

Postcolonial testimony and the ruins of empire

Robert Stock

Mozambican stories and the remains of empire

The acclaimed filmmaker Licínio de Azevedo has been based in Mozambique since the 1970s. Leaving Brazil under the military dictatorship, he travelled to post-revolutionary Portugal in 1976. From there, he moved on to Guinea-Bissau, trained journalists, and interviewed members of the PAIGC about their experiences in the fight for independence against Portuguese armed forces (Azevedo and Rodrigues, 1977). Later, Azevedo continued this type of journalistic work in Mozambique by publishing *Relatos do Povo Armado* (Reports of the Armed People, Azevedo, 1983), a book about Frelimo's struggle against the Portuguese colonial regime.¹ Besides his work as a journalist, Azevedo began working at the *Instituto de Comunicação Social* in Maputo at the end of the 1970s. There, he participated in experiments for the introduction of television and met Jean-Luc Godard and other filmmakers from Brazil and Europe pursuing projects at the *Instituto Nacional de Cinema* (INC, National Film Institute) (Andrade-Watkins, 1995; Fendler, 2014). During the 1980s, while mainly involved themselves in the production of educational films, he started to focus on his own works, which pushed the boundaries of documentary films by exploring the poetic potentials of moving images and music. By doing so, he situated his work somewhat outside the official discourse of Frelimo, which underlined its victory over the colonial regime and focused on the war against Renamo (Convents, 2011, p. 522). Around 1990, Azevedo, Pedro Pimenta, and others were involved in founding Ébano Multimédia. This and other private production companies were emerging as the civil war ended and official state television and film production were in crisis (Fendler, 2018). In this period, his films focused on the consequences of the protracted civil war

(Arenas, 2011, pp. 139–148; Convents, 2011, pp. 523–527). Azevedo's continuous interest in the country, its histories, and stories motivated him to make further films that crossed the boundary between fiction and documentary. For instance, *Virgin Margarida* (2012) and *The Train of Sugar and Salt* (2016) are two important works that address the challenges Mozambique and its people were confronted with during the post-revolutionary phase and the civil war (França, 2017). Other productions like *Ricardo Rangel. Ferro em brasa* (2006) concentrate on artists like the homonymous photographer or take a fresh look at the life of ordinary people on the Ilha de Moçambique, as in *A Ilha dos Espíritos* (2007).

This chapter will take a closer look at *Night Lodgers (Hóspedes da Noite, 2007)*, which revisits the ruin of the Grande Hotel in Beira, a former colonial luxury hotel now abandoned and long used as a provisional shelter by war refugees and displaced persons, among others. On the one hand, the film sheds light on the daily life of the current inhabitants portraying several more closely and constructing an image of a social microcosm with religious practices, self-administration, and economic order. On the other hand, the film uses the ruin to evoke a particular reflection about the colonial period and its end in the Portuguese Revolution in 1974 and Mozambique's independence in 1975. Fernando Arenas observes that '[t]he film entails the *mise-en-scène* of a visit by former employees who return to the hotel reminiscing on the opulence and excitement during the colonial era' (Arenas, 2011, p. 231). I will follow this thought on Azevedo's film and question how the former staff members are portrayed and thus produced cinematographically as historical witnesses, that is, as someone who tells his or her experiences in front of the camera to inform viewers of a certain vision of the past. Yet if these protagonists are 'reminiscing', we might question whether their stories potentially embody a certain colonial nostalgia, that is, a subjective experience characterized by (a supposedly uncritical) longing or yearning for a distant place or time (Atia and Davies, 2010, pp. 181–186; Boym, 2001, pp. xiii–xix; Wilson, 2005, pp. 21–37).

While a number of films about the Grande Hotel in Beira rather seem to explore nostalgic views of former settlers (Sarmiento and Linehan, 2018, p. 2),² *Night Lodgers* offers a different approach by centering on the accounts of two former employees. However, we must note that their nostalgic perspective blurs common views of colonial nostalgia as an attitude commonly attributed to former white settlers (cf. Bissell, 2005, p. 239; Lorcin, 2012, p. 9; Rosaldo, 1989). If former colonial subjects articulate nostalgia as a cultural practice, a dichotomous scheme of violent colonial rule and oppressed locals could be relativized. Such manifestations could be followed to investigate the complexities and ambivalences associated with processes of ruination and renovation in postcolonial contexts (Bissell, 2005; Gupta, 2018; Stoler, 2013).

Colonial nostalgia as it is articulated through *Night Lodgers* might be understood first and foremost as a fragile cue for the complex and heterogeneous field of memories related to the country's recent past, where histories of colonialism and civil war intersect. The question is how the film – maybe not explicitly but to a certain extent – complements or functions as a proposal to rethink Frelimo's official discourse and politics of history: The so called 'liberation script' (Borges Coelho, 2013; Israel 2013, p. 13) narrates the struggle for independence as a long process, where the independence movement closely fought with and for 'the people' against oppression, exploitation, racism and violence of the Portuguese colonial regime. Given a dichotomy of rulers, oppressed and liberation warriors in the official discourse, *Night Lodgers* possibly raises doubts regarding official versions of the history of colonialism in Mozambique and how these are related to the civil war and the actual residents living in the hotel.

Against this backdrop, this chapter examines how the ruin of the hotel is framed through cinematographic means and addressed as an emblematic site where a complex past of 'opulence and excitement' is confronted with marginalization or stories of loss and suffering. The moving images of the Grande Hotel are taken as an important example for how documentary productions

recently approach the 'physical imprints of colonialism' (Demissie, 2007, p. 157) or authoritarian regimes (Blaine, 2013, pp. 127–129; Rodríguez, 2013) and how architectural remains are increasingly becoming sites of coming to terms with the past (MacDonald, 2009, pp. 96–99). Of course, these debates reveal as much about the past as they consist of arguments about historical periods shaped by the present. In this respect, Gupta observes that the Grande Hotel belongs to the sites that 'serve as reminders of that colonial past but on the other hand they are actively re-positioned in a largely non-touristic postcolonial African 'reluctant' city of today' (2018, p. 3). The ruin in Beira thus prominently embodies a tension and confrontation of various temporal layers and histories. Consequently, Azevedo's production is here understood as a possibility 'to think with ruins' following Ann-Laura Stoler: 'To think with ruins of empire is to emphasize less the artifacts of empire as dead matter or remnants of a defunct regime than to attend to their reappropriations [...] within the politics of the present' (Stoler, 2013, p. 13). To explore the mentioned aspects in detail, the following sections will analyse how the film stages the witnesses' experiences and testimony as well as their reencounter with the hotel to evoke a specific vision of the colonial past.

Documentary testimony

Many factors contribute to the way testimony is framed cinematographically. There is a vast scholarly literature on video testimony and its significance for coming to terms with traumatic histories of genocide, violence and oppression that cannot be explored in full detail here (cf. Givoni, 2016, pp. 1–18; Schmidt, Krämer and Voges, 2011). While mainly concentrating on the holocaust (Felman, 2000; Hartman, 1996; Young, 1988) and related memory work after World War Two (Aufderheide, 2007, pp. 100–102) in-depth analyses also demonstrate the increasing importance and ambivalence of testimony in non-European contexts (Beverley, 2004; Boyer-Rossol, 2013; Dhada, 2015), art (Krämer and Schmidt, 2016) and cinematographic productions (Oppenheimer and

ten Brink, 2012; Killer Images; Sarkar and Walker, 2010). Though widely disseminated, testimony proves to be a rather contested concept through which ambivalences, fractures and marginalization regarding recollections of past or present wrongs may be problematized. Also, bear in mind that testimony is a 'shifting category' (Benzaquen, 2012, p. 43) subject to historically, socially, culturally, economically, and last but not least politically conditioned framings (Tamar and Pinchevski, 2009, pp. 133–137).

For this chapter, temporal distance and spatial proximity are most pertinent as the recollections in *Night Lodgers* are articulated by historical witnesses at that the site where the experiences occurred. As such, testimony can be understood as a '*performative act*, embedded in specific cultural ramifications, which establish certain scripts' (Assmann, 2007, p. 34, my translation).³ One might observe the performative character in closed or rather neutral spaces (Young, 1988). Yet in the case of *Night Lodgers*, the perceived interaction of testimony and an historical site is at stake. Theories on how site-specific or situated testimony is generated filmically and whether testimony may actually benefit from surrounding architectural structures disagree. Historians and cultural studies scholars discuss whether interviews at such sites positively influence the 'flow' of recollections (Bösch, 2008, pp. 60–61). Other researchers also question whether these historical settings may enhance the credibility of the people interviewed for documentary productions (Keilbach, 2010, pp. 140, 174). A third aspect concerns the rather stereotypical portraying of persons interviewed at a certain place as they are often reduced to specific features of their personalities (Nichols, 1983, p. 27). These parameters all pose challenges to filmic work concerned with testimony and historical sites. To further complicate this constellation, returning temporarily to such a place is a significant act that carries an affective dimension. In the post-Katrina context, Walker maps video testimony and documentary returns as an 'affective geography' (2010, p. 84) by focusing on films that centre around displaced persons as returnees to former sites of social and cultural belonging destroyed by the natural disaster. Such an affective dimension of

return is also of relevance in Traverso's analysis of post-dictatorial Chilean documentaries (2013). Following Walker, he argues that bringing testimony, historical sites and documentary film together results in 'intimate yet intangible relationship[s]' (Traverso, 2013, p. 53). The person's body, the testimony and the historical site where the recollections are delivered to the camera are brought into a dialogue which is complemented by the 'testimony's temporality, which fluctuates between the events as a past whose traces we can interpret from the physical features of the site, and the events' imagined present [...] (Traverso, 2013, p. 53).

Conceptualising testimony following Walker, Traverso, and others, is to problematize the temporary, affective and fragile character of documentary testimonial scenarios. This also entails acknowledging the instability of the meanings ascribed to certain historical sites (Assmann, 2011), in this case through the application of filmic practices. Perceiving places and producing spaces socially, culturally or visually are ongoing, limitless processes. Additionally, the reciprocal relation between the historical witnesses and spatial surroundings is framed and conditioned by the camera and recording technologies (Walker, 2010, pp. 86–87). Hence, the necessity to recognize the ephemeral character of documentary film and video testimony regarding the constitution of a certain understanding of the past in contrast to state monuments and official politics of history (Melber, 2009, p. 451; Onyebuchi Eze, 2013, pp. 681–682) which are manifest on central places in city centres and capitols.

Colonial postcards

Before analysing the filmic staging and performance of testimony, it is useful to turn to the history of the building itself and how it is presented by the film. It is located in Beira, which is one of the important urban centres in Mozambique, whose structure and architecture are strongly shaped

by the colonial regime (Freund, 2007, pp. 65–80; Jenkins, 2012, pp. 142–144). The Grande Hotel and its trajectory are described at the beginning of *Night Lodgers* with a mix of recent footage, archival images and text overlay. The text description contains rough information about when the hotel was built, its actual situation and the number of current inhabitants, which is about 3,500 persons.⁴ It draws a clear distinction between past and present. Colonialism is associated with luxury, the present with destruction, decay, and poverty.

The text is complemented by inserted images of the building. To illustrate the hotel's original appearance in the 1950s, three old postcards⁵ are shown. They demonstrate the hotel building and the swimming pool as a specific imperial leisure attraction (Peleggi, 2005; 2012, p. 135). Such images echo imperial discourses that stressed the economic development and growth of the colonies, their wealth and urbanization. They serve to underscore the hotel's historical significance as a showcase for the modernity, progress, and wealth of colonial Mozambique. In Portugal, such images of the colonies have not been forgotten. Since the 2000s, a number of books dedicated to the former colonies with postcards of colonial Luanda, Lourenço Marques (today Maputo) or Beira were published. Often, such postcards are related to arguments about a seemingly successful modernization of the Portuguese colonies in Africa that took place in the 1960s – eschewing the complex reasons for such representational strategies of the colonial regime (see Loureiro, 2005, illustrations on pages 193, 194, 207, 208).⁶

In *Night Lodgers*, the postcards help to establish an image of the colonial past that indicates some of the imperialist claims while underscoring a radical difference from the contemporary footage. The latter demonstrates the decay of the hotel by repeating the postcard views decades afterwards and thus underlines a before-after-logic. In this perspective, colonialism is associated with prosperity, wealth, modernization (just like back then) and is characterized by the absence of violence (Sarmiento and Linehan, 2018). In contrast, the present is dominated by deterioration and

poverty. It is a comparison that tends to reproduce a widely disseminated narrative about the hotel and its transformation from a site of luxury into a slum (Berger, 2009; Fallon and Tutton, 2011; Murphy, 2013; Rolletta, 2006; Schiller, 2012). This line of thinking is supported by the absence of many details which include that the building designed by the architects José Porto and Francisco Castro had to close in 1963 due to various reasons that led to a decline of guests, among them political instability in the region and the begin of the colonial war in 1961 (Mendes, 2012, p. 254; Sarmiento and Linehan, 2018). The ambivalent fact that the Grande Hotel was a symbol for the crisis and the end of empire hence remains unexplored.⁷

However, Azevedo does not content himself with a vision of postcolonial demise as other productions do.⁸ Rather, the film's introduction can be read as a demand to remind us of dichotomous schemes that have to be critically re-thought. Hence, the film's subsequent suggestion not to repeat a scenario of decay but to develop another imagination of the hotel that is built upon two aspects: First, *Night Lodgers* addresses the dimension of everyday life in the ruin and looks 'on the lives of those living *in* them (Stoler, 2013, p. 15). It accesses the building and thereby paints a different picture than sensationalist press reports about the miserable existence in the former luxury establishment. Second, rather than locating the architectonic remains in the past, the film sheds a different light on the colonial period not by presenting the yearning for the past of Portuguese returnees (*retornados*) but by engaging the testimonies of two former employees who return to the hotel. Consequently, the film is concerned with 'material and social microecologies' (Stoler, 2013, p. 15) of this specific site left to decomposition and ruination. A site which is not primarily 'inhabited by those displaced to make a political point, or requisitioned for a newly refurbished commodity-life for tourist consumption' but 'occupied by those left with nowhere else to turn' (Stoler, 2013, p. 13).

Suited testimony

When considering testimony as a performative act in *Night Lodgers*, it is valuable to go beyond an examination of the narrative articulated by the witnesses. This seems particularly promising as the protagonists' formal clothing suggests that the film not only draws on forms of situated testimony but also sketches a certain type of suited testimony, which affects and destabilizes established figures of experts and witnesses.

Both protagonists, who share their experiences and information about the past of the ruin in the film, are identified as 'ex-trabalhadores do Grande Hotel'.⁹ While the camera focuses on the front façade of the building in the opening scene, viewers are invited to observe how Senhor Caíto and Senhor Pires walk upstairs approaching the entrance and entering the building. In the next scene, the camera accompanies the men inside and picks up some fragmentary conversation as they walk along dim corridors. Through their talk, viewers know that they have not returned to the hotel building since it was closed many years ago.¹⁰ It also becomes clear, that Sr. Caíto lost his vision. For this reason, Sr. Pires guides him through the building (Figure 6.1). Aside from these short descriptions, there is no more information about the two protagonists.¹¹ In the film, Azevedo does not rely on video interviews or voice-over narration to provide more insights about the life and memories of the participating subjects (Nichols, 1991, pp. 50–56). In fact, through the absences of such standard filmic elements, their position as historical witness remains vague. Simultaneously, the avoidance of traditional documentary means gives way for another type of filmic observation. As in other productions by Azevedo, such a strategy is used 'to allow 'the other' (in this case, mostly poor rural Mozambicans) to speak with a minimal amount of directorial interference, [...] dialogues appear unrehearsed and scenes barely scripted' (Arenas, 2011, p. 139). The effect of this documentary framing is a flow of scenes that stress the spontaneous character of the protagonists'

reencounter with the ruin echoing to a certain extent the observational style of ethnographic film and its claim for non-intervention (Grimshaw and Ravetz, 2009, pp. 3–23).

Despite the claim for a non-scripted approach, the film's specific staging of the employee's return to the hotel cannot be overlooked. While roaming through the ruin, Sr. Caíto and Sr. Pires wear suits and ties. The clean, shiny fabric contrasts strongly with the blank walls, the empty windows and the poorly dressed inhabitants of the Grande Hotel. The protagonist's performance appears as a form of postcolonial mimicry, which dislocates and destabilizes the colonial discourse (Bhabha, 1984, pp. 125–126): The suits are not 'elaborate uniforms' (Sarmiento and Linhan, 2018, p. 11), which would 'mimic the costume of colonial servants' (Sarmiento, 2011, p. 43. See also Edensor and Kothan, 2004, pp. 192–194; Jennings, 2003, pp. 191–194; Peleggi, 2012, p. 127) and associate Pires and Caíto with their former roles as employee or bartender. The suits rather evoke an image of both men appearing as hotel guests or casino visitors. Furthermore, the clothing might be seen as a tactic to enable a distinction between the former employees and the current inhabitants of the hotel ruin in *Night Lodgers*. In this respect, the suits ascribe a certain authority to both protagonists and their role as historical witnesses that lends weight to their views of the colonial period.

As the clothing's effect on the protagonists and their performances remains ambivalent, this effort to position the former employees as historical witnesses proves questionable. In the context of documentary film, a (fe/male) person in a suit is normally associated with the figure of an expert or historian who eloquently explains current or past phenomena and elaborates on the complexity of certain problems. However, neither protagonist fulfils such expectations. Their talk is mostly fragmented and snippy, containing small anecdotes thus suggesting that walking through ruins, as Edensor puts it, 'highlights complex temporalities and thus draws attention to the limits of narrative' (2008, p. 136). This conversation among peers of an in-group, which offers little insight to the viewer, is explored in the next section. There, I will highlight how Azevedo's film can be

understood as a way 'to consider more carefully the physical structures, objects, and dispositions in which [...] histories [of the colonial past] are carried and conveyed' (Stoler, 2013, p. 5).

Staying at the bar

The portrayal of the protagonists and their clothing as a testimonial scenario raises many questions without providing definitive answers. By shifting the meaning of the expert's figure and presenting a witness (seemingly) unable or willing to articulate her/his views, experiences, and memories, *Night Lodgers* raises questions how subalternity and subaltern testimony might be cinematographically framed (Beverley, 2004; Sarkar and Walker, 2010). Azevedo's film explores this question through the observation of the suited protagonist in the ruins. It withholds a simple solution and does not unravel the life histories of the two men probably forgotten by (official) historiography. Yet, there are several noticeable moments in the film from which it is possible to gain insight about how postcolonial testimony is dislocated through its enactment by the former hotel employees.

As the camera continuously follows the protagonists roaming through the decaying building it thus temporally changes the setting in a meaningful way. Pires and Caíto pass through the different parts of the ruin, among them the former laundry and cold storage. The places that they encounter have lost their former shape, facilities, and furniture. The room's original function is mostly indistinguishable. They often have blank walls and are equipped with the personal belongings of the actual residents. It is a scene of 'disorder, disarray and the mingling of usually unlike categories of things' (Edensor, 2008, p. 134). Through the protagonist's sporadic and fragmentary comments, these rooms experience a momentary transformation. Walking, talking and camera work contribute to the production of a cinematographic space where different time layers and meanings interfere.

The provisional character of the resident's housing is mixed with imagined glimpses into a past that disappeared decades ago. The architectural remains appear as 'marginalized structures that continue to inform social modes of organization but that [...] [have ceased] to function in ways they once did' (Stoler, 2013, p. 22). Caíto's and Pires' trajectory serves to reencounter the former types of uses, which are then ephemerally inscribed in the ruin and its current use. Still, the taciturn historical witnesses remain mostly silent. They do not give further explanations about what they experienced or what they remember about these spaces exactly. This constellation resembles a 'spectral aspect' observed by Edensor (2008, p. 137), who states that 'we are haunted in industrial ruins by the signs of the past that project us back to things we half know or have heard about, recollections of a past we can hardly recognize [...]'

The recollections of the historical witnesses are often confronted by scenes of the hotel in its current sociocultural state. When Caíto and Pires mention the swimming pool, recent footage of the pool with its dirty water and filled with rubbish is shown. When the conversation mentions elevators, the camera captures empty lift shafts where Schindler elevators were once installed and shows inhabitants arguing that people should not throw waste in there. Note that this structure entails the problem of how to reproduce a rhetoric of postcolonial decay (cf. Rotberg, 2004, pp. 5–10). However, *Night Lodgers* goes beyond such an argument.

During the reticent tour of the former employees through the hotel ruin, there is one brief conversation that stands out. It occurs when Caíto and Pires reach the hotel bar. The camera observes them from a certain distance suggesting that the protagonists are left to themselves. The two begin a short dialogue about the bar and how it was to be there back then. One of them says:

Era bestial, tinha música e tudo. Vestiam-se bem as senhoras ... Os senhores ... tomavam Whisky. Eu era ... bilheteiro, vendia os bilhetes, e abria a porta, não entrava sem gravata.

(It was cool, there was music and everything. The ladies were well-dressed... The

gentlemen ... were drinking whisky. I worked ... at the ticket sales, sold the tickets, opened the door, did not enter without a tie.)¹²

The quote shows how several aspects concerning the everyday happenings in the bar back then are addressed: dress code, entertaining music and the respective offer of drinks. The former employees seemingly evaluate the atmosphere in the bar as 'bestial', which is a rather positive connoted and colloquial term in Portuguese. These recollections resonate with the history of the hotel, which after its opening 'became a focal point in the city and a fashionable destination for those travelling for business or pleasure. [...] [The] nightclub was particularly lively, with 'music, dancing, good food and all sorts of wines' [...]. Various music shows took place in the hotel, with either local musicians, or renowned artists from Lisbon booked on colonial tours' (Sarmiento and Linehan, 2018, p. 10). While the conversation occurs, the camera observes the bar with its blank walls and emptiness. An establishing shot and a panning camera stress abandonment and decay. It is hence an affective juxtaposition of testimonial performance and architecture that allows for a brief transformation of the setting. Film, ruin, and protagonists interact in a way that produces an emerging filmic memory space. An absent and distant past – filled with an imaginary of colonial leisure culture (Peleggi, 2012, p. 125) – is intermittently inscribed in the architectural remains through cinematographic means and anecdotal utterances. The nostalgic atmosphere surfacing in this scene might give 'sensory depth to our awareness of the other places, times and possibilities' (Atia and Davies, 2010, p. 184).

In the mentioned scene and generally speaking, the film does not seem to critically engage with the colonial past or its leftovers. Despite fragmented articulation, one is left with the impression that the protagonists did not dislike their professional activity. Whether out of habit, nostalgia or general good will, they do not voice negative words against the guests or managers of the Grande Hotel. No descriptions of unfair treatment or even violence are included.¹³ Moreover,

the absences in this scene somehow also suggest that Caíto and Pires perhaps were ‘good boys’ when they were employed in the hotel (Penvenne, 1995, p. 126). Recollections of seemingly good working conditions can be confirmed by Guthrie (2018), who emphasizes, that workers in Beira had relatively higher wages and better treatment than elsewhere in Mozambique (see also Guthrie, 2016). However, and in contrast to this quite moderate vision of the colonial past, the well-known writer Mia Couto noted of colonial Beira that:

Os brancos da Beira eram profundamente racistas. [...] na Beira havia quase *apartheid* em certas coisas. Não podiam entrar negros nos autocarros, só no banco de trás ... Enfim, era muito agressivo. No Carnaval os filhos dos brancos vinham com paus e correntes bater nos negros... (The whites in Beira were deeply racist. [...] in Beira there was nearly a regime of *Apartheid*. Blacks could not enter public buses, only on the back seats.... Well, it was very strict. During carnival, whites came with sticks and chains to beat black people...) (quoted in Chabal, 1994, p. 276)

Bearing in mind the social and racist order of late colonial Mozambique – and its architecture (Sarmiento and Linehan, 2018, p. 7) – how the protagonists’ relatively privileged position as staff members of the hotel influenced their recollections can only be speculated.¹⁴ It is questionable if we could evaluate their views as too uncritical or label them as ‘loyal colonized’ (Stoler and Strassler, 2000, p. 38). Additionally, it is not possible to know whether or how both of them would have reacted or explained their life differently when being asked outside the context of this film production. In this respect, the film offers little insight to colonial nostalgia as a ‘cultural practice that hinges on position and perspective’ and ‘as expressive and creative activity grounded in the dynamics of everyday life’ (Bissell, 2005, p. 239).

The unpolished character of the protagonists’ conversations seems to confirm ‘that stories about walking through ruins can only be speculative [...] and cannot readily be composed into

coherent temporal sequences' (Edensor, 2008, p. 137). It serves as a reminder for the complex structure of Mozambican memories related to colonialism, too. By effectively underscoring that there are no "colonial memories" per se', their words also challenge practices of oral history which were used to legitimate and idealize the official history of the 'national struggle for liberation' (Cahen, 1999; Fernandes, 2013). To a certain extent, their testimonial accounts recollect Stoler's and Strassler's analysis where the Indonesian women's and men's 'recollections of touch, taste and smell were not shaped into tidy plots, much less congealed as anti-Dutch resistance narratives. [...] these accounts refused the colonial as a discrete domain of social relations and politics, of experience and memory' (Stoler and Strassler, 2000, p. 38). Instead of explaining the protagonists' position or speaking 'for them' via voice over, *Night Lodgers* merely presents their walk through the building and some sporadic insights to their experiences. By acknowledging the absences and gaps in the protagonists' utterances, the film thus sidesteps reproducing seemingly indisputable colonial memories and a master narrative that would likely serve to support an (outdated) anticolonial discourse like Frelimo's 'liberation script'.

Recollections of colonialism in the light of the present

Reflecting on the route that Pires and Caíto take through the ruin of the Grande Hotel as well as the fragmentary reports about the colonial past serves as a reminder that 'ruins are not just found but *made*', as Stoler (2013, p. 20) affirms. Roaming through the hotel ruin and listening to the site-specific testimony articulated by the protagonists emphasizes the ephemeral virtue of memory. The experimental character of *Night Lodgers* including the piecemeal recollections of the colonial hotel resonates intensely with the hotel's spatial features emerging through cinematographic means. Architectonic and mnemonic remains intersect. Thus, the film incorporates 'intimate yet intangible relationship among several interacting elements' (Walker, 2010), including the

protagonist's bodies, their testimony, and the site of the hotel. Consequently, *Night Lodgers* proposes an affective geography with different temporal and spatial layers that is 'figured by the bodily movements, gestures, and utterances of those who are seen returning [and haunting] [...] the physical or material geography [...], which has been permanently transformed or irrefutably lost' (Traverso, 2013, p. 53).

Contrasting the way the colonial period is discussed and evoked by *Night Lodgers* with the official version of Mozambican history, the 'liberation script' reveals a number of ambivalences. First, the Grande Hotel is a place apart from central places in Maputo or Beira, where the founders and presidents of Frelimo are idealized and honoured on state holidays, like independence celebrations on June 25 when festivities for National Independence take place.¹⁵ As an emblematic ruin – a 'fusion of lost dreams and precarious livelihoods in one site' (Sarmiento and Linehan, 2018, p. 2) – the Grande Hotel may thus offer a different perspective on the Mozambican past and the role of Portuguese architectural heritage in this particular case. Its filmic production stresses the complex links between past and present and also works to relocate 'the present in the wider structures of vulnerability, damage, and refusal' (Stoler, 2013, p. 9). Second, the film does not centre on heroic figures of the 'national struggle for liberation' but on the experiences of ordinary people. By focusing on the perspective of the hotel personnel, not the architect or former hotel manager or other colonizing subjectivities, *Night Lodgers* decentres visual regimes of colonial cinema that 'were constructed almost in inverse proportion to the realities of colonial power in that they were dominated by the colonial bourgeoisie, as if the Mozambican public did not exist or was somehow temporarily absent' (Campbell and Power, 2010, p. 179). Yet it does not frame the former colonial subjects, as official versions of history tend, as passive victims that are oppressed, exploited, or abused (Cahen, 1993, p. 48).

While the violent character of colonialism and its architecture has to be acknowledged (Sarmiento and Linehan, 2018), the cinematographic framing of Caíto and Pires' statements offers clues to a complementary perspective on the imperial past. Without objectifying voice over, elaborate experts, or talkative historical witnesses, Azevedo's film is gesturing towards one of the many situations and social positions of colonial subjects and the experiences possibly related to an existence shaped by colonial regimes. By doing so, it also implicitly takes a critical stance against and destabilizes hence dichotomous schemes primarily denouncing colonial regimes for their social, economic, oppressive, and racist structures. In this sense, *Night Lodgers* is similar to other productions by this filmmaker. It does not primarily develop a political argument. Instead, the film's aim is to create an attentiveness to ordinary life and people in precarious situations. In Bamba's words, Azevedo's films are '[...] more socially than ideologically engaged; [it is] a cinema that examines the destiny of simple people and that explores the relationships between history, memory, African tradition, and the everyday difficulties of the peasant and urban populations' (Bamba, 2012, p. 182).

Several scenes support this non-ideological stance of *Night Lodgers*. Consider the three women talking and engaging in daily chatter in the former cold stores, now their shelter. Or the scene where two brothers are talking about how they got to the hotel during the civil war. Observations of instances that shed light on the self-organized administration stress that social order is not absent from this place. Rather, the film shows that there are daily routines and a certain rhythm of life at the Grande Hotel, notwithstanding missing infrastructures and material means. The impression created by these scenes is similar to Gupta's description who writes about a 'lively atmosphere despite the dire circumstances' (2013, p. 13).

By juxtaposing the everyday dimension of the hotel with fragmentary recollections of colonial times, the film creates an opportunity 'to refocus on the *connective tissue* that continues to bind

human potentials to degraded environments, and degraded personhoods to the material refuse of imperial projects – to the spaces re-defined [...], to the relations severed between people and people, and between people and things' (Stoler, 2013, pp. 7–8). If and for how long the relations between the imperial leftovers and people occupying them will continue at the Grande Hotel is not sure. However, Azevedo affirmed in 2009: 'If you take those people out of there, put them somewhere in the neighbourhood, other people are going to come and occupy it because the lack of housing here is very great [...] I see beauty there from the human point of view [...] Mozambicans are very resistant. They're an insistent, resistant people. So I think they're going to stay there until the end' (quoted in Berger, 2009). Until now, even in the wake of climate crisis and cyclones, enormous social inequalities and continuing political conflicts, thousands of people keep considering the ruin a sort of shelter and home (Soares, 2019) while others still mourn a glorious past in the light of the ruin and the ruined city of Beira (Carneiro, 2019). One is left to wonder, what the future still holds for this ruined postcolonial space and its actual inhabitants. Yet its sheer dimension seems to inhibit reconstruction work or renovation as one sees in other places, which are transformed into new sites of late-capitalist leisure cultures (Bissell, 2005, p. 232; Cruiming, Cuperus, and Mulder, 2014). Even if we can only speculate about or long for a better future of those who occupy the structure, the film gives us a valuable possibility to reflect about ruins and processes of ruination. It urges us, following Stoler, to 'turn to ruins [...] as history in a spirited voice, as sites that animate both despair and new possibilities, bids for entitlement, and unexpected collaborative political projects' (Stoler, 2013, p. 14).

Bibliography

- Anonymous. (2011). 'Governo decreta 2011 Ano Samora Machel', *O País*, 27 January.
<http://opais.sapo.mz/index.php/politica/63-politica/11996-governo-decreta-2011-ano-samora-machel.html>. Accessed 30 July 2019.
- Allina, Eric. (2012). *Slavery by Any Other Name. African Life under Company Rule in Colonial Mozambique* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press).
- Alloula, Malek. (1987). *The Colonial Harem* (Manchester: Manchester University Press).
- Andrade-Watkins, Claire (1995). 'Portuguese African Cinema. Historical and Contemporary Perspectives. 1969 to 1993', *Research in African Literatures* 26, pp. 134–150.
- Arenas, Fernando. (2011). *Lusophone Africa. Beyond Independence* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).
- Ashuri, Tamar, and Amit Pinchevski. (2009). 'Witnessing as a Field', in Paul Frosh and Amit Pinchevski (eds.). *Media Witnessing. Testimony in the Age of Mass Communication* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Assmann, Aleida. (2007). 'Vier Grundtypen von Zeugenschaft', in Michael Elm (ed.). *Zeugenschaft des Holocaust zwischen Trauma, Tradierung und Ermittlung* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus).
- . (2011). 'Places' in *Cultural Memory and Western Civilization. Functions, Media, Archives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Atia, Nadia, and Jeremy Davies. (2010). 'Nostalgia and the Shapes of History. Editorial', *Memory Studies* 3, pp. 181–186.

Aufderheide, Patricia. (2007). *Documentary Film: A very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Azevedo, Licínio de. (1983). *Azevedo, Licino. Relatos do povo armado* (Maputo: Cadernos Tempo).

Azevedo, Licínio de, and Maria da Paz Rodrigues. (1977). *Diário da libertação. A Guiné-Bissau da nova Africa* (São Paulo: Ed. Versus).

Bamba, Mahomed. (2012). 'In the Name of "Cinema Action" and Third World. The Intervention of Foreign Film-Makers in Mozambican Cinema in the 1970s and 1980s', *Journal of African Cinemas* 3, pp. 173–185.

Benzaquen, Stéphanie. (2012). 'Witnessing and Re-Enacting in Cambodia. Reflection on Shifting Testimonies', *AI & Society* 27, pp. 43–45.

Berger, Joshua Howat. (2009). 'Slum That Used to be One of Africa's most Opulent Hotels', *The Telegraph*, 23 October.

Beverley, John. (2004). *Testimonio. On the Politics of Truth* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).

Bhabha, Homi. (1984). 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse', *October*, 28, pp. 125–133.

Bissell, William Cunningham. (2005). 'Engaging Colonial Nostalgia', *Cultural Anthropology* 20, pp. 215–248.

Blaine, Patrick. (2013). 'Representing Absences in the Postdictatorial Documentary Cinema of Patricio Guzmán', *Latin American Perspectives* 40, pp. 114–130.

Borges Coelho, and João Paulo. (2013). 'Politics and contemporary history in Mozambique. A Set of Epistemological Notes', *Kronos* 39, pp. 20–31.

Bösch, Frank. (2008). 'Geschichte mit Gesicht. Zur Genese des Zeitzeugen in Holocaust-Dokumentationen seit den 1950er Jahren', in Thomas Fischer and Rainer Wirtz (eds.). *Alles authentisch?* (Konstanz: UVK).

Boyer-Rossol, Klara. (2013). 'Makua Life Histories. Testimonies on Slavery and the Slave Trade in Nineteenth-Century Madagascar', in Alice Bellagamba, Sandra E. Greene, and Martin A. Klein (eds.). *African Voices on Slavery and the Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Boym, Svetlana. (2001). *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books).

Brandstetter, Anna-Maria. (1997). 'Kolonialismus. Wider die vereinfachenden Dichotomien', in Jan-Georg Deutsch and Albert Wirz (eds.). *Geschichte in Afrika* (Berlin: Verlag das Arabische Buch).

Cahen, Michel. (1993). 'Check on Socialism in Mozambique: What Check? What socialism?', *Review of African Political Economy*, pp. 46–59.

---. (1999). 'The Mueda Case and Makonde Political Ethnicity. Some Notes on a Work in Progress', *Africana Studia*, pp. 29–46.

Campbell, David, and Marcus Power. (2010). 'The Scopic Regime of "Africa"', in Fraser MacDonald, Rachel Hughes, and Klaus Dodds (eds.). *Observant States. Geopolitics and Visual Culture* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris).

Carneiro, Yvete. (2019). 'A Beira transformou-se no seu Grande Hotel', *JN*, 21 March, <https://www.jn.pt/newsletter-editorial/interior/a-beira-transformou-se-no-seu-grande-hotel-10706552.html>. Accessed 30 July 2019.

Chabal, Patrick. (1994). 'Mia Couto', in *Vozes moçambicanas. Literatura e nacionalidade* (Lisboa: Vega).

Convents, Guido. (2011). *Os moçambicanos perante o cinema e o audiovisual. Uma história política-cultural do Moçambique colonial até à República de Moçambique (1896-2010)* (Maputo: CP - Conteúdos e Publicações).

Cruiming, Robert, Ype Cuperus, and André Mulder. (2014). 'Reciclagem do Grande Hotel. An Open Building Design Intervention for Socio-Economic Empowerment in Mozambique', in *W104 - Open Building Implementation. Architecture Otherwise: Resilience - Ecology - Values* (Durham: CIB), pp. 758–766.

Demissie, Fassil. (2007). 'Imperial Legacies and Postcolonial Predicaments. An Introduction', *African Identities* 5, pp. 155–165.

Dhada, Mustafah. (2015). *The 1972 Wiriyamu Massacre of Mozambique* (London and New York: Bloomsbury).

Dockanema. (2012). *Festival do Filme Documentário: Catálogo* (Maputo: Ébano Multimedia).

Domingos, Nuno. (2013). 'A desigualdade como legado da cidade colonial. Racismo e mão-de-obra em Lourenço Marques', in Nuno Domingos and Elsa Peralta (eds.). *Cidade e império. Dinâmicas coloniais e reconfigurações pós-coloniais* (Lisboa: Edições 70).

Edensor, Timothy J. (2008). 'Walking through Ruins', in Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst (eds.). *Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot* (London: Ashgate).

Edensor, Tim, and Uma Kothan. (2004). 'Sweetening Colonialism. A Mauritian Themed Resort', in D. Medina Lasansky and Brian McLaren (eds.). *Architecture and Tourism. Perception, Performance and Place* (Oxford and New York: Berg).

Fallon, Amy, and Mark Tutton. (2011). 'Former luxury hotel home to thousands of squatters', *CNN*, 7 February.

Felman, Shoshana. (2000). 'In an Era of Testimony: Claude Lanzmann's Shoah', *Yale French Studies* 50, pp. 103–150.

Fendler, Ute. (2014). 'Cinema in Mozambique: New Tendencies in a Complex Mediascape', *Critical Interventions* 8, pp. 246–260.

—. (2018). Narrating Mozambique: Recent feature films', *Third Text Africa*, 5. http://asai.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/TTA_MOZ_VOL-5-18_Narrating-Mozambique.pdf.

Fernandes, Carlos. (2013). 'History Writing and State Legitimation in Postcolonial Mozambique. The Case of the History Workshop, Centre for African Studies, 1980–1986', *Kronos* 39, pp. 131–157.

França, Alex Santana. 2017. 'As contradições do projeto da nação moçambicana pós-independência em Virgem Margarida (2012), de Licínio Azevedo', *Rebeca. Revista brasileira de estudos de cinema e audiovisual*, 6. <https://doi.org/10.22475/rebeca.v6n2.381>.

Freund, Bill. (2007). *The African City. A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Givoni, Michal. (2016). *The Care of the Witness. A Contemporary History of Testimony in Crises* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Grimshaw, Anna, and Amanda Ravetz. (2009). *Observational Cinema: Anthropology, Film, and the Exploration of Social Life* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).

Gupta, Pamila. (2018). 'Ruminations on Renovation in Beira (Mozambique)', in *Working Papers of the Priority Programme 1448 of the German Research Foundation Adaptation and Creativity in Africa: technologies and significations in the making of order and disorder* (Halle) <https://lost->

research-group.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/WP25_Pamila-Gupta_Ruminations-on-Renovation.pdf. Accessed 30 July 2019.

Guthrie, Zachary Kagan. (2016). 'Forced Volunteers: The Complexities of Coercion in Central Mozambique, 1942-1961', *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 49, pp. 195–212.

—. (2018). *Bound for Work. Labor, Mobility, and Colonial Rule in Central Mozambique, 1940-1965* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press).

Hartman, Geoffrey H. (1996): Holocaust testimony , art, and trauma. *The longest shadow. In the aftermath of the Holocaust*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 151-72

Igreja, Victor. (2010). 'Frelimo's Political Ruling through Violence and Memory in Postcolonial Mozambique', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 36, pp. 781–799.

Israel, Paolo. (2013). 'A Loosening Grip. The Liberation Script in Mozambican History', *Kronos* 39, pp. 10–19.

Jenkins, Paul. (2012). 'Maputo and Luanda', in Simon Bekker and Göran Therborn (eds.). *Capital Cities in Africa. Power and Powerlessness* (Cape Town: HSRC Press).

Jennings, Eric T. (2003). 'From Indochine to Indochic. The Lang Bian/Dalat Palace Hotel and French Colonial Leisure, Power and Culture', *Modern Asian Studies* 37, pp. 159–194.

Kalisky, Aurélia. (2017) 'Die Szenographie der Zeugenschaft zwischen systematischer und kulturgeschichtlicher Perspektive', in Matthias Däumer, Aurélia Kalisky, and Heike Schlie (eds.).

Über Zeugen. Szenarien von Zeugenschaft und ihre Akteure (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink).

Keilbach, Judith. (2010). *Geschichtsbilder und Zeitzeugen. Zur Darstellung des Nationalsozialismus im bundesdeutschen Fernsehen* (Münster: Lit).

Krämer, Sybille, and Sibylle Schmidt. (2016). *Zeugen in der Kunst* (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink).

Lança, Marta. (2010). 'We, the Ones from the Grande Hotel da Beira', *BUALA*, 14 October.
<http://www.buala.org/en/city/we-the-ones-from-the-grande-hotel-da-beira>. Accessed 30 July 2019.

Lorcin, Patricia M. E. (2012). *Historicizing Colonial Nostalgia. European Women's Narratives of Algeria and Kenya 1900 – Present* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).

Loureiro, João M. (2004). *Memórias de Lourenço Marques: uma visão do passado da cidade de Maputo* (Lisboa: Maisimagem).

—. (2005). *Memórias da Beira* (Lisboa: Maisimagem).

—. (2007). *Memórias de Moçambique* (Lisboa: Maisimagem).

MacDonald, Sharon. (2009). 'Unsettling Memories. Intervention and Controversy over Difficult Public Heritage', in Marta Anico and Elsa Peralta (eds.). *Heritage and Identity. Engagement and Demission in the Contemporary World* (London: Routledge).

Melber, Henning. (2009). 'Southern African Liberation Movements as Governments and the Limits to Liberation', *Review of African Political Economy* 36, pp. 451–459.

Mendes, Rui Paes. (2012). 'O modernismo e suas abordagens em Moçambique e Angola', *urbe. Revista Brasileira de Gestão Urbana* 4, pp. 245–257.

Murphy, Annie. (2013). 'In Mozambique, a Glorious Inn Becomes a Slum', *The Atlantic*, 29 January. <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/01/in-mozambique-a-glorious-inn-becomes-a-slum/272533/>. Accessed 30 July 2019.

Nichols, Bill. (1983). 'The Voice of Documentary', *Film Quarterly* 36, pp. 17–30.

—. (1991). 'Documentary Modes of Representation', in *Representing Reality. Issues and Concepts in Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).

Onyebuchi Eze, Michael. (2013). 'Pan-Africanism and the Politics of History', *History Compass* 11, pp. 675–686.

Oppenheimer, Joshua, and Joram ten Brink (eds.). (2012). *Killer Images. Documentary Film, Memory and the Performance of Violence* (London: Wallflower Press).

Peleggi, Maurizio. (2005). 'Consuming Colonial Nostalgia: The Monumentalisation of Historic Hotels in Urban South-East Asia', *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* 46, pp. 255–265.

—. (2012). 'The Social and Material Life of Colonial Hotels. Comfort Zones as Contact Zones in British Colombo and Singapore, ca. 1870-1930', *Journal of Social History* 46, pp. 124–153.

Penvenne, Jeanne Marie. (1995). *African Workers and Colonial Racism. Mozambican Strategies and Struggles in Lourenço Marques, 1877 – 1962* (Portsmouth: Heinemann).

Pereira, Ana Cristina, and Rosa Cabecinhas. (2016). "'Um país sem imagem é um país sem memória..." – Entrevista com Licínio Azevedo', *Estudos ibero-americanos* 42, pp. 1026–1047.

Rodríguez, Juan Carlos (2013): Framing ruins. Patricio Guzmán's postdictatorial documentaries. *Latin American Perspectives* 40.1: 131-44.

Rolletta, Paola. (2006). 'O delírio de um Grande Hotel', *Savana*, 22 September.

Rosaldo, Renato. (1989). 'Imperialist Nostalgia', *Representations* 26, pp. 107–122.

Rotberg, Robert I (ed.). (2004). *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

Sarkar, Bhaskar, and Janet Walker. (2010). 'Introduction. Moving Testimonies', in Bhaskar Sarkar and Janet Walker (eds.). *Documentary Testimonies. Global Archives of Suffering* (New York: Routledge).

Sarmiento, João. (2011). Fortifications, Post-Colonialism and Power. *Ruins and Imperial Legacies* (Farnham: Ashgate).

Sarmiento, João, and Denis Linehan. (2018). 'The Colonial Hotel: Spacing Violence at the Grande Hotel, Beira, Mozambique', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775818800719>.

Schefer, Raquel. (2013). 'Fictions of the Liberation Struggle. Ruy Guerra, José Cardoso, Zdravko Velimirovic', *Kronos* 39, pp. 298–315.

Schiller, Jacon. (2012). 'Colonial Luxury Hotel Now Colonized by Migrant Squatters', *Wired*, 17 August.

Schmidt, Sibylle, Sybille Krämer, and Ramon Voges (eds.). (2011). *Politik der Zeugenschaft: Zur Kritik einer Wissenspraxis* (Bielefeld: transcript).

Soares, Christina. (2019). 'Ciclone Idai: Grande Hotel continua de pé', *rfi Português*, 8 April.

Stoler, Ann Laura. (2013). 'Introduction. "The Rot Remains": From Ruins to Ruination', in Ann Laura Stoler (ed.). *Imperial Debris. On Ruins and Ruination* (Durham: Duke University Press), pp. 1–38.

Stoler, Ann Laura, and Karen Strassler. (2000). 'Castings for the Colonial. Memory Work in "New Order" Java', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42, pp. 4–48.

Traverso, Antonio. (2013). 'Nostalgia, Memory, and Politics in Chilean Documentaries of Return', in Patricia Swier and Julia Riordan-Goncalves (eds.). *Dictatorships in the Hispanic World. Transatlantic and Transnational Perspectives* (Lanham: Fairleigh Dickinson).

Walker, Janet. (2010). 'Rights and Return. Perils and Fantasies of Situated Testimony after Katrina', in Bhaskar Sarkar and Janet Walker (eds.). *Documentary Testimonies. Global Archives of Suffering* (New York: Routledge), pp. 83–114.

Wilson, Janelle L. (2005). *Nostalgia. Sanctuary of Meaning* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press).

Young, James Edward. (1988). 'Holocaust Video and Cinemagraphic Testimony', in *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust Narrative and the Consequences of Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), pp. 157–171.

Filmography

Azevedo, Licínio de (dir.). (2006). *Ricardo Rangel* – (2006). *Ferro em Brasa*. Dir. Licínio de Azevedo (Mozambique; Portugal: Ébano Multimédia; LX Filmes). DVD. (2006). (Ébano Multimédia; LX Filmes).

Azevedo, Licínio de (dir.). (2007). *Night Lodgers [Hóspedes da Noite]*. (2007). Dir. Licínio de Azevedo (Mozambique; Portugal: Ébano Multimédia; LX Filmes). DVD. (2007). (Mozambique: Ébano Multimédia).

Azevedo, Licínio de (dir.). (2012). *Virgem Margarida* (2012). Dir. Licínio de Azevedo. (Mozambique: Ébano Multimédia, Ukbar Filmes, JBA Productions). DVD. (2014). (Schweiz: trigon-film).

Azevedo, Licínio (dir.). (2016). *Comboio de Sal e Açúcar*. . (2016). Dir. Licínio de Azevedo (Mozambique: Ukbar Filmes, Ébano Multimédia).

Cardoso, Margarida (dir.). (2011). *Licínio de Azevedo*. (2011), *Crónicas de Moçambique*. Dir. Margarida Cardoso (Portugal, France: LX Filmes, INA).

Saint-Maurice, Anabela (dir.). (2007). *Grande Hotel*. (2007). Dir. Anabela Saint-Maurice (Portugal: RTP).

Stoops, Lotte (dir.). (2011). *Grande Hotel*. (2011). Dir. Lotte Stoops (Netherlands; Belgium: Serendipity Films).

Velimirovic, Zdravko (dir.). (1985). *O Tempo dos Leopardos* (Yugoslavia, Mozambique: INC).

Notes

1 The book *Relatos do Povo Armado* was later used for the script of the film *O TEMPO DOS LEOPARDOS* (1985) dir. Zdravko Velimirovic. Yugoslavia, Mozambique: INC. See Convents, 2011, p. 521; Schefer, 2013, pp. 312–313; Fendler, 2018.

2 Other films about the Grande Hotel are: *Grande Hotel* (2007; dir. Anabela Saint-Maurice. Portugal: RTP) und *Grande Hotel* (2011; dir. Lotte Stoops. Netherlands; Belgium: Serendipity Films). Dockanema, 2012, pp. 93–97.

3 For a critique of Assmann's approach to different models of testimony see Kalisky, 2017, pp. 40–41.

4 *Night Lodgers*, 00.01.16–00.02.26.

5 There is a vast literature on colonial postcards that critically assesses their visions of the Other or analyses them as an industrially produced commodity that circulated in the colonies and the metropolis. For a classic account see Alloula, 1987.

6 For a critical view on urbanization in late colonial Mozambique see Domingos, 2013, pp. 64, 101, 108.

7 There is also no mention of the workers that contributed to build the hotel or its maintenance and service when it was opened.

8 According to Lança, for '[...] almost all the documentaries, pictures and news stories focusing on the former colonies' city patrimony, it is [...] enough to observe the luxury of before and the litter of now' (Lança, 2010).

9 *Night Lodgers*, 00.04.16–00.04.30.

10 *Night Lodgers*, 00.02.23–00.02.53.

11 In colonial times, locals were generally allowed to work in service and cleaning in hotels, restaurants, shops or in private homes as domestic servants, but not in management (Penvenne, 1995, pp. 55–56, 126).

12 *Night Lodgers*, 00.21.42–00.22.27.

13 Note that compulsory labor was common in late colonial Mozambique. See Allina, 2012.

14 Both protagonists remember speaking English with hotel guests. But relatively few employees in the colonial tourism area had such language skills (Penvenne, 1995, pp. 54–56, 60).

15 This was particularly the case in 2010 and 2011 during the 'Ano Samora Machel' that honoured the first Mozambican President Samora Machel. Several statues of Machel were inaugurated in that year (Anonymous, 2011).