

# Football and Colonialism

# Contents

List of Illustrations	vii
Foreword by Harry G. West	ix
Acknowledgments	xiii
Abbreviations	xv
<i>Chapter 1</i> Football and the Narration of a Colonial Situation	1
<i>Chapter 2</i> A Colonial Sport's Field	21
<i>Chapter 3</i> Football and the Moral Economy of the Lourenço Marques Suburbs	61
<i>Chapter 4</i> A Suburban Style of Play	102
<i>Chapter 5</i> Witchcraft Practices in Football's Symbolic Economy	135
<i>Chapter 6</i> Sweetness and Speed <i>Tactics as Disenchantment of the World</i>	158
<i>Chapter 7</i> Football Narratives and Social Networks in Late Colonial Mozambique	190
<i>Chapter 8</i> Embodied History	225
Notes	233
Bibliography	299
Index	319

# 1 ↪ Football and the Narration of a Colonial Situation

## JOSÉ CRAVEIRINHA'S ETHNOGRAPHY OF SUBURBAN FOOTBALL IN LOURENÇO MARQUES

In 1955, José Craveirinha, a prominent Mozambican *mestiço* poet and journalist,<sup>1</sup> suggested that the distinctive performance of African players from the suburbs of Lourenço Marques revealed a form of intelligence, an “extraordinary and limitless . . . fantasy” of the *indígena* (native) population, which the poet attributed to its “acute sense of malice.” *Malice*, usually associated with grave and harmful actions springing from an evil source, was here given a positive spin, as intelligence or cunning.<sup>2</sup>

This was one among a series of articles that Craveirinha wrote that year in *O brado africano*<sup>3</sup> on the kind of football played in the suburbs of Lourenço Marques. In another piece, he addressed the way in which suburban players adopted, adapted, and re-created the game, a European invention.<sup>4</sup> “The *indígena*,” he emphasized, “is ready to adapt to new things but also to transform them or even discover them anew.”<sup>5</sup>

The use, in local football, of what he termed “witchcraft practices” was one of the most conspicuous manifestations of this process of adoption. Craveirinha highlighted the influence of “ancient taboos, beliefs, superstitions” in the local adoption of the game. These beliefs had a powerful effect on the players’ “reflex system.” For years in succession, Beira-Mar, a team from Chamanculo, a suburban neighborhood, won the local championship because, the poet claimed, “before the matches, their athletes drank a special tea at the president’s house and, at some point, several black-and-white crows would appear behind the opposing team’s

goal, to indicate how many goals they would suffer.” “Black men and many mestiços,” the poet continued, “still entered the pitch with small ‘copper’ coins inside their boots, and would rub certain ‘remedies’ on their knees beforehand in order to protect their bodies from the opponent’s sorcery.” Africans, he noted, “gladly accepted countless impositions and customs from a more advanced civilization but, at the same time, they held on to a series of traditional practices that reflected their ‘worldview.’” The interpretation of this topic led the poet to issue a challenge: “these manifestations demand a vast study, which would lead to a greater knowledge of the black man, of his problems, of his clashes with European civilization, in short, to a thorough treatise of useful and instructive ethnography.”<sup>6</sup>

As in so many other places, the urbanization process in Lourenço Marques transformed both individuals and groups. In the city, one acquired practical skills but also began to perceive and imagine the world differently. In the capital of Mozambique, this modern phenomenon was shaped by colonialism, and more specifically by the colonial projects that marked this space under Portuguese rule. The development of sporting practices and forms of consumption in Lourenço Marques was underpinned by this colonial situation.<sup>7</sup> From the first decades of the twentieth century onward, both in the center of the “European city” and in the African suburbs, from children’s matches taking place in any random plot of land to the more organized competitions, from matches of an informal nature among friends to those following the model of an official competition, football established itself as a dynamic element among emergent leisure practices, and made its mark as a communitarian spectacle. Here, as elsewhere around the world, by becoming a public event, the game no longer had a meaningful existence for the players on the pitch only. Performance was now shared with an audience, with those that witnessed the spectacle in situ as well as with those that gathered information on it through other, indirect, means, either personal interactions or specific channels such as the media. Sports like football were thus transfigured into a medium of everyday individual and collective identification, a secular religion of sorts, a universal language.<sup>8</sup> In those contexts where football became a competitive spectacle, performed for an audience, the effect of competition and of the growing pressure exerted by fans converted football into a “serious” activity, in contrast with the typical image of a “disinterested” amateur practice.<sup>9</sup>

The values and practices shared and praised by football players and public in the Lourenço Marques suburbs, and above all the predominant faculty of malice, will serve as a starting point for an inquiry into the specific nature of colonial domination in Lourenço Marques and the particular

culture it fostered. The situated study of players' bodies gives rise to a singular representation of the colonial process. This representation is in stark contrast to the pastoral genre that gave voice to the interests at play within the field of colonial power. In the Lourenço Marques imagined by colonial propaganda, its suburbs were either culturalized or, quite simply, omitted. The city was also conceived by modernizing projects that, from the 1950s onward, were concerned with the way in which the African labor force had been reproducing.

The nature and evolution of the colonial field of power in the capital of Mozambique can be perceived through the way in which the Portuguese state and other agents—local interest groups, companies, religious organizations, nations, and international institutions—conceived the city's suburbs and their populations. The adoption of football in the periphery ran parallel with the struggles for the definition of a suburban social contract. Framed by the indirect rule that characterized the *indigenato* system, and under the thumb of a predatory state, this social contract was geared toward fulfilling the need for the reproduction of the suburban labor force and maintaining the order and racial hierarchy that regulated the relation between the colonizers and the colonized.<sup>10</sup> The existence of a local football dynamic in the suburbs of Lourenço Marques was partially a response to a segregation policy led by the state institutions and translated into the network of sport associations. Sports practices and consumptions were part and parcel of a broader, radically uneven process of exchange, which affected the living conditions of Mozambican populations and their specific adaptation to the environment of the city.

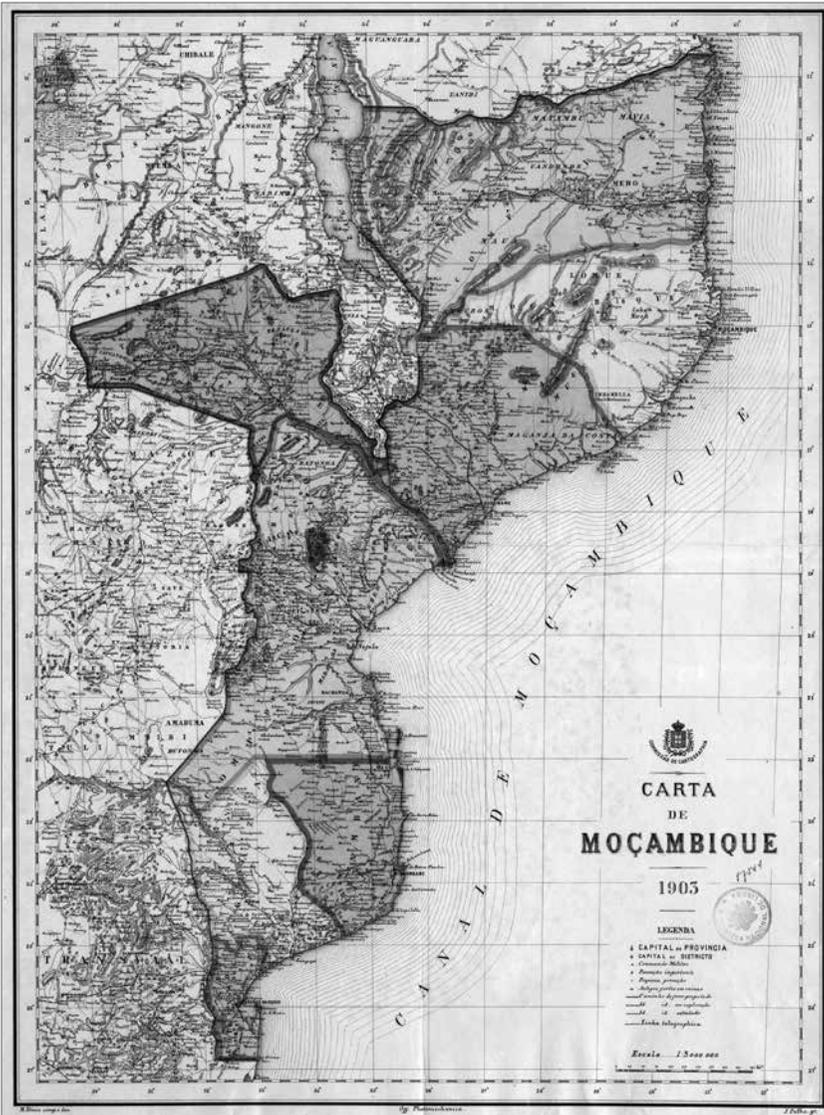
In this work, the malice described by José Craveirinha is not treated as an idiosyncratic trait of culturally framed individuals. The point, rather, is to interpret it as but one aspect of an informal social contract that emerged on the outskirts of Lourenço Marques and that was sustained by the unsettled routines of its inhabitants. In this sense, malice is not an element of a prescriptive notion of “culture” or “identity.”<sup>11</sup> Nor, for that matter, is it meant to stand for a form of “national agency,” so often invoked in the analysis of colonial experiences.<sup>12</sup> The use of prescriptive identitarian projections is common in the analysis of sports performances. By absorbing external referents (of a national, ethnic, cultural, or political nature), the game style (Brazilian, African, English)<sup>13</sup> naturalizes the very principles of which it is presumed to be a reflex: nation, race, identity, culture.<sup>14</sup> As a feature of a suburban habitus, a malice was inscribed in individuals' strategies and in the responses they gave to the strict conditions that constricted and confined them.

In this book, football performances, translated into a locally meaningful style of play, operate as a laboratory of bodies, senses, and worldviews through which one can offer a representation of the local colonial society, of its structures of power and means of social reproduction, but also of the elements of transformation brought about by historical change and human aspirations.

The game, as a practice but also as a shared popular and mediatized culture, helped the population's integration into networks of interdependence, not only those previously established through ethnic and geographic bonds, but also those shaped by other distinctly urban groups, and which may or may not have replicated those previous belongings: those that gathered in each neighborhood and those that emerged from work relations or the participation in association movements. Organized in the form of performances, played before a live audience, football contributed to the formation of a specific social stock of knowledge.<sup>15</sup> Knowledge about football bred everyday encounters and interactions, cemented identities, and created an idiom of expression and relation for and within the community, but it was also a means of communicating with the world. In the outskirts of colonial Lourenço Marques, football was a vehicle through which local inhabitants aspired to another material and symbolic existence, sport being one of the few fields where Africans could stand out in the frame of a colonial society. This desire for social mobility was reinforced when some black and, most all mestiço players started a professional trajectory that would eventually lead them to major metropolitan clubs. Among the latter are the well-known cases of Matateu, Mário Coluna, Hilário, and Eusébio. Thus, while an analysis of the players' on-field choreography enables us to interpret the structures of a system of domination in the capital of Mozambique, the urban dissemination of football brings to the fore the extent to which the system was unstable and subject to pressure exerted by the desires and aspirations of its inhabitants.

## LOURENÇO MARQUES

In the urban history of Africa, colonial cities like Lourenço Marques established themselves, since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as specific types of social organization.<sup>16</sup> They were focal points in a network of transnational economic relations reliant on decisions made in the metropolitan political centers and in the international commodity markets. These urban colonial societies were regulated by a set of laws and institutions, and their development generally involved military occupation and the employment of coercive means; the implementation of an



MAP 1.1. Mozambique, 1903. Comissão de Cartografia. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal.

administrative apparatus; the enactment of laws regulating the rights, duties, and movement of the populations; and the establishment of a regime of economic exploitation, aimed at the reproduction of the labor force, which integrated African goods and workers in international networks of production and trade.<sup>17</sup> Colonial cities distinguish themselves by their functional role within a set of commercial and productive relations, their

political framework and degree of state intervention, their social and professional stratification, their demographic structure and ethnic composition. Part of a larger process of social transformation, each colonial city presented its own unique dynamics.<sup>18</sup> As complex and creative spaces of exchange and mobility, colonial cities like Lourenço Marques were defined by processes of social and racial segmentation that led to the creation of segregated urban areas, each with a European center surrounded by African suburbs. After World War II, the African colonial city's functional specialization went through a decisive shift, when the need for cheap raw materials and labor generated a demographic explosion.<sup>19</sup> Many Africans were then introduced to the dynamics of a capitalist economy, becoming workers or servants, but also consumers, participants in a developing urban culture. Facing severe material and symbolic hardships, they went on to occupy a city they had built with their own hands. A site of linguistic, religious, and cultural reinvention, the city, through the specificity of its social and spatial relations, created new patterns of conflict and cooperation, new practices and worldviews.

A symbol of a new stage in Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique, the growth of Lourenço Marques came to represent the advent of this process. Despite the unmistakable signs of fragile territorialization and lack of capital, knowledge, and human resources, in other words, the relative weakness of the state's infrastructural power, in the sense used by Michael Mann,<sup>20</sup> the projects developed in Portuguese colonial territories did not significantly contrast with the general trends that define European colonial rule in Africa, and with which they were connected. Portuguese colonialism was no exception.<sup>21</sup> Lourenço Marques, which became Mozambique's capital, replacing the former capital in the Island of Mozambique (Ilha de Moçambique) in 1898 (although legally only in 1906), had singular features. The new Mozambican capital, served by an important deep-water port, would become one of the axes of a regional economy nurtured by South Africa's precocious industrialization, funded by British capital and based on gold and diamond prospecting. The train connection between Mozambique's main cities and its neighboring regions, between Lourenço Marques and Transvaal Province and further north between Beira and Rhodesia, defined the city's economic role, within the frame of a "transit and emigration economy" that characterized the southern Mozambique economic system.<sup>22</sup> A focal point of commercial relations, Lourenço Marques became the center of one of the most important regional labor markets. The Portuguese government made several worker transfer agreements with its neighboring regions. These agreements were

one of the main colonial sources of income. Each year, thousands of Africans were sent to South African mines. The migratory-work phenomenon affected the more underprivileged populations, especially those whose rural life structure was shaken by the “colonial encounter,” by tax exaction and compulsory labor.<sup>23</sup> The transfer of workers to the Transvaal was negotiated under a monopolistic regime in exchange for the passage through the port of Lourenço Marques of a parcel of southern African imports and exports.

The construction of the suburbs of Lourenço Marques is inseparable from the colonial system’s need to reproduce the labor force necessary to sustain the city’s economic activities, but also, particularly in the first decades of modern urban formation, those of the flourishing South African regional industry. The Portuguese occupation removed the indígenas from the city center, pushing them to the periphery, where many others would join them from the countryside. Successive labor regulations punctuated the various stages in the formation of a symbolically differentiated space in Lourenço Marques, composed of more or less limited zones of interaction, subject to distinct rights and duties. Suburban dwellers, with no rights to land or to ownership of the houses they had built, were forced to rent them. The rental market in the suburbs drew the contours of a hierarchical space in which residents were distributed according to their possessions. A profitable business, the private exploitation of plots of land and houses persisted, stimulated by the lack of urban planning. As with much of the urban built space in Africa in the wake of nineteenth-century colonialism, in Lourenço Marques a large portion of the population inhabited a sprawling periphery, in the fragile condition of occupiers, at the mercy of all kinds of arbitrary acts.

The prevalent economic model in the Portuguese colonial system—mercantilist, barely industrialized, and lagging behind in the employment of capitalist processes<sup>24</sup>—prevented the local growth of an extensive proletariat,<sup>25</sup> despite the increase in economic activity in the late colonial period, when the populations of settlers and Africans grew significantly. Although it was a modern colonial city, Lourenço Marques did not share some of the characteristics of other African cities, whose economic structure was built around large-scale industrial infrastructures. Many of the workers returning from the South African mines, and coming through Lourenço Marques, went back to their villages, a seasonal mobility that contributed to minimizing the effects of proletarianization.<sup>26</sup> The labor insecurity of those who tried to settle in the city helped maintain close connections between the city and the countryside, the latter providing a

last resource of social security, based on the extended family, in a context defined by the state's feeble intervention.

The site of the reproduction of a cheap, disposable, and unskilled labor force, which the state regulated in a discretionary manner and where domestic servants made up a large portion of the population, the suburbs of Lourenço Marques showed the pattern of development of a servile society forced to adjust itself dramatically to modern structural processes. The institutions of the colonial state, ruled from 1926 by a metropolitan dictatorship,<sup>27</sup> sought to shape this urban environment, adjusting their particular concerns to the evolving and at times contentious interests of the colonial forces. The constant struggles that traversed the colonial field of power help us interpret the singular development of the urban structure in Lourenço Marques and the role played by the state in this process.

#### LEISURE AND FOOTBALL IN THE COLONIAL CITY

Urban formations such as colonial cities—spaces of social interdependence enhanced by the various routes opened up by business, trade, services, the sprawling state apparatus, and the growing labor market—created the conditions for the development of the spectacle of football as part and parcel of urban popular culture.<sup>28</sup> The expansion of sport in Africa, dependent on the colonial process as a whole, was the result of a dynamic of heterogeneous dissemination, often not reliant on the initiative and control of economic or state institutions. Even in English colonies, where the sway over cultural apparatuses was relatively more far reaching, sports dissemination did not quite follow a linear script. Football, for example, was not a part of the traditional elite games (cricket, polo, and even rugby, but also tennis, squash, or badminton) included in the curriculum of the colonial cadres educated at Cambridge or Oxford. As noted by Harold Perkin, footballs did not so much travel in the suitcases of diplomats, administrators, and missionaries as much as in the luggage of soldiers, small businessmen, railway workers, and teachers.<sup>29</sup>

Craveirinha's articles reveal how the game was more spontaneously appropriated in the Lourenço Marques suburbs. He even suggests that the suburban player's humor ("reflected in the way he enjoys the game, in the theatricality of his feints and dribbles, and in the expressions he employs to belittle the player who has just been tricked: 'pysonho,' 'psyêtu,' . . . onomatopoeic expressions that are only employed here") was one of the features that distinguished it from other conceptions of the sports activity: "these colorful gatherings become inebriated with the practice of the sport but not with the latter's role as an activity for physical improvement;

they even appear oblivious to this restrictive concept.”<sup>30</sup> According to his description, local leisure went against some of the characteristics that defined the sports movement of a nationalist, hygienist, and pedagogic (occasionally premilitary) nature that had begun to spread across Europe in the nineteenth century and took its mold from organized models of physical reinvigoration.<sup>31</sup> The creation of physical education schools was also stimulated by the imperial expansion and by the need to form colonial cadres, but this ideology of the body was also present in the local colonial institutions, such as schools and military forces. In Mozambique many Africans were introduced to gymnastics through their compulsory insertion in Portuguese military companies.<sup>32</sup>

Research centered on leisure practices and consumptions has enabled us to understand how leisure and sport simultaneously define and defy the boundaries of colonial society.<sup>33</sup> Monographic works by Phyllis Martin on colonial Brazzaville, Laura Fair on Zanzibar, Peter Alegi on South Africa, and Bea Vidacs on Cameroun<sup>34</sup> have shown how much the study of sports practices and consumptions has to add to research on African colonial and postcolonial societies.<sup>35</sup> These research works demonstrate how a modern practice, whose urban adaptation some authors associate with the influence of traditional practices,<sup>36</sup> was adjusted to deeply stratified societies; how, in extremely segregated contexts, forms of modern popular culture, sometimes creatively interlinked with previous traditions, have generated urban bonds among subaltern populations;<sup>37</sup> how, despite being the object of surveillance and political co-option by state institutions, religious and economic actors, sports associations promoted practices and consumptions, mobilized people and enabled urban encounters and, in some cases, were even converted into sites of organized resistance; most important, how spectatorship and body practices, which are specific arenas of individual and collective struggles, become empirical grounds for the research of historical processes.<sup>38</sup> Much like these studies, research into football in Lourenço Marques fits into analyses of colonial processes focused on recovering the strategies of subordinate groups as agents of their own history and on interpreting how they transformed and tested the existing structures of domination,<sup>39</sup> even if their actions most of the time did not imply a project of organized and formal resistance.

#### FOOTBALL'S SPECIFICITY

The role played by football in the construction of the suburbs of Lourenço Marques was anchored in the game's features as a form of popular culture. A particular social process transformed the players' performances, the

basic cells of a sports activity, into shared knowledge.<sup>40</sup> Football knowledge (a player's name, the memory of a certain special play, the list of scores) was managed according to the interactional situations individuals found themselves in.<sup>41</sup> Through a singular process, a specific sporting capital was converted into social capital, given that the team, its victories and defeats, represented the individual in a variety of everyday situations. In the colonial city, leisure practices contributed to the development of these more or less widely spread "specific bodies of knowledge."<sup>42</sup> Individuals related to this knowledge according to their social position and trajectory and, in the case under analysis, along gender lines. Football in Lourenço Marques was mainly a performance by men, and for men's consumption. For young African men the game was not only an athletic performance but also a means to achieving a certain status within a local urban environment that defied previously established hierarchies.

One of the most salient features of the process of accumulation of this specific knowledge was the way in which the information produced by the game, regardless of its scale, was organized by means of a narrative texture disputed by those who appropriated and transformed it.<sup>43</sup> The recursive nature of football competitions ensures the temporal continuity of these "football narratives."<sup>44</sup> In Lourenço Marques, apart from informal neighborhood matches, which generated a grassroots knowledge, three institutionalized narratives with varying degrees of dissemination were prevalent, emerging out of three distinct competitions: the "European city" championship, the "African suburb" championship, and the metropolitan championship, covered by the local media. A dimension of "the presentation of self in everyday life,"<sup>45</sup> club affiliation was the structuring element of local football narratives, the position from which individuals manage their football knowledge in the course of their social interactions.<sup>46</sup> While allowing individuals to communicate and establish bonds, this specific knowledge became an "interaction repertoire."<sup>47</sup> During interactions individuals used their knowledge through rhetorical apparatuses—shared expressive techniques—creatively adjusting their dramaturgical agility to the social situations where they are involved: at school, at work, or in leisure relationships.<sup>48</sup> The rhetorical use of narrative enabled the development of personal interpretations on a range of facts that in turn may be shared, or not, with others: teams and players' histories, competition results, trophies.<sup>49</sup>

Sports identifications have become, in many instances, a means to express social struggles and frontiers, enhancing the strength of identities and occasionally generating radical breaks.<sup>50</sup> Integrated within social relations defined by the existence of what Max Gluckman has called "multiplex

ties,”<sup>51</sup> sports narratives are able to operate as elements that reinforce the practical and identitarian frontiers of human groups organized according to specific ethnic, religious, class, or spatial bonds (a shared regional past, a new life in the urban neighborhoods), strengthening the self-identification of the group in a context of interaction with groups of different backgrounds in an urban space, for instance. In Lourenço Marques, where the development of sociabilities was conditioned by a system of domination inscribed in the urban space and in the existing social stratification, the circulation of knowledge, the acquisition of techniques, habits, and schemas for the interpretation of the surrounding world was subject to a variety of social enclosures and favored the development of belongings and identities, bonds activated to respond to a host of practical everyday issues.

However, football knowledge, as an interaction repertoire, also facilitated the creation of bonds against the background of nondysfunctional conflicts. In these cases, the conflict, as noted by Coser, was a means of recognizing difference and agreeing upon a relational lowest common denominator.<sup>52</sup> Regardless of the capacity to cement previous identifications, sports narratives, woven into a growing popular culture, were able to assist in interactions between individuals that did not share any other filiation or even a social or spatial proximity other than that of belonging to a stratified urban community. This specific knowledge, then, helped the creation of what Mark Granovetter has termed “weak ties.”<sup>53</sup> In the context of intense urbanization, where people of different backgrounds found themselves interacting with each other, the creation of a common knowledge and common ways of acting was a key principle of coexistence. These weak bonds were fragile but nonetheless essential bridges that allowed for interknowledge among individuals of different backgrounds who were compelled, in this context, to interact.<sup>54</sup>

The way in which these football narratives are transformed into a relational resource, facilitating participation in everyday encounters, points us toward a wider interpretation that will be critical in the history of football in Lourenço Marques. The manipulation of information in interactional situations is the ground for the formulation of arguments, the justification of opinions, the participation in debates, emotional expression and sharing and the production of moral and aesthetic judgements.<sup>55</sup> Being in possession of football knowledge, which in the colonial city was far more democratized than other bodies of knowledge, individuals use it as a mechanism for personal and gregarious affirmation before others, which can either be part of their closest circles or socially more distant. The manipulations of football narratives, then, meets the need for differentiation that results

from the urban collective dynamics itself.<sup>56</sup> Thus a specific public space takes shape. This is critical because by means of the manipulation of a sports narrative, commentaries on other spheres of reality are being produced. These comments do not imply the manifestation of an opinion on a particular political, economic, moral or religious issue, although they may also function as a means to judge these matters. In a mediated and implicit manner, the production of aesthetic and ethical judgments on events within the sports practice itself offers a set of reference points that legitimate or invalidate forms of agency and worldviews and that manifest the strength of a reason molded by local practices.

### STYLES OF PLAY

The emergence of a local style of play was an element of the construction of this specific public space in Lourenço Marques. With Craveirinha's help, football's language could become the foundation for a historical inquiry. Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning note,

The observation of an ongoing game of football can be of considerable help as an introduction to the understanding of such terms [*social configuration* or *social process*] as interlocking plans and actions. Each team may have planned its strategy in accordance with the knowledge of their own and their opponents' skills and foibles. However, as the game proceeds, it often produces constellations which were not intended or foreseen by either side. In fact, the flowing pattern formed by players and ball in a football game can serve as a graphic illustration not only of the concept of "figurations" but also of that of "social process." The game-process is precisely that, a flowing figuration of human beings whose actions and experiences continuously interlock, a social process in miniature.<sup>57</sup>

The practice of football is defined by a set of elementary conditions that delimit the performance: the maneuvering of the ball and the relation established with a given space for a given period of time. The rules that organize the match, in turn, mediate the choreography of modern football. The universalization of modern sports formats, governed by preordained rules, was a fundamental element in what Elias calls "sportization process," the phenomenon of the regulation of pastimes.<sup>58</sup> These norms are not neutral: they convey a certain ethics. For instance, they establish a principle of universality: everyone is subject to the same law. Rules seek to curb situations deemed prejudicial to the game, such as the violent

incidents that are commonplace in physical performances involving constant interaction. The elaboration of a body of rules, originally delineated in 1863 in the context of sports competitions between English public schools and overseen since 1886 by the International Football Association Board (IFAB),<sup>59</sup> gave rise to an orthodox game model, the Football Association, distinct from a wide variety of popular versions based on unshared local conventions, which tended to disappear.<sup>60</sup>

Football rules subjected players to a code and thus constrained their individual action, and yet they did not determine the greater portion of gestures nor the general dynamics of the game. The dissemination of modern football through the world from the second half of the nineteenth century was not linear. The game established itself as a situated and historically embedded practice, producing gestures inscribed within constellations of local meanings. These performances, Elias and Dunning have argued, were small-scale historical laboratories. From a set of homologies, the examination of sports practices allows us to discern long-term shifts in and through the players' bodies. In turn, these allow, for instance, for an analysis of the dissemination of certain behaviors, of the individual embodiment of principles of practical action and worldviews, of the degree of tolerance toward violence and to relate this with the increased complexity of the social division of labor, growing social interdependencies, state centralization, and a greater degree of individual, externally conditioned self-restraint, as a means of curbing impulses.<sup>61</sup> Although in a singular manner many of the modern structural changes that Elias linked to the modernization process were part of the colonial social configuration in the twentieth century, namely in major urban centers like Lourenço Marques.

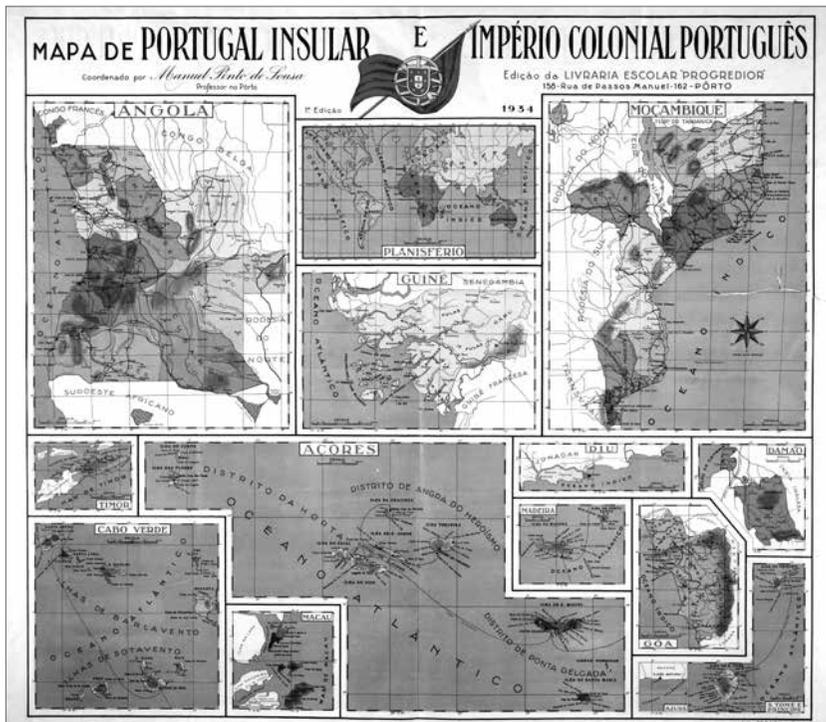
Football styles of play result from a particular relation between, on the one hand, the features of an evolving language—shaped by an ethics intrinsic to the official regulations and, progressively, by a specific tendency toward body rationalization, which molds individual and collective movements with a view to achieving greater efficiency<sup>62</sup>—and, on the other hand, structural and contextual historical trends. It is also the outcome of a series of struggles between diverse agents within a specific field of activity—players, coaches, the audiences, journalists, and other intermediaries—over the definition of what would be the most “appropriate” movement, the more spectacular performance, or the most efficient route to victory.<sup>63</sup>

In the contexts where modern football was more developed, the game's language became increasingly interpreted by professionals, because only a professional with a learned training routine and bodily grammar could

interpret the match with the necessary rigor and efficacy, as well as meet the demands intrinsic to the “representation” of the will of the fans, neighborhoods, cities, and countries. The command over football’s language was obtained by means of predetermination of the individual and collective movement carried out through the progressive development of tactical thinking. Within the frame of the modern tactical rationalization, the “pass,” for example, became the center of the game’s economy, which meant a subalternization of other gestures, such as the dribble, now subject to a more calculated use. The specialization of players’ roles and positions, in turn, attributes to each position on the pitch a particular task, whereby the proportion and types of movements depend on the performance of a specific function, which is also associated with certain physical and performative traits of the athletes (tall center backs, fast wingers, etc.).

Such rationalization of football’s language, which is always contested and adjustable within the universe of professional football, imposes a bodily *hexis* on the professional player, or a *motor habitus*, defined, after Bourdieu’s conceptualization, as a specific motor translation of trained bodily disposition during performative situations.<sup>64</sup> However, where the conditions for the constitution of a competitive body were fragile, as in the case of the Lourenço Marques’s suburbs, the specific struggles for the definition of a style of play gave rise to multiple and heterodox genres, performed by motor habitus less shaped by this hegemonic rationality. As an empirical site of historical research, the game could operate as a barometer for gauging the expansion of structural and procedural tendencies in the long term and be the observatory of the local moral aesthetics that mimicked, recreated, subverted, or resisted, and thus fostered “other footballs.”<sup>65</sup> The movements of Lourenço Marques suburban players, whose practical and symbolic reason was described by Craveirinha as malicious, were a specific example of how the game, when locally embedded, becomes defined by local economies of symbolic exchanges<sup>66</sup> that produce a singular, but contested, moral economy: this moral performance expresses contradictions and is a space of negotiations, challenges, and subversions that are ultimately translated into the language of the game.<sup>67</sup>

The football choreographies enacted by the players from the Lourenço Marques suburbs expressed a physical orientation that was also a social and ethical orientation put into action by a specific libido that underlay the movement.<sup>68</sup> Filtered by a formal language, this condition and these moralities also turned into a specific aesthetics. Individual and collective movements were the key signifying elements of that language and the embodied record of a specific historical process. Collective movements were



MAP 1.2. Metropolitan Portugal and the Portuguese colonial empire (used in classrooms), 1934. Manuel Pinto de Sousa, Porto: Livraria Escolar “Progredior.” *Source:* Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal.

not random. Expressing the existence of an order, an “interaction order,”<sup>69</sup> the game was shaped by specific conventions and norms that were locally meaningful and defined a performative arena: a “space of stylistic possibles.”<sup>70</sup> The cells of these interactions were the gestures and movements that defined the players’ “motor repertoire,” their bodily techniques, in the sense Marcel Mauss lent to this term.<sup>71</sup> The moral and practical meanings inscribed in these movements are the gateway for the study of Lourenço Marques’s singular suburban social contract under Portuguese rule.

### GENDERED PERSPECTIVES, METHODOLOGY, AND CHRONOLOGIES

The present research was based on archival work, both in Portugal and in Mozambique, on newspapers and magazines of the period and a set of interviews with some of the protagonists of the time, key elements to retrieve a sense of the dynamics of the game of football as it was practiced in the suburbs of Lourenço Marques. To the important descriptions of the

history of football in these parts and in this period, these accounts have added information that sheds light on some of the features of the sports performances. This book aims to look at a historical process through the lens of a particular activity and, more generally, through the experience of suburban inhabitants, so as to offer a perspective that is mostly absent from the archival documents and written sources.

This partial view of the historical process can certainly be found in the “colonial archive,” even if it often reveals lines of fracture within the Portuguese power structure. Out of these conflicts and the ramification of interests around the state and its institutions there emerged a variety of viewpoints on the city’s peripheral spaces and on their populations. However, from the “African side,” by which I refer to the press in particular, the suburbs were still represented all too narrowly. In the way they critically described Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique, newspapers such as *O africano* and *O brado africano* are indeed rare and precious historiographical sources. And yet, while their accounts do bring to the surface some of the dynamics of the historical processes in the capital of Mozambique, their analyses play down, and even exclude, other processes and points of view, namely of those that did not share the social status of this African elite, or their economic position, their religious beliefs, or their status vis-à-vis the state. One of the challenges of the present book was to avoid drawing a general portrait of the suburban experience through the gaze of these individuals, diverse and contradictory as it was. It could not fail to take into account their singular experience as an important historiographical source, but at the same time it also needed to avoid magnifying the information and interpretations they offer us.

The gathering of narratives on the local sports scene and on the itineraries of suburban football players was an attempt to remedy the near-absence of accounts of life on the edges of the city. Mostly provided by players with stable sports careers, these accounts do not faithfully represent the diversity of suburban experiences throughout the period under study. Be that as it may, their words help us identify dominant practices and norms that were expressed, first and foremost, by means of a specific style of football play. This style then functions as a laboratory that opens onto a wider field of analysis of the conditions in which the colonial periphery developed. In retrieving a sense of this suburban life it was also important to include the data produced by the colonial regime’s own institutions, namely the monograph of the colonial cadre António Rita-Ferreira (*Os africanos de Lourenço Marques*, 1968). When placed in the context of its production, which implies a critical distance from its intents

and conclusions, these data yield information that ensures a richer frame for understanding the urban situation in the capital of Mozambique.

The local society portrayed by the game of football was almost exclusively composed of men. While in many ways suburban men shared with suburban women a similar urban experience, framed by the unstable local social contract that we wish to survey, the game was primarily a dimension of the masculine experience, adaptation, and performance. As one would expect, football's local institutionalization reinforced gender discrimination, as sports clubs were structurally unequal. Recent work by Jeanne Marie Penvenne on female workers in cashew factories in Lourenço Marques between 1945 and 1975, published when this book was nearly completed, examines the gendered perspectives of the urbanization process.<sup>72</sup> Addressing the same spatial context, Penvenne lifts the veil from the dramatic living conditions of the population of the suburbs of Lourenço Marques and thus retrieves the working and urban experience of these female workers, by bringing them into the fold of historical narratives—of the proletariat, of migratory processes—from which they had been excluded; she reveals the singularity of their survival strategies and how adaptation to an urban environment was bound by prior conditions for which the city was a space of struggle and transformation.

Informal women's matches did take place in the suburbs of Lourenço Marques, but football, maybe alongside boxing, was the ultimate frontier in terms of gender discrimination in sports. Football clubs, both in the suburbs and in affluent, all-white cement city, did not have female teams, though there was an active women participation in other sports activities. In the suburbs the mestiço elites promoted gymnastics for women, as well as athletics and basketball teams, later on. Women's participation in sports was also influenced by the way in which gender discrimination translated into the Portuguese official sports' policies. In the metropole the creation of the Mocidade Portuguesa Feminina (Feminine Portuguese Youth), in 1937, institutionalized a sexual separation and a distinction between the types of exercises appropriate for each sex.<sup>73</sup> The same categorizations were present in school syllabuses. Both in gymnasiums and outdoors, classes for men and women were separated. Physical education should provide men with "opportunities to assert a virile personality in displays of disciplined energy, loyal competition and the sublimation of fighting instincts," and lead women "to a fertile family life,"<sup>74</sup> as women needed to be "protected from the great muscular and masculinizing efforts of athletics, a feminine aberration that went against this sex's sensitiveness and woman's natural role as a future mother and educator."<sup>75</sup> School syllabuses marked this

distinction between the woman, seen both as mother and educator, whose physical activities expressed control over the domestic realm, and the athletic man, ready to defend the nation. The development of sports beyond the sphere of the state in Lourenço Marques took place within the frame of such gendered official conceptions, which were deeply rooted in the Portuguese colonial system, namely in the *indigenato* system.<sup>76</sup>

The central argument of this book is that the game of football in Lourenço Marques, by absorbing the main traits of the local colonial society, became an embodied representation of a historical experience. The appropriation of a modern activity, as a performative practice but also as a medium of everyday relationships and a ground for the creation of social networks, offers a unique point of view on the formation of a system of colonial power with distinctive features, thus revealing, at the same time, the way in which individuals reproduced and transformed the system. This representation of local life runs counter to the culturalist and exotic visions of the periphery promoted by the regime's propaganda, but also counter to modernizing views that, by diagnosing the suburbs as an urban pathology, explained their misery through the self-exclusion of Africans.

The relation between football and colonialism in the capital of Mozambique, between the game's embodied language and the structures of colonial domination, became crystallized through a process of dissemination and institutionalization that I attempt to describe in chapters 2 and 3. Appropriated by a variety of urban populations, the game organized itself along the lines of, and indeed reproduced, existing social differences, namely those imposed by a colonialism of an increasingly racist nature. Once disseminated and accessible, football was the ground for specific performances but also for the creation of associative structures that shaped urban identities that the state tried to organize, control, and use to its own advantage—not always successfully. In the city's suburbs, where a particular social organization was imposed, the process of the game's appropriation by the local populations forged a unique performance, a local style of play that had its own moral economy, plainly linked to the urban and labor policies of the colonial state and the key role these policies played in the formation of a suburban *habitus*.<sup>77</sup>

In chapter 4, I attempt an archaeology of this style of play and outline its main features, paying particular attention to the way in which football became a medium for negotiating the grounds for the construction of an informal social contract that could organize, however precariously, the life of those that lived in the periphery of the city. The descriptions by José Craveirinha of this malicious game, as well as the accounts of former

suburban players, are the foundations for this archaeology of the local style of play. By retrieving the game's language, the chapter proposes an alternative narrative of the suburbs, its structures, practices, and convivial norms, one that brushes against those accounts that idealized it, culturalized it, or reduced it to a social pathology. This effort of narrating the suburban life continues in chapter 5, now on the basis of an interpretation of the links between the game of football and a series of local traditions that were being adjusted to the colonial city environment, such as witchcraft and faith healing. Healers and witch doctors, just like the best interpreters of the local style of play, were the performers of these informal rights, aspirations, and desires, and their heroic feats were narrated in stories that have survived to this day.

This changing world had multiple points of contact with the outside world. For the local style of play, regardless of its unique traits, the rules of modern football remained a reference point, and the local game was far from impermeable to other ways of playing. The game was likewise appropriated by local fans, who brought football into their everyday lives, as an identitarian trait and a means of relating to a wider universe, as the game had spread throughout the globe. News of its practice in the metropole, in Europe, and across the world reached the suburbs. Chapters 6 and 7 address this process of transformation and the way the suburban populations, while constrained by the colonial system, connected and related to the world. An aspect of the ongoing negotiation of the suburban social contract, this process manifested itself in different ways. Chapter 6 exposes how the players that abandoned the suburban style of play so as to pursue a professional career felt the effects of that change in their very bodies, in the form of a self-conditioning, a disenchantment, as if they had let go of who they were. However, it was precisely under the sway of the modern game and its constraints that some suburban players began their professional and social mobility trajectories, by means of which they became key figures in the game and an inspiration to the populations of the suburbs of Lourenço Marques. Modern football had created its own space of stylistic possibilities, based on a specific use of time and space, with singular symbolic exchanges that shared traits with other modern activities, namely those that implied a complex division of labor. By rewarding the merit and talent of African players, modern football placed itself at the service of a desire for justice, but it also disrupted the local style.

It was also in the course of this process that football became an idiom of social contact. Through football, one also expressed the desire for a different social contract. In this demand, the game served as a foundation

for the establishment of a particular public space, one structured by rules, rights, and opportunities. This universe opened up the possibility of belonging to worlds of signifying constellations and to spaces for the creation of commonalities, a practical and symbolic egalitarianism that offered instruments of public representation in a world where they were scarce. Chapter 7 aims to reveal how football played its part in the process of urbanization of suburban inhabitants on the basis of a singular phenomenology that converted knowledge into narratives embedded in an interactional everyday. Suburban fans' admiration for Portuguese clubs, where some of the most distinguished local African players displayed their talent, is testimony to this appropriation of the possibilities afforded by the modern game and its competitions.