. Often—and as a test of the *n'anga*'s prowess and capacity—one does not appoint a time for the first consultation. At these first visits, the *n'anga* or *profete* will in conversation with the visiting person and their companions talk and

tell more than listen, creating in a sense a speech genre (Bakhtin 1986) wherein his or her authority over the ailments and sufferings of the patient is asserted. The patient, if convinced by the utterances (in a Bakhtinian sense) of the *n'anga* or *profete* will then agree on a certain time to return to address the specific problems.

An outline of a typical visit to a *profete* may elucidate the logics of treatment involved. In João's case from 2005 it was in order to obtain two interrelated objectives: *kufunga mui*ri, "the closure of the body," and *kudussa muia zacaipa*, "the pulling out of an evil spirit [from the body]." João, a man in his forties, had his house repeatedly broken into and he has been mugged once. In addition, he has fallen sick several times during the past year, a threat to his productive capacities in the *mach-amba* as well as to his role as protector of his wife and their household's four children. João's ailments are thereby not restricted to his body and person alone, but they threaten his household and kin, underlining how well-being needs to be seen as relational and irreducible to individuation (see also A. Honwana 1996, 1999). After consulting kin, close family, and friends, João was in the end given a recommendation for a particular *profete* by his mother, who attends the church where the *profete* holds the position of bishop (*bishope*).<sup>12</sup>

At around 5:00 PM, João arrived to the courtyard of the *profete*. I was waiting there, as João had allowed me to accompany him. Early the same morning, we had been there together for the first part of the treatment, which came in the form of copious amounts of liquid *mutombo* held in a five-liter plastic bottle containing a slightly brownish, milky liquid. This bottle given to João, and he was told to drink a large cup morning, noon, and night. Made with water, condensed milk, Zimbabwean Tanganda tea, salt, sugar, and various other ingredients, the *mutombo*, according to the *profete*, "washes the stomach and the insides." Now, however, we sat and waited for the *profete*, and João took the opportunity to again comment on her virtues. When I queried as to why he trusted her, he commented her physical stature: "She is fat. That means she has a lot of power." "Why?," I asked. "I do not know. It is like that," he said, having proven his point. And he was right: in a context where many bodies are shaped by hard physical work and life-long toil and evidenced by a diet high in carbohydrates and hardly any fat or protein, many *profetes'* bodies stand out, literally, by being (and referred to as) very fat.

After João arrived, we were immediately sent by the *profete's* assistant, her niece of around fifteen, to the room used for healing. The room is located in a rectangular structure—unlike the round structures of the *tchitunga tchonanga*—made of mudded walls and with a plastic covering for a roof.<sup>13</sup> The few objects in the room consisted of some plastic bot-

bles, 1.5 to 5 liters, containing liquid and nonliquid forms of *mutombo*, a *bonde* (a woven straw mat) on the floor, and a white robe as well as several headscarves hanging from the ceiling. The two of us sat down on the floor and the *profete* immediately entered. João hastened to give her the objects he was asked to bring: a piece of red, white, and black cloth; a few pieces of corn; some beans of the *nhimo* type; and a broken piece of a *pendekari* (a clay pot for preparing *sadza*). She received the items and put them beside her for later usage.<sup>14</sup> She then put on the white robes and a white headscarf and sat down in front of us. In the forehead of the headscarf was a red star shaped like a starfish. Tied around her waist was a string rope in red, black, green, and blue that corresponded to the colors of crosses—one for each color—on her robes. She smeared some Vaseline on her arms and face and started to blow softly in a small metallic flute while beating a black, slender, wooden rod on the ground at the same time. Following this, she bowed her head and spoke in a subdued voice in *chiTewe*, appealing to the spirits to reveal themselves. These immediately appeared in the form of a powerful, hoarse and dark “HE!” uttered by/through the *profete*. She called for her niece to be present, and the young girl again entered the room bringing Tanganda tea. Thus began a more intense part of the ceremony, and both niece and *profete* each sat with two ceremonial rattles (*goshu*) in their hands. The women turned toward João and started to sing and use the rattle; after a while, João joined in the singing as well. Sometimes the *profete* would let out the same deep, hoarse voice, a sure sign of a *pfukwa*. Increasing in intensity, she finally stood in front of João, put her hand on his head, spoke intensely, and, at the height of rattling, singing, and talking, with a dramatic hand movement pulled out something from João’s body.

Following this, she sat and spoke with her normal soft, light voice, but it was impossible to communicate with her. Both the niece and João uttered things like *masquati* (“hello” in *chiTewe*) without her responding initially. She uttered only *soffreu maningue* (“he suffered a lot” in Mozambican Portuguese) and replied to herself with the affirmative *ehe!* (“yes”). The niece stood and left the room, returning with a cup of water on a plate for the *profete*. The *profete* sipped and suddenly blew water with great force in João’s face, startling him. She then gave João the shard of the *pendekari* holding the three pieces of cloth. After she instructed him, he spit on them. She then took the shard to the doorway and left it there. She would later take these out and destroy them securely—having extracted the danger from João’s body.

This was followed by another session of prayers with the dark, hoarse voice, where she stood before João, holding him on his stomach, and interrupted the flow of words with a violent “HE!” several times. Having



**Illustration 4.4.** Objects João brought the *profete* photographed before they were presented. Chimoio, 2005.

finished this the *profete* sat down, leaned her back to the wall beside João, and spoke to him about his now newly acquired protection. Meanwhile, the niece had collected a twig from a bean plant (*ndodzi*), which the *profete* used to beat him with lightly while saying his name at the same time. With no other formal ending, the session ended, and the *profete* removed the robes.

In this ritual and the preparatory visit in the morning, there are elements of *extraction* and *consumption* that are important to the dynamics of healing for both *profete* and *n'anga*. Central to the possession of the *profete* was the extraction of *tchikume*—danger—from the body of João. *Tchikume* is seen as a dangerous matter that has entered the body. While in the body, *tchikume* will infect and affect relationships and the immediate surroundings of the afflicted by endangering, making ill, creating destruction, or generating death. Again, treating *tchikume* is central to healing, underscored also by its dramatic extraction at the height of the ritual. In terms of post-extraction treatment, *tchikume* is usually transferred to a vessel such as clothing or a coin (as we will see later) and either burned or buried (at a crossroads or deserted site). Ritual and bodily logic, however, demands that once opened and *tchikume* has been extracted, the body needs to be filled with protective and benevolent *mutombo* so as to prevent new afflictions of *tchikume* and to *kufunga muiri*—“close the body.”

The forms of *mutombo* used by *n'angas* and *profetes* vary greatly, and especially the former use a vast array of different herbs, leaves, roots, and other drugs derived from flora or fauna. These may be administered as concoctions, bundled up in small packages worn close to the body, smeared on the body directly, or infused in either boiling water where the fumes are inhaled or the water itself is used on and in the body. As mentioned, many *profetes* are consciously seeking to distance themselves from *n'angas*, often through using *mutombo* to a much lesser extent. Some *profetes*, therefore, rely solely on the power of water that they have previously treated ritually, as well as the force of the scripture, prayers, or the Holy Ghost, which these *profetes* access, channel, and redirect.<sup>15</sup>

The *extraction* of *tchikume*, however, needs to be complemented by *consumption* in order for, in this case, João to achieve renewed protection. A trend among *profetes* in Chimoio seems to be the provision of large amounts of *mutombo* in a liquid form for consumption over a longer period. In João's case, the liquid has strong symbolic and material connotations and similarities to other fluids and their strongly gendered and healing potencies. Especially, it is akin to a vaginal fluid in frequent use by married women for the cooling of sick children, the tempering of drunk husbands, or the cooling of corpses of husbands (Jacobson-Widding 1989: 29; see also Bagnol and Mariano 2008). Jacobson-Widding argues that vaginal liquid shares some properties with mother's milk in terms of neither being hot nor cold—thus capable of cooling down dangerous conditions like disease. Luc de Heusch (1982a), the influential structuralist, developed the notion of thermodynamics as an approach to ideas of cold, heat, gender, authority, and a range of other

dimensions.<sup>16</sup> In the Manyika material, Jacobson-Widding (1989) has, however, developed a related argument that approaches disease, healing, and the agents, situations, and circumstances as connected with destructive (but also constructive) heat and fever in contrast to its corollary in cooling down. Jacobson-Widding extends these gendered material symmetries to also propose that the semen is the “white blood” of men where vaginal fluid is the female equivalent, and that when these mix during intercourse, a powerful and productive meeting between ancestral forces takes place (1989: 41).

De Heusch’s basic thermodynamic as developed in Jacobson-Widding’s Manyika material significantly mirrors my own from Honde and Chimoio—and very clearly in the case of the *profete’s mutombo* “milk” given João: the *mutombo* underlines her soothing, cooling, and protective capacities by alluding to fluids known for their benevolent effects within the *dzindza*. In this session, the milky *mutombo* was used together with *salt*—a very potent agent used to cool down the magical power of *uroi* (see, also, e.g., Kalofonos 2008: 160). For João, it is probable that salt was an important part of the treatment as it “washed” the body and, thus, defused *tchikume* possibly still lodged within his body. This technique to cleanse the body has its parallel in the defusing of *uroi* or other attacks on physical structures, such as a house. For instance if one wishes to ward off attacks, salt should be sprinkled around the house, in its doorways, and also, sometimes, on the perimeter of the swept area immediately between *mato* and courtyard in order to prevent its power from materializing or repelling attacks by *muroi*. When consumed orally and as it courses through the body, the potentially dangerous orifices are then protectively “sprinkled” in the same way as the openings and peripheries of the household or other territorial and spatial zones of danger. Protecting the orifices carries import, as it is through these—especially the mouth—that dangerous matter, for instance poisoned *sadza*, enters the body (see also Bertelsen 2011, 2014b).<sup>17</sup>

Another significant ingredient in the *mutombo* was the Zimbabwean *Tanganda tea*—crucially demonstrates the strengths of the healing agent (*n’anga* or *profete*) by providing a (tangible) relation to the powerful Shona. As we have seen, the *makomere* spirits are manifold, angry, and potent in postwar Manica given their propensity toward vindicating themselves after having been killed unlawfully or without proper funerary rites. In the life story interviews I have conducted, a great deal of the *n’angas* and some *profete* possessed (or were possessed by) Shona spirits from the time of the war or previous instances of predation.<sup>18</sup>

Together, these potent ingredients made the milky liquid with a brownish tint a powerful concoction that through consumption extracted fur-

ther potential *tchikume*, secured protection, and asserted the authority of the healing capacities of the *profete*.

### ***N'anga* Healing: Addressing Matambudziko, Extracting Tchikume**

Similar elements of healing can also be found in the account of a young man in his early twenties from Honde named Celso who needed to consult a *n'anga* for protective purposes in 2007. Celso was the second oldest son of Ana and António in the household where I lived in Honde, and I have known him since his early teens from my first fieldwork in 1999–2000. Although not yet a man who had established his own household or with a wife for whom he had paid bride-wealth (*kurora*), Celso's afflictions were of a similar kind to João's. Living in what he perceived as poverty and tending his *machamba*, his crops did not yield well and he suffered from recurrent *malaria*.<sup>19</sup> In his own words, his life was one of *matambudziko*—"sufferings"—a plural term often used to describe a composite condition of experienced poverty, marginalization, and lack of well-being deriving from present and past conditions and problems. However, as the suffering had recently increased, Celso used money he had pooled from his family (especially his elder brother and sister, father, and a maternal uncle) to visit a *n'anga* who would



**Illustration 4.5.** Example of objects used for possession by a *n'anga*. Chimoio, 2005.



**Illustration 4.6.** *N'anga* administering hot stones to the concoction. Gondola, 2007.

hopefully end or ameliorate his troubles. Celso was adamant that all *n'angas* in Chimoio were charlatans interested only by his money. Thus, he decided to visit a woman living on the outskirts of a much smaller nearby town, Gondola, who had come recommended by acquaintances but whom he had not yet encountered. He suggested I could join him.

Upon arrival after a three-hour trip by bus and on foot, we sat and chatted with the *n'anga* under the mango tree providing shade over the



**Illustration 4.7.** João sitting stooped over the fumes. Gondola, 2007.

courtyard. During the conversation—which related to everything else than the purpose of our visit—we were treated to water, fruit, and a lunch of *sadza* and beans. After some time, we were both invited into the *tchidoma tchonanga*. As in similar visits I have made, the *n'anga* had a range of *mutombo* in different woven containers upon display, a ceremonial rattle (*goshu*), and different and potent parts of animals and birds. First, Celso was asked to wipe his face, forehead, and back of his neck with an MT 1,000 coin (about USD 0.20). While resembling other

instances I have participated in—i.e. to preliminarily extract *tchikume*—here, however, the *n’anga* took the coin, looked at it, and beseeched the spirits, “Show what he has brought.” During the ceremony in the *tchidoma tchonanga*, Celso was not asked any direct questions, but the *n’anga* gained insight into his situation through a powerful so-called *tchikwambo* spirit that had possessed her after she had given birth to her fifth child.<sup>20</sup> To locate the source of the afflictions, she varied between asking the *tchikwambo* spirit and throwing eighteen halved dark brownish *mungoma* nuts on the *capulana* (cloth) in front of her.<sup>21</sup> The ways in which these arranged themselves when thrown and collected, again and again, gave her more information for locating causes and prescribing remedies for Celso.

As in the example of the *profete*, an important contribution to Celso’s condition of *matambudziko* was the lack of spiritual and bodily protection that had allowed *tchikume* to enter, making him the object of envy of others and also making him vulnerable to disease. After the *n’anga* had located causes, she opened the containers holding a wide range of *mutombo* and selected and prepared three. The first, made of a root, was to be infused in a bucket of water when Celso returned home and into which he was to insert his left foot only. Left, in this and many other contexts, signifies deviation, things past, and is generally associated with negative issues. By extracting *tchikume* through washing this particular foot, the difficult past condition of *matmabudziko* is, literally speaking, left behind, and the strength of the right foot—associated with moving forward without deviation—is empowered and reasserted. The second piece of *mutombo* was to be mixed with a bit of Vaseline and deposited in a *pendekari* pot no longer in use. Thereafter the pot was to be put on the fire while Celso stooped over it and inhaled the smoke from the mix as he would be underneath a piece of *capulana*. This measure would end the problems of attracting the envy of others. The third, made into a bundle the size of a button and fitted in the wallet, was to generally protect against danger and be carried at all times. After paying for the services, Celso was told to return in a week for a second part of the treatment.

Celso completed the cleansing measures he had been instructed to undertake, and we returned the following week. The *n’anga* then executed several rituals aimed at extracting residual *tchikume* from his body. The most elaborate and lengthy of these consisted of Celso sitting stooped over a pot of boiling water in which several pieces of wooden and herbal *mutombo* were floating while under a piece of red and white cloth. The concoction was kept at a boiling temperature and emitted a lot of steam, as burning hot stones from the fireplace were added to the pot three

times. Likewise, fresh pieces of *mutombo* were also added three times. The heat and steam under the cloth made Celso sweat profusely—the sweat containing the *tchikume* from his body and dripping into the pot. While he stooped over the pot, the *n'anga* stood over him, three times dashing him with a green twig that she had previously dipped in the boiling hot water. After some twenty minutes, the *n'anga* in a dramatic move tore the cloth off of Celso's body, asking him to empty the pot outside the swept courtyard and, therefore, in the *mato* (bush). Emptying the pot signaled the disposal of Celso's last remnants of *tchikume*.

### ***Kutenda Adzimu Edu: Ritual, Family, and Protection***

For both *profete* and *n'anga*, we see that access to the body of the afflicted and extraction of *tchikume* from it are complemented by the consumption of *mutombo* to re-close and re-strengthen it. The rituals of Celso and João can be usefully contrasted with another—the *kutenda adzimu edu*, or “thank the spirits”—that is held annually in all rural households in Honde (and in many urban ones as well). The mnemonic aspect is important, as the risks of spiritually induced misfortunes or other mishaps in the wake of forgetting the *vadzimu* spirits are great (for the living). If forgotten, one risks the *vadzimu* will abandon their protective measures, provoking, for example, miscarriages, serious illnesses, or agricultural pests in the *machamba* (such as swarms of grasshoppers). But at important occasions—for instance after someone has survived a serious accident—there is also a need to reinforce the protective measures secured by the *vadzimu*. In these situations, returning to one's *dzindza* and paternal family's household is crucial and often prioritized before consulting a *n'anga* or a *profete* to close the body or to secure one's own household against enemies.

The ritual at the paternal household itself is often quite simple, as it was in Paulo's case when we entered his paternal family's *muturica* in Honde one early January morning in 2007. Paulo had just been released from prison in Chimoio where he had been held on suspicion of having committed theft and immediately returned to Honde upon being let out. Only close family members (besides the anthropologist) were gathered in the dimly lit house that grew even dimmer when the door was closed.<sup>22</sup> Paulo respectfully presented his father with five liters of *portugaro*, one liter of *nipa*, and an old 1,000 MT coin. The father thanked the son for bringing the gifts, and then we gathered around a tin plate (normally used for serving *sadza*)—women on the one side, men on the other, and children outside the adult circle. Women sat on several *bonde*,

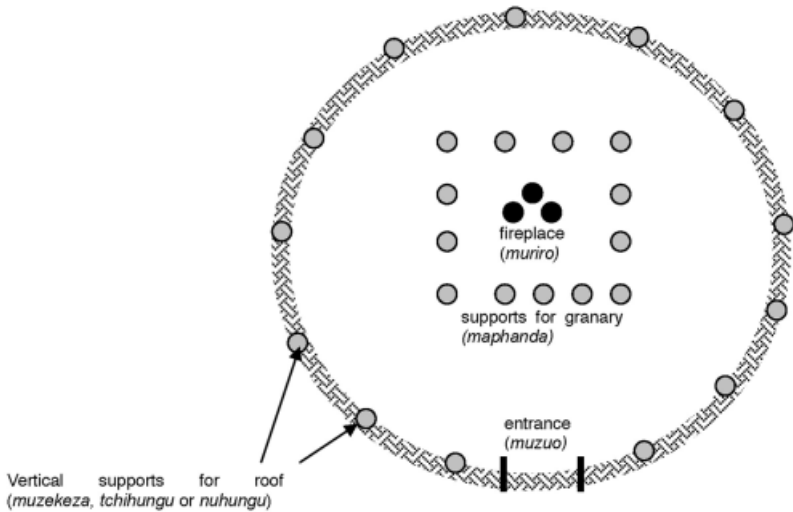
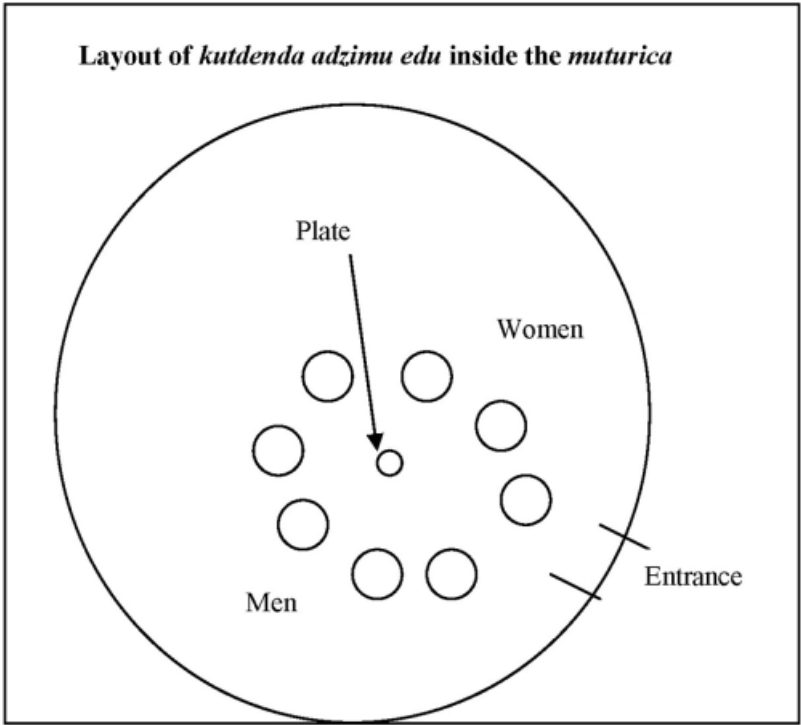


Figure 4.1. *Muturica* interior as seen from above.

men on low benches, while Paulo's father commenced by standing on his knees, beating his palms against each other rhythmically (*kuembera*), and calling on *baba* (father). All women and men present joined in on the *kuembera*, clapping rhythmically while Paulo's father poured *nipa* onto the plate after first having put the 1,000 MT coin there. While clapping, he asked the spirit of his *baba* and other *vadzimu* to renew the protection of Paulo, Paulo's family, and himself. Then he continued by pouring red wine onto the plate, the two liquids mixing until becoming a pink fluid with the coin glimmering faintly in the dim light from the cooking fire. The *kuembera* continued while Paulo was given a tin cup of *nipa* to drink, followed by Paulo's father, and then the other men. The same procedure was repeated with the *portugaro*, and then a third round was passed with a mix of *portugaro* and *nipa*. After this the *kuembera* stopped, the door to the *muturica* opened, and there was a general mood of relief as the ceremony had been conducted well. In the hours to follow, the good mood continued as all participants—including the women—drank the remaining *portugaro* and *nipa* in a festive manner.<sup>23</sup>

This petite and obviously greatly varied ceremony of *kutenda adzimu edu* is important neither for its rich symbolism—although there are some aspects on which I will elaborate—nor for its material dimensions, but rather for its social and spiritual significance and its proliferation. All households and larger family and kin groups—*dzindza*—hold (or aim to hold) such ceremonies annually and after important events and mishaps. They are, thus, important loci for establishing and reconnecting rela-



**Figure 4.2.** Simplified spatial layout of *kutenda adzimu edu* carried out within a *muturica*, as seen from above.

tions with as well as placating their powerful and important *vadzimu*. As such, *kutenda adzimu edu* is oriented toward generating familial lineage cohesion, underlining the socially important aspects of unity, continuity and mutual support—as in the case of Paulo. The thoroughly social, familial, and practical orientation of *kutenda adzimu edu* also demonstrates the predominantly non-professional and noncommercial aspects of spiritual and religious activities for the majority of people.

**Healing, History, and Hierarchies of State and Sociality**

Oftentimes, the noncommercial aspects of healing are neglected—especially in studies that are informed by understandings of a materialist bent. These often portray dealings with (ancestral and other) spirits as enshrouded in a veil of suspicion where the analysis often casts doubt

on the experiential and fundamentally socially significant realities of ritual and healing. West and Luedke's (2006) analysis of healer-diviners is a case in point: in foregrounding aspects of *bricolage* and entrepreneurship among the *n'angas* and *profetes*, on the one hand, and accentuating the fluidity of practices or nascence and demise of spiritual types on the other, these analyses do underline important features of the *n'angas* and *profetes*. Simultaneously, by imposing a universalizing template of entrepreneurship they are reductive in the sense of *eclipsing* the central social realities of healing *tchikume*, the volatile nature of spirits, and the vitally important familial rituals. In these analyses healing practices are seen as largely money-making devices for those speculative enough to enter these supposedly murky and unenlightened (in all senses of the term) domains.<sup>24</sup> By extension, these positions also by default relegate those remaining practitioners of the field (who *cannot* be identified as dynamic entrepreneurs) to a residual category: the necessarily stale, nondynamic domain of "folk medicine" with its implicit and explicit antimodernist assumptions.

As tentatively outlined ethnographically in the cases above, one alternative to the entrepreneurship perspective is to recognize the penumbra between fluidity, experience, and potentiality—or the "agency of intangibles," as Blanes and Espíritu Santo (2014) usefully coins it. If applying such a perspective on the three cases above, the vibrancy and potency of its social reality remains prominent. By underlining the importance of the social I mean, of course, in no way to banalize, dehistoricize, or "culturalize" the rituals and their cosmologies by presenting them merely as ubiquitous practices and beliefs held equally by all—devoid of dimensions of gender, power, discontinuity, and distribution. Quite the opposite: as practiced now the rituals are historical products in the sense of both linear time represented in master narratives of history, as well as the particular histories of individual households, *dzindza*, and their members embedded in particular (collective or individual) memories or speech genres. With Deleuze (2004 [1968])—always celebrating and emphasizing the (potential for) "non-stasis"—one could claim these rituals are perpetually in states of *becoming*, not *being*, as in given a predefined shape, scope, structure, linearity, and trajectory. What is in the making or becoming arguably reflects deeper social and cosmological structures beyond the disparate and particular—structures that also evidence symbolic and systemic continuities in time-space (see also Abramson and Holbraad 2014). Put differently and very concretely: the calling upon *baba* (father) during the *kutenda adzimu edu* expresses what one can analyze as hierarchical and patriarchal features of social organization in the rural-urban continuum under study.



**Illustration 4.8.** *Kutenda adzimo edu*. The liter of *nipa* on the left and the five-liter *barril* of *portugaro* on the right. The plate in the middle contains the mixed wine and *nipa* with the 1,000 MT coin in the center. Honde, 2007.

In these ritual contexts, the active and collective remembering of the paternal spirit serves to mirror and reinforce the nonspiritual and mundane social and spatial organization of the bodies of the yet undead. How individual bodies are positioned vis-à-vis others in ritual settings involves articulations and registers of hierarchy, familiarity, and formality crucial to social order. For instance, when approaching classificatory (that is, genealogically or status-wise) elders, one's posture should feign inferior physical height, lowered toward the ground in an embodied display of respect. This means that if the classificatory elder is seated—on a low wooden bench or a wooden chair as often is the case with men—one should refrain from standing beside or directly in front of the elder and preferably find a seat on a lower point and at a certain distance. One should also refrain from physically approaching someone of superior status face on, drawing nearer instead from a slightly askew angle, and stopping at a respectful distance. One's presence should be made known by exclaiming *pamsoro* ("excuse me")—which is granted by the reply *pindai* ("come in")—or by uttering the title of the one approached in a respectful manner, such as *baba* ("father"), *baba mkuru* ("great father"), or *mai mkuru* ("great mother"). In addition, one should evade direct eye contact—at least this goes for the first part of the encounter and before one is familiar—as this might be interpreted as a challenge to preestablished hierarchical relations. Another example of such hierarchical, striding, and, ultimately, arborescent dynamics within the social order, is the *kuembera*—the clapping of hands in certain rhythms and sequences after a decision has been reached or a session of sorts has begun. Failing

to engage in the *kuembera* is seen as disrespectful as it is one of the most visible (and audible) signs of deference to authority or commitment to community. The *kuembera* also reveals crucial gendered dimensions of bodily comportment and posture. When meeting in a ritual setting (e.g., *kutenda adzimu edu*), for example, while men and women will be seated in separate spaces, women will always face the main spectacle, orator, or other event from an angle, slightly askew.<sup>25</sup>

Such arborescent bodily registers of hierarchy and gender are, however, constantly challenged by the dynamics of *n'angas* and *profetes*, as a great number of these are female who possess—and are possessed by—a range of powerful male spirits, which, crucially, originate in nonlocal geographical contexts (typically Zimbabwe, Malawi, Gorongosa, southern and coastal Mozambique, etc.). In this way, the rhizomic character of these female healers is fueled by an allochthonous potentiality—a force uncontained by and antagonizing toward the gendered, hierarchical, and, in the context of Honde, patriarchal structure that is, ultimately, also an order of the state kind. Put differently and as part of a broader field (rather than a striated hierarchical order), the rhizomic dynamic may in this context be seen as an “interlocking web. It is a conjunction of dynamic relations—producing bulbs here and there, interweaving with great complexity, reaching outward in its continuing growth. It represents the principle of dynamic, varied pluralism that absorbs the hierarchical structures of the tree” (Kurokawa 2001[1988]: 1028). For female *n'angas* and *profetes*, the gendered aspect of such a rhizomic, multiplying orientation is crucial, as their prevalence, influence, and potentialities significantly—and commonly—reorder relations within households, sometimes also hierarchical relations between husband and wife or father and son. Thus, in their differing capacities, *n'angas* and *profetes* have significant leverage in terms of changing trajectories of particular *dzindza*, households, and individuals to the point of challenging arborescent hierarchies of sociopolitical order—whether these are embedded in the formal bureaucratic apparatus of the state or that which is often represented as *tchianhu wo atewe*. Moreover, these female *profetes* and *n'angas* are also in themselves inverting and traversing hierarchies by establishing themselves (as) beyond the confines of bounded gendered social and physical space.

Such capacities to challenge are, of course, also conditioned by noteworthy sediments of the longer process of colonization, commodification, and bodily toil—sediments especially evident, perhaps, in the *kutenda adzimu edu*: here, the *portugaro* signifies the blood and sacrifice of former generations' deaths at the hands war or colonial or state-organized violence. This blood is diluted by or mixed with *nipa*—which represents

the sweat of ancestors' bodies.<sup>26</sup> The use of *portugaro* and *nipa* in *kutenda adzimu edu* and also in rituals of rainmaking seen in chapter 3 indicate a continuously generated social formation of memory of a violent past—often expressed in ritual and communal contexts.<sup>27</sup>

Given the long history of state capture, the extraction of labor from households, and the predation by colonial and postcolonial violent forces, “Portuguese blood-wine” and ancestral sweat seem appropriate vehicles for expressing exploitation, loss and suffering. However, they are *not* merely material reminders of past injustice and violence; rather, they must also be seen as evocative and multisemic symbols (Turner 1991 [1967]) of power, vitality, and life—dimensions that are reasserted in the ritual settings of healing. The white of *nipa* corresponds in color to protective ancestral spirits, *vadzimu*, an element also evident in the *profete*'s cloth, the *n'anga*'s use of cloth covering for, for example, Celso, and the black and white cloths of rainmaking ceremonies. Additionally, red indexes the most powerful spirits, those often borne out of violent deaths, such as the *gamba* and the *tchikwambo*. *Gamba* is recognized as the most powerful of the two and often emerges as a result of killing and robbing travelers or returning labor migrants (often from South Africa or Southern Rhodesia/Zimbabwe).<sup>28</sup> *Tchikwambo* is also the result of violent death in war or conflict, or as a result of murder.

Both *gamba* and *tchikwambo* are, thus, important spirits within the generic category of evil spirits, *pfukwa*, in the sense that both will tirelessly search for the killer or his or her kin and, when found, will cause misfortune and illness.<sup>29</sup> Most *n'angas* (but also many *profetes*) will possess *tchikwambo*, *gamba*, or a great deal of other spirits—spirits that have at one point approached them and that they have either appropriated or become mediums for—depending on perspective. However, ordinary people afflicted with *tchikwambo* or *gamba* will seek a *profete* or *n'anga* to locate causal relations, often resulting in the spirit demanding compensation. Compensation may take several forms and I will briefly mention only two that are most relevant.

The creation of a so-called *gotokoto* (“spirit goat”) comprises a key form and entails purchasing a regular goat (preferably black and male) and bringing it before a *n'anga*. The *n'anga* will then ritually transfer the malevolent spirit into or onto the animal. To ensure that the spirit stays with the goat and does not regress to its former victim, a piece of cloth (often red or black) is tied around its neck into which some MT coins are put. The spirit—malevolent and greedy—will then pursue the sound of the money, and the *gotokoto* will be let loose in a deserted area in which it will roam freely. Recognizable by the cloth tied around its neck and acknowledged as a mobile vehicle of considerable destructive

and unpredictable forces, the *gotokoto* must be avoided, apprehended for neither sale nor consumption. If caught or consumed, the potentially rhizomic capacities of the *gotokoto*'s spirits may again be directed against the sociopolitical order, as well as against individuals or *dzindza*.<sup>30</sup>

Another measure available—and one that is arguably important given Mozambique's long trajectory of conflict—is that of the marriage of women to malevolent spirits. Such prospective male spirit-spouses, born out of violence, are usually unwilling to accept compensation (for instance in the form *gotokoto*); or there are spirits that, for various reasons, reject being incorporated within localized spirit realms (as was the case with many *makomerede* spirits in chapter 3). In order to refrain from further damage to *dzinda* or individuals, especially in the domains of fertility, health, and reproductive capacities, a solution for the spirit's afflictions is to marry a woman. This arrangement, where women married to spirits are called *mukadzi wo mudzimu*, meaning literally “wife of the spirit,” involves a process wherein women will gradually train to become *n'anga* (or, more rarely, *profete*) in order to placate, soothe, and “cool” the “hot” rage of a particular *pfukwa*. The element of cooling down is integral to a wider system of hot/cold distinctions—elaborated earlier in terms of healing—in which a newly created spirit is commonly considered “hot.” This potentially destructive heat of a new spirit is commonly counteracted in various ways—from *duro* (traditional beer), central to burials, being poured on a recent grave to gravesites for important *aridizi wo nhika* (owners of the land) being located in cool surroundings, typically close to streams or under shadowy trees.<sup>31</sup>

While *mukadzi wo mudzimu* is well-known across various social and political contexts in Sub-Saharan Africa (and beyond),<sup>32</sup> in Honde a key dynamic revolves around placating the sorrows of the spirit who—bereft of life and therefore also reproductive possibilities—cannot beget children. Spirits lacking children will generally be believed to have few family members or kin to commemorate them and will sometimes be forgotten, although there is always the opportunity of becoming socially incorporated through communal rituals—again as we saw in chapter 3 in the rainmaking ritual where spirits of *makomerede* and others were recognized and placated. There is also a considerable emancipatory element involved for the woman being possessed by and marrying the spirit—she thereby wields a great force and considerable power in matrimonial and social aspects alike. In terms of marriage, the existing husband (if there is such) will become second to the primary male spirit-spouse. This also entails that all children born after becoming *mukadzi wo mudzimu* belong to the spirit-husband. As also noted, many *mukadzi wo mudzimu* also become *n'anga*, a role in itself dually commanding great



**Illustration 4.9.** A *gotokoto* photographed as it was running away—the tied cloth around its neck is visible. Honde, 2005.

respect in most social circumstances but also challenging gendered hierarchies and arborescent orders more generally.

In all three ritual cases noted earlier and inherent to the dynamics of *gotokoto* and *mukadzi wo mudzimu*, extracting *tchikume* from either the individual or social body, often through a vessel such as a coin, is a central element. Paulo, therefore, wiped his head and torso with a coin, swiping off—as it were—the *tchikume* of his body in a practice called *kudusa tchikume*, transferring it to the metal object at the center of the metaphorical blood of violence and war and the sweat of forced or unforced labor. In the first case previously discussed, the *tchikume* was taken care of by the *profete* directly; in the second case, the *n'anga* indirectly handled it by having Celso pour out the concoction; and, finally, in the familial situation of *kutenda adzimu edu*, the *tchikume* was dissolved in the plate.<sup>33</sup> This extraction and redirection of *tchikume* is always followed by insertion of *mutombo* and also the closing of the body or property. Such extraction and consumption constitutes significant elements of bodily-spiritual interactions in which the potencies of substance (bodily, medical, diabolical) are treated, their circulation ensured or enhanced, or their destructive entry or circulation barred or repelled. *Gotokoto* and *mukadzi wo mudzimu* show, however, to what

degree interaction with the *vadzimu* is embedded in the spaces of everyday life. Contrarily, and this is important, it is *not* relegated to a domain of specialization, commercialization, or being solely under the control of ritual specialists. Further, both the cases of *gotokoto* and *mukadzi wo mudzimu* evidence that particular spirits and their forces are in excess of what can be placated by healing and the power of *n'anga* and *profete* alone.

Even though these ritual practices and social realities have also been interpreted as reflecting historical points of great violence and upheaval (in terms of *portugaro* and its interpretation as forced labor, for instance) or war (in terms of the prolific *tchikwambo*), there are important *longue durée* elements present in contemporary practices of the *profetes* and *n'angas*, if compared with historical sources.<sup>34</sup> In Santos's description from 1609 of the annual ritual of the Quiteve king for honoring his father, for instance, one may recognize contemporary features of both *n'anga* and *profete* practices in bodily possession (Santos 1964 [1609]: 197):

The devil enters into one of the Kaffirs of the assembly, saying that he is the soul of the dead king, father of him who is engaged in these ceremonies, come to converse with his son. The demoniac becomes as one into whose body the devil has entered, stretched on the ground disfigured, deformed, and out of his senses, and while he is in this state the devil speaks through his mouth in all the foreign tongues of other Kaffir nations, which are understood by many of those present. Besides this, he begins to cough and speak like the dead king whom he represents, in such a manner that it seems to be his very self, both in voice and movements, by which signs the Kaffirs recognise that the soul of the dead king has come as they expected.

Here we see voice, bodily movements, the languages spoken, and even the coughing as important traits for evaluating the power of the possessed (or “demoniac” in Santos's term) and his or her relation to the spirits. These features are crucial aspects of current healing rituals, and some spirits are, for instance, known to cause their mediums to cough profusely. Also, if possessed by the spirit of a *makomerede*, for example, the medium will then comport herself or himself in a soldierly fashion and speak Shona. Together, the bodily and vocal practices of a *n'anga* or *profete* constitute significant performative aspects of possession and healing, also mirroring nonritual or nondivine aspects. Put in another way, they articulate and become forces of the past that impinge on the present to resolve contemporary situations of danger—*tchikume*—or bodies afflicted with this.

## Healing and the Force of Becoming

The presence and extraction of *tchikume*, the closing and cleansing of the body, and the rituals of *kutenda adzimu edu* exemplify how spirits, illness, and ritual engage with the domains of constructive and destructive forces. These dealings and their potentialities have led some to make distinctions between “sorcery of construction” and “sorcery of destruction”—a dichotomy proposed by West in his important book *Kupilikula* (2005) on political authority, governance, and sorcery on the Mueda plateau in northern Mozambique. Although arguing for a historically informed vision of sorcery, West retains the notion that both *mitela* (equivalent to *mutombo*—medicine) and sorcery are forces that are in themselves *neutral*: “Muedan sorcerers—like the medicinal substances they used—could either protect or harm, cure or kill, feed or devour, construct or destroy” (2005: 75). West shows in his rich ethnographic account just how powerful sorcery is and how this is related to, interpreted by, and confronted by *kupilikula*—a Shimakonde term meaning to annul or undo.

Although analytically weaving together a sophisticated tapestry of historical and contemporary political dynamics, practices, and discourses, West’s basic distinction between the potentialities of sorcery of construction and destruction seems to be too crude in comparison to my material. Here *mutombo*, the forces of spirits engaged through *n’angas*, *profetes*, and, even, rituals as *kutenda adzimu edu* are inherently ambiguous and irreducible to destruction or construction. Subsequently, to engage healing contexts is therefore seen to always be potentially dangerous as these might elicit or provoke malevolent forces. Although people allege that virtually all *n’angas* and *profetes* engage in nebulous affairs, rarely does one find those that acknowledge their meddling in such: as a rule of thumb, and for fear of being labelled a *muroi*, such capacities are always allocated to other *n’angas*, *profetes*, or to *muroi* themselves. However, when interviewing Celso’s *n’anga* in 2007—during our third visit—she came close to acknowledging precisely such ambivalent (or potentially sinister) dealings:

B: The problem of *muroi*, is it big?

N: Yes! It is very big. There are a lot of people who suffer from this.

B: Can one protect oneself against this problem?

N: Yes. I can give protection. And I can even send spirits to create confusion and disorder [*confusão*] in a family that has killed someone.

B: Ah yeah? You do this a lot?

N: Yes. A lot of people want this.

B: Does it require a lot of work?

N: It is a lot of work, this. And you need to make a big ritual.

Through description and analysis of the rituals and the practices of extracting *tchikume*, of addressing the work of *uroi*, of placating aggrieved *tchikwambo* and *gamba* spirits, the work of *n'anga* and *profete* have been portrayed as being that of protection and healing—solely in terms of warding off evil and destruction. However, what is admitted in the interview with this (and other) *n'angas* (and also *profetes*) is how frequently they not only repel forces of destruction and evil but actively engage, take on, and embody these capacities. People in Honde and Chimoio know, acknowledge, and fear this, and for these reasons the visibility of the house of a *n'anga* is important, as well as to circumscribe their work with taboos and prohibitions.<sup>35</sup> Socially and in everyday life, *n'angas* and *profetes* are therefore ambiguous: their powers are extensive and their practices are irreducible to categories of destruction or construction but are framed as murky and perilous. Such potentialities do not easily translate into a neat dichotomy of “sorcery of construction” and “sorcery of destruction,” nor is it easy to see sorcery and *mutombo* as inherently neutral—as West also argued—as the powers in operation are far too pervasive, ambivalent, and unpredictable to fit the categories of instigators of destruction and construction. Their unpredictability and the shifting, murky, and enormous force of *n'angas* and *profetes*—for example in the potencies of powerful spirits attacking suddenly—underline the vitality, dynamic, and force of this field (see also Obarrio 2014).

As also mentioned above, a common analysis in this field is what one may term *the entrepreneurship approach* in which *n'angas* and *profetes* are understood as maneuvering within a social space that is, in turn, manipulated for economic ends (see, e.g., Luedke and West 2006; Pfeiffer 2006; Simmons 2006). Surely, some elements may elicit support for such an argument. For one, those seeking treatment are often called “clients” (*clientes*) by the *n'anga* and *profete*, an appropriation of terminology of the formal medical apparatus that is then reinserted and reanimated in novel settings outside originary discursive and institutional constraints (cf. also West and Luedke 2006: 8).<sup>36</sup> Another element is related to payment: in their works on Chimoio, both Pfeiffer (2002, 2006) and Seibert (2006: 64) argue for a key distinction between *n'anga* and *profete* being that the former accepts payment while the latter, they argue, rarely does.

However, based on the material in this chapter as well as my fieldwork material in general, I have found little or no reason to make distinctions between *n'angas* and *profetes* in terms of seeking compensation for their work. Thus, despite the wide acceptance of monetary payment and appropriation of the biomedical or institutional rhetoric of clienthood, the entrepreneurship approach is reductionist in its individuated and universalist economist leanings. A related problem concerns its presentist leanings—the construction of the world of healing entrepreneurship as devoid of violent historical trajectories. An approach seeking precisely to contend with the force of historical trajectories in the present is that of *memory*. As Jennifer Cole has demonstrated in her works on Madagascar (1998, 2001), memory needs to be approached *beyond* being an individual faculty as well as a vehicle of political power or empowerment. Cole, developing thoughts from the classic work on social memory by Maurice Halbwachs (1980), thereby critiques the idea that memory is merely an artifact of the present, a construction projected backward, subjected to presentist politics. Such a limited approach, she contends, underestimates “the memory community, [which,] while political, is also moral” (1998: 105).<sup>37</sup>

Applied to the material from Honde and Chimoio and reflecting Cole's argument, one may argue that as a considerable social force, the past assumes a directionality of its own wherein it is impossible to analytically pin this force down and subject it to dichotomous functions (i.e. sorcery of destruction pitted against sorcery of construction) or individualize and fragment this into *n'angas* and *profetes* being agents of a universal entrepreneurial spirit. Rather, the forceful, ever-changing shape of healing resides in its capacity to always supersede, challenge, and counter forces and dynamics of the ordering kind. As a force of the social beyond simply being a bearer of a particular memory (collective or individual), the ritual practices of *n'angas* and *profetes* exhibit dynamics similar to the *mhondoro* previously analyzed: integral to politics and social orders, yet with the capacities to unsettle and destabilize through, for example, being possessed by powerful allochthonous spirits such as *mukadzi wo adzimu* that upset (often gendered) social arrangements and hierarchies. This unsettled, noncompartmentalized, nondomesticated, and nonstable past—a past with no stable memory community upholding it—is integral to considerable forces of destabilization or, better, deterritorialization. Concretely, this force can be recognized in terms of memory—social, political, and moral—but importantly, and as Werbner points out, must be seen as a present past that is unpredictable and nonconfined.

## Healing Bodies, Engaging Pasts, Unsettling Orders

Analyzed in this and previous chapters, such pasts reflect more than a century of wars, movements of people, escape from state capture, and forced migration to the South African mines or farm work in Zimbabwe—aspects which have meant that there are elements one could portray as “Zimbabwean,” “Malawian,” or “Shona” in the present past. This analytical “originist” or “authenticist” inclination in denoting elements of healing construes or upholds problematic and analytically unhelpful dichotomies of things Zimbabwean or Mozambican, things chiNdaу, chiSena or chiShangaan, imposing unfounded orders and forms of stability.

The tack taken here is different: as healing and its domains constitute an effervescent, expanding and transforming field, then framing this into an analytical optics of *being*—the present being the endpoint of a process that has now ground to a halt—the *n’anga* and the *profete* and their movements are thereby, literally, frozen, immobilized, and emplaced. This portrayal would belie the field’s unruly and continuous *becoming* where novel spirits may be appropriated or enter involuntarily the healers and nonhealers, and where the capacities to accumulate new spirits and techniques of healing, etc., involve a perpetual movement—in a cosmological and spiritual sense. It seems, therefore, that the practices of healing, the spiritual domain, and the afflictions of illness and mishaps may be approached as historical artifacts—sedimented from the violence of past and present conflicts as the civil war, the violence of colonialism but also exhibiting long-term structural continuities. As attempted here, such a historically informed approach needs to be complemented by one that emphasizes the distinct vibrancy characterizing this particular field—its perpetual *becoming* and not *being*.

This chapter has presented and analyzed some features of the continuing dynamic characterizing the field of healing, spirits, and illness. In particular, this dynamic is one not captured by the arborescent hierarchies of gender and patriarchy, bodily comportments, or institutional arrangements inherent to the state dynamic. Contrarily, the force of spirits and their attacks continually upset stable social and political arrangements—steeped in the historical trajectories of colonialism and violence. Further, the profoundly rhizomic character of spirits’ capability to attack and take possession of people therefore profoundly challenges and, at times, alters gendered, hierarchical, and patriarchal orders.

This general dynamic pattern bears similarities to the capacities and multiple orientations of the *mhondoro*, as analyzed in the foregoing chapter. Historically embedded and at times also challenging its polity

of origin, the *mhondoro* may be seen and experienced as a force reaching beyond the boundaries of politics and social systems. Similarly, the unpredictable force of the spirits' capabilities for alteration remains beyond the apparatus of capture of formal social and political organization—as is also the case with the nonstate hierarchical system of *régulos* (chiefs) or *aridzi wo nhika* (owners of the land). In practical terms, these orders—in themselves often having a state dynamic in the Deleuze and Guattarian sense—are constantly challenged by several instances: the *mukadzi wo adzimu* in the sense of both attacking the institutional arrangement of marriage as well as redirecting and reallocating the productive and reproductive capacities and capabilities of the woman afflicted. Understood more theoretically, if kinship is perceived ideally as a system of descent and categorization informing and structuring patterns of social order, then the sudden and violent redirection of flows of life and reproduction involved in terms of the *mukadzi wo adzimu* is an *actualization* of the *virtual potential* of the traditional field in terms of upsetting the state dynamics of kinship.

Further, characteristic of *both* the unpredictability of the potentialities of spirits of *makomerede*—i.e. when, how, and where these will impinge on the social order—and their potencies when having appropriated someone—i.e. when a woman has become a *mukadzi wo adzimu*—the *makomerede* spirits are heterogeneous, multiple, and always mutating. Thus, as other spirits of the *pfukwa* kind (e.g. *gamba*, *tchikwambo*), vis-à-vis the political and social orders, they constitute lines of flight that upset the arborescent and hierarchical sociopolitical realities into which they are otherwise constantly sought embedded—i.e. through ritual as we saw in previous chapters or through institutional arrangements such as the *mukadzi wo adzimu*. Such lines of flight circumvent and upset apparatuses of capture and the territorialization processes central to the state order—the deterritorialized *makomerede* spirits epitomizing such lines in the same way as the free-roaming and highly visible *gotokoto*. Further, such evasion and deterritorialization are also characteristic of the forces that churches, waxing and waning with their *profetes* and *n'angas*, seek to tap.

Overall, the potencies of the field exhibit profoundly rhizomic characteristics in their constantly shifting, unpredictable, and—often, not always—anti-institutional or a-institutional orientation. However, as emphasized earlier, the traditional field's trajectory often involves aspects of (unfinished) pasts impinging on dynamics of the present with tremendous force—as in the spiritual appropriation of, in particular, women that undercut the ideals of the sociopolitical orders. Thus, the field's potencies in its dynamic of appropriation of past suffering (i.e.

*makomerede* spirits) is capable of upsetting and destabilizing the hierarchical, arborescent, and, ultimately, state-like features of social and political organization in the urban-rural continuum of Honde and Chimoio. With Clastres, one might say that the (state-like) *oneness* of society—with *régulos*, bodily registers of hierarchy, gendered realities of subordination, and patriarchal arrangements—is constantly challenged and deterritorialized by the *plural* actualization of the profoundly social potencies and forces of spirits and healing.

These challenges are, however, not uniquely poised against arborescent sociopolitical orders. Rather, they are also central to a far more tangible apparatus of capture directly integral to the postcolonial state that, as we will turn to now, explicitly and directly aims to control and tame not merely forces of healing but also *uroi*—sorcery.

## Notes

1. The spelling *n'anga* is consistent with Hannan's Shona dictionary (1984 [1959]), Jacobson-Widding's (1989) ethnographic works on the Manyika (e.g. 1989), and Gelfand's texts on the Shona in general (e.g. 1977). Some elderly people claim that in chiTewe a *n'anga* is known as *tchiremba*. However, despite being in use in the neighboring chiManyika dialect (see also Hannan 1984 [1959] under the spelling *chiremba*) *tchiremba* seems to be very rarely invoked in Honde and Chimoio. I have therefore chosen to use the term *n'anga*.
2. *Profete*, obviously derived from "prophet," is sometimes spelled *profeta* (Lubkemann 2000), which seems to reflect the Portuguese word with the similar spelling. However, in keeping with the pronunciation, I retain the spelling *profete*.
3. Lambek's (1996: 236) tentative definition of spirits and possession is employed in this chapter: "Possession refers to the relations that particular disembodied creatures ('spirits') engage with particular human hosts, such that the host is periodically 'absent' from her own body, replaced by the voice and persona of the spirit."
4. See also Gelfand (1977) and, to some extent, Jacobson-Widding's more recent works (1999).
5. See, for example, Luedke and West (2006) for a "Southeastern African" expression of this type of analysis, as well as Pfeiffer (2002, 2006) and Luedke (2011) for analyses based on Manica Province material.
6. Beyond my own ethnographic material, key historical (Theal 1964 [1898]; Liesegang 1966 [1796], 1996) and older ethnographic sources (Bullock 1927; Shropshire 1938; Holleman 1953; Gelfand 1977) will be used.
7. This point may of course also be expanded to the globe, as seen in many attempts to link (conceptions of) modernity or postmodernity to the rise of spiritual movements, the growth of globalizing faiths, or the augmentation of religious

- dimensions to society. For one such powerful and incisive crypto-Marxist argument of an encroaching and ascending global “capitalist spirituality” seen to smooth out resistance (conceived broadly), see Carrette and King (2005).
8. When reexamining Evans-Pritchard’s classic work on Azande (1976 [1937]) and contrasting these with South American and Circumpolar ethnographica, Taussig (2003: 303) has pointed out that it may precisely be in the dynamics of *skepticism*, its techniques (or technicality), and the nature of its public secret that magic’s power lies. Thus, skepticism should not be, in Taussig’s view, external to magic itself (see also Guyer 2013; Igreja 2015b).
  9. For a layout of these compounds and houses, see figures 1.1 and 4.1.
  10. Being integrated yet separate, powerful yet mysterious constitutes also, of course, the ambivalent position of those living alone, of which people often say “*Wakaramba kuanda ndimuroi*”—“The one who does not want to live with others is a witch.” Thus, spatial separation indicates an ambivalent social position of those meddling in spiritual affairs—benign or malevolent.
  11. While there is not sufficient room for this subject in this book, there are several important works that delve into the role of the different churches and missions in Mozambique: see, e.g., Morier-Genoud (2006) for a case study on the politics of the Catholic Church from Salazar’s Estado Novo until independence; see Cruz e Silva (2001) for an argument for the role of the influential Protestant and other missions in southern Mozambique in the formation of early nationalist and independence sentiments; see Helgesson’s (1994) monumental work tracing the Catholic Church and especially its relation to the Protestant missions from the Gaza empire to independence in 1975. See also Engelke (2007) for a Zimbabwean, Englund (2004) for a Malawian, Jean Comaroff (1985) for a South African, and Blanes (2014) for an Angolan case exploring the potential, diversity, and orientation of these churches. Further, works pertaining specifically to Manica Province or Chimoio on the churches include Fry (2000), Pfeiffer (2002), and Luedke (2005). However, in spite of the enormous recent attention these churches have engendered in anthropology, and contrary to some representations, they are *not*, as some would like us to think, of course, new phenomena, as Sundkler’s (1964 [1948]) seminal work points out.
  12. See, for example, Luedke (2005, 2006) for analyses of the spiritual and political hierarchies of the Zion churches.
  13. A majority of the *profete* I have met, however, have had round buildings conforming to the ideal of the *tchitunga thonanga*.
  14. The colors red, white, and black are, of course, core symbols in many Sub-Saharan contexts—a subject, for example, of Victor Turner’s classical interpretation based on Ndembu fieldwork in Zambia where “whiteness=semen, milk; redness=menstrual blood, the blood of birth, blood shed by a weapon; blackness=feces, certain products of bodily decay etc.” (Turner 1991 [1967]: 107, see also 57 for an interpretation of these in a color triad). For an analysis of the colors of particular spirits based on Manyika material corresponding and complementing Turner’s tripartite distinction, see also Jacobson-Widding (1999: 123).

15. There are also several examples from the literature of this approach to cleanse the field of the *profete* of traditional elements, especially within the Zionist vein of the African Independent Churches. Engelke (2005, 2007), for example, argues on the basis of an analysis of the Johane Masowe movement in Zimbabwe that mundane objects like water and pebbles form crucial parts of healing and ritual practice, starkly contrasting most *profetes* and all *n'angas* in my material in their emphasis on the need for (also) *mutombo*.
16. For an analytically rich archaeological analysis of Southern Africa between 1300 and the 1800s using the thermodynamic approach to social and state formation, including its material and gendered aspects, see Fredriksen (2009).
17. Works on the *profetes*' use of these liquids from other areas have also found that dangerous matter may enter the body through the anus by way of an enema (see, e.g., Chapman's [1998: 189] thesis based on work in nearby Gondola, Manica Province). I have not found such instances in my work, but the idea underlines the fact that orifices essentially are entry points for *tchikume* as well as *mutombo*, a view in keeping also with Jacobson-Widding's (1999: 305) general argument about orifices being vital gates to self and personhood. This point is also supported by the long-term oral administration of poison to suspected *muroi*, the so-called *lucasse* test, a practice documented as far back as the 1600s (Santos 1964 [1609]: 204).
18. Despite using the term "life story," I am aware of the theoretical and analytical problems pertaining to constructing the narrative of a (individual/individualized) life, in keeping with Bourdieu's (1987) trenchant critique. However, for simplicity's sake I choose to retain the term as the narration by those interviewed predominantly took the shape of a linear narrative conforming largely to conventional understandings of the concepts of "life history" or "life story."
19. The term "malaria" frequently denoted a wide range of afflictions ranging from being feverish and displaying biomedically identifiable symptoms of malaria (and even AIDS) to various other bodily and social afflictions. Consequently, in conversations "malaria" is commonly invoked to indicate a lack of well-being.
20. Numerous Mozambican and Zimbabwean works have for almost a century analyzed and referred to *tchikwambo* (also spelled *chikwambo*), and it the workings of this persistent category of spirit vary somewhat across time and space. Consult Davies (1931), Earthy (1931c), Gelfand (1954), Maxwell (1995), Fry (2000), Pfeiffer (2002), or Massart (2011) for contrasting descriptions.
21. The usage of such nuts in divination and healing is well-known among Manyika, other Shona groups, as well as throughout Sub-Saharan Africa more generally. In Shona literature the act of divination is known as *hakata*, and its objects are variously made of animal bones, sticks, stones, seeds, or, as in this case, halved nuts of the *mungoma* (sometimes also spelt *mungongoma*) tree ("pod mahogany" in English, *Afzelia Quanzensis* in Latin). See especially Bullock (1927: 156ff), Tracey (1934), or Gelfand (1964: 75–85) for analyses of *hakata* as a technique of Shona *n'angas*, and Wim van Binsbergen (1995) for a comparative argument of the *hakata* being part of a larger complex of related Southern African healing practices—varieties that in southern Mozambique

- also include sets of shells or bones called *tinhlolo* (Granjo 2007; Thornton 2009) or *tinxlholo* (Polanah 1987).
22. Family members here include father, mother, and male and female siblings and their young children.
  23. The ritual described resembles the basic structure of what Jacobson-Widding (1985: 11ff) calls “family prayers”: they take place in the cooking hut early in the day; women and men are on each side, a coin is put in a wooden bowl, *kuembera* is performed, and the father kneels down and addresses the ancestors directly. However, Jacobson-Widding emphasizes strongly the paternal aunt’s role and argues for the ritual centrality of female ancestors. In Honde, although female ancestors, especially the paternal mother’s spirits, are seen to possibly foment illness, disease, and difficulties in conceiving and bearing children through a spirit often called *zinhambuya*, neither the paternal aunt nor other female ancestors were prominent in the *kutenda adzimu edu* I attended.
  24. In the case of Chimoio, this position is expressed by Pfeiffer, with whose works (e.g., 2002, 2006) I have already extensively engaged.
  25. See also Jacobson-Widding’s (1989: 36) analysis of greetings, face-to-face encounters, and seniority.
  26. The use of the plate as we saw in both the case of the *profete* and the *kutenda adzimu edu* is also well-known from a range of other ceremonies. See, for instance, Gelfand’s analysis of a sweet beer that is poured onto a plate mixed with medicines for the *mhondoro* (1970).
  27. I have dealt at length with the formation of violent memory in Honde and Chimoio elsewhere (Bertelsen 2002).
  28. There is a rather large literature on the *gamba*. Marlin, for example, acknowledges its complex origins, but his analysis revolves around the violence and displacement of the civil war (2001: 122ff), as does much of the work of Mozambican anthropologist Victor Igreja (e.g., 2003, 2015a, 2015b). Earlier writers from the Shona and Zimbabwe/Southern Rhodesia context, such as Gelfand (1977) and Bullock (1927), sometimes refer to *gomba* but classify this particular spirit as one of many types of *mashave* spirits—that is predominantly malevolent, powerful, and foreign (i.e. nonancestral, locally territorial, or familiar).
  29. There is considerable fear of *gamba*, making it an apt threat. If one is being beaten or robbed, uttering “You will suffer with *gamba*” at the culprits is believed to cause them to suffer within a year’s time.
  30. I was repeatedly told during fieldwork that no one will dare kill this animal for meat or sell it at the market, as the cloth around the neck signifies danger. Thus, quite a number of *gotokoto* are seen in Honde and other peri-urban areas around Chimoio in an area where the consumption of meat—and protein in general—is comparatively low even by African standards (see Pfeiffer, Gloyd, and Li 2001). However, persistent rumors indicate that the so-called *maQuelimane* (people from the city of Quelimane) have slaughtered and killed *gotokoto* in Chimoio, and this is why they are now afflicted with *gamba* and *tchikwambo*. It should be added that such dangerous behavior correlates with the commonly held view of Quelimane as Mozambique’s gangster capital. Thus, breaches of social norms are also complemented by transgressions of cosmological

- boundaries—with dramatic repercussions for the *maQuelimane*, whose market stalls in Chimoio were also specifically targeted during the popular urban uprisings in Mozambique in 2008 and 2010 (see Bertelsen 2014 for details).
31. Such importance of coolness and affinity with rain and water is also integral to rainmaking capacities and chiefhood. Following this, chiefs, for instance, are often buried on mountaintops in order for their bodies and spirits to both be near the soothing and cooling rains and safeguard their continued pouring (Sætersdal 2004).
  32. Pfeiffer (2002: 186–88) terms the phenomenon *mukadzi we mupfukwa*—wives to *pfukwa* spirits. In Honde and Chimoio I generally found that women who marry male spirit-spouses are entitled *mukadzi wo adzimu*—wives to spirits (see also Schuetze 2010). However, a large percentage of the spirits that take wives would be termed *pfukwa* spirits. A. Honwana underlines similar dynamics in southern Mozambique between *pfukwa* spirits, wives and the past (2003: 71–74). Comparatively interesting, Kamp explores how the Afro-Brazilian idea of *pombagira*—spirit-spouse—is integral to Maputo’s urban Pentecostal setting and resonates with local Mozambican notions (Kamp 2011, 2015).
  33. Such consumption may also be on a metaphorical level, as through the practice of what in chiTewe is called *kuchekwa nhora*, whereby cuts are made in the body into which *mutombo* are inserted. On *nhora* incisions in general, see also Gelfand and Swart (1953) and Gelfand (1964: 156) for Shona examples, Amaral’s (1990: 307–18) analysis of Mozambican Yao ritual incisions and tattoos, and, finally, West (2007: 86–93) for a case from the Mueda plateau in northern Mozambique wherein incisions were made as part of non-biomedical “vaccinations” against *uwavi* (sorcery).
  34. The way in which missionary and ethnographer Henri Philippe Junod describes *kuembera* resembles the present form: “When a woman meets another woman, she greets her by clapping hands, which is the greeting of man to man also; only when a man claps, he does it with the fingers in front, whereas the women clap their hands with crossed palms” (Junod 1936: 296; see also Morier-Genoud 2011 for an analysis of H. P. Junod’s work).
  35. For instance, *n’angas* are meant to avoid drinking alcohol, meddling in petty affairs, or having extramarital sex, as all these activities are seen to tap their powers and capacities (see also Bertelsen 2013).
  36. There are clear analytical limits to emphasizing a sharp distinction between supposedly different spheres of “Western medicine” and “African/traditional medicine” as these often rely on dichotomies of “modernist/modern” versus “traditional” terms—or even “premodern” and “modern” (see Fumo 1998 for such an analysis). In addition, the notion of linearity and development in which the “nonscientific” will gradually be eroded, cracked, or banished by the light of “scientific medicine” occludes the complementarity and conflict, the commensurability and the *bricolage* within the medical field—what Hokkanen (2006) in an interesting analysis of medical missionaries in Malawi calls “medical culture,” which was also related to the colonial-era “bioprospecting” within medicine (Hokkanen 2012). For other approaches to the complex field of medicine, illness, and healing in Mozambique, see also Shapiro’s (1983) analysis

of medicine's integration into the Portuguese colonial project or Meneses's (2004b) argument for a holistic approach to the field of health in contemporary Mozambique.

37. Cole's analyses of the present moral impact of violent colonial memories in Madagascar resonate with Lambek's (1996, 1998) view of memory as a form of moral practice within another Malagasy location. Arguing that the memorial practices of mediums and spirit possession also constitute moral practices, Lambek seeks to explain how these make up a process of redressing the past, of processing the past in the present. Evaluating the past and the present through possession, the practice also addresses significant moral dimensions. Werbner's work contrasts slightly that of Cole and Lambek by highlighting the *social* practice of memory in his analyses of postwar Zimbabwe (1991, 1998a), emphasizing particularly the telling of histories and the unease with which the past is treated, as well as the moral impact these have in his Matabeleland work (Werbner 1998c: 98). However, to particularize these memories would be wrong as "responsibility cannot be narrowed down. It must make demands beyond the temporal interest of the immediate moment" (Werbner 1995: 105). Reflecting also the positions of Cole and Lambek, Werbner's work, thus, also emphasizes how the force of memory—in terms of stories told or possession—cannot be confined or individuated.