

# **CHIBALO and the working class: Lourenço Marques 1870-1962**

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During the colonial period, forced labour or chibalo was extensively used throughout Mozambique, including the southern provinces. Mozambicans were rounded up and marched off to work by the police and the native affairs bureaucracy. The capital city, Lourenço Marques, was largely built by chibalo labour. This article, which is derived from a longer study still in progress, on the making of the African working class in the capital, describes how chibalo was the response of Portuguese colonial capitalism to stronger capitals, against which it could not compete, and how changing economic conditions in the colonial period resulted in changing forms of chibalo use by the city; and how these forms in turn affected the structure of the urban working class.

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The early history of the African working class of the capital city of Lourenço Marques is deeply embedded in the peculiar forms of labour exploitation imposed by the Portuguese colonial system. The leasing of Mozambican labour to the South African mining industry, and to other sectors of that economy, is well-known and has been extensively described. The result of this system of labour export was that by far the greater part of the Mozambican wage labour force was employed

outside that colony. thus in 1912, when there were over 91,000 Mozambicans working on WENELA contracts, only 5,926 Africans were recorded as employed in Lourenço Marques, and that city was, of course, far and away the major employment centre in Southern Mozambique.

The state-controlled system of labour sale to the South African mines brought extensive revenue to the colonial state. The colonial government was paid in foreign exchange on a per capita basis for every miner contracted; and transit traffic for the Lourenço Marques railway and harbour, which was negotiated as part of the labour brokerage system, accounted directly for an important proportion of colonial revenue. But at one and the same time, the export of labour from the colony reflected, and compounded, the weakness of capital, especially of Portuguese capitalism, inside Mozambique. Neither state nor private capital were able to offer wages competitive with those paid on the Rand mines. In turn this inability to compete for labour handicapped state and private efforts to develop plantation agriculture, transport works, the service sector and private enterprise in the south.

Until the 1950s when the pattern changed, most capital invested in Lourenço Marques was irregular state funding plowed into the port and rail network which maintained the transit-trade relationship with South Africa. Portugal at home and in her colonies was plagued by an absence of private risk capital.

Of all private risk capital invested in Lourenço Marques by 1894, for example, only 27 percent was Portuguese. In fact, most basic infrastructural facilities of the city were initially undertaken on a concession basis by foreign capital, since Portuguese state and private capital were lacking. The city's electrical system, trolley system, and first modern wharf complex were all undertaken by foreign concessions, many with direct links to mining syndicates in South Africa.

### **CAPITALISM ON THE CHEAP**

Capital was able to operate only with substantial assistance from the state. Portuguese capital in the service sector and the construction industry, for instance, relied on government contracts, and depended on state protection. Above all, both state and private sector needed secure supplies of la-

bour at minimum wage levels. This labour was secured through the operation of chibalo. Two systems of labour supply thus operated side by side. On the one hand there was the international leasing out of labour, formalised in the agreements concluded with South Africa and processed by the recruiting operations of WENELA; and on the other hand, and side by side, there was the national system of labour conscription, or chibalo. In 1903, thus, the Department of Native Affairs and Emigration was created to oversee both systems. Much of the Department's early activity was devoted to breaking up private recruitment networks in order to monopolise the profits accruing from labour recruitment so as to pay the costs of curbing desertion. It was this Department which was responsible for registering all labour, and for developing a native affairs police force to control it.

The chibalo system operated on a much smaller scale than the international leasing system, but it was integral to the overall design to attract, introduce and support capital investment — preferably Portuguese — which would in turn support the state bureaucracy and ensure continued Portuguese sovereignty in Mozambique. Though smaller in scope and capacity, the colonial state's use of chibalo labour had very similar purposes to the system of contract labour used by the mining industry. Chibalo labour in the urban context served to hold wages down, to block the efforts of workers to organise, and it channelled labour away from the better-paid jobs to the lower-paid ones, and to those jobs which workers would have resisted had they had the choice.

Chibalo labour was used over a long period of time in the growth of the city, but both the methods of labour supply, and the use of chibalo within the employment structure of the city changed over time, as the colonial urban economy went through different phases.

### **PILLAGING THE PEASANTRY: 1877-1929**

The earliest period, from 1877 onwards, saw the first sustained efforts of the colonial state to establish their control over Mozambique's labour resources for the city.

The government sought cheap labour and cheap skills; the Mozambican peasantry was to provide the cheap labour, and the African and Indian population of Lourenço Marques

the cheap skills. This was a period of severe political irresolution, and there was such a rapid turnover in administrative personnel that gross corruption within the bureaucracy and abuses by private enterprise went largely unchecked.

In the urban area bureaucratic abuses were outstanding. Chibalo labourers recruited by force from the rural peasantry were distributed to functionaries or private parties through patronage networks as though the chibalo workers were the personal property of the patron. Wages went unpaid; workers who had completed a contract were not allowed to return home; workers who had been told there was no work when they volunteered at the port in the morning were rounded up at noon as vagrants and put to work as chibalos on the roads. Peri-urban taverns run by Portuguese, Greek and Chinese merchants selling cheap wine to Africans generated an abundant supply of drunken Africans who were duly sobered up with a term of prison labour.

From the time of the earliest efforts to mobilize large numbers of Africans for port and rail construction in 1889, desertions to South Africa raised the cost of wage labour in Lourenço Marques. These costs, however, were due to high supply costs rather than high wages. For example, in 1889, of the 250 chibalos recruited in Inhambane by private recruiters for the Department of Public Works (DPW), and the private railway contractor, 180 deserted within three weeks. Recruiters received 11\$700 reis for each recruit contracted, while wages amounted to only \$225 reis per day per worker. The desertion therefore added costs equivalent to 9,360 days wages. Recruitment costs contributed to the tendency to hold wages down, which in turn discouraged volunteer labour, and reinforced the reliance on chibalo supplies.

Chibalo, in fact, drove out volunteer labour even where relatively attractive wages prevailed. In 1882, a Lourenço Marques editorial complained that volunteer labour had been sufficient in town until the government ordered that any drunken African should be seized for one to two months of forced labour, at which point in time volunteer supplies dried up. Volunteers, the editorial charges, had turned from the arbitrary abuse of the Lourenço Marques labour market to the mines; this complaint was echoed chronically in the press of Lourenço Marques right up to the mid-1950s when changing patterns of capital investment in southern Mozambique en-

couraged changes in labour relations.

The Native Affairs Department made its first attempt to control labour supplies to the city with the registration law of 1904, but the move was premature. Lourenço Marques was a city with diverse sectors competing for labour. Private commerce, construction, the state transport industry and private domestic employers — all had different needs in terms of skill, numbers, tenure and reliability of employees. The government might legislate \$500 reis per day as the maximum wage for an African and six months as the minimum contract, but in 1904 it did not have the power to prevent private forwarding companies from paying twice the maximum wage to get sufficient labour to turn over a ship, nor was the police force and registration system sufficiently developed to curb desertion or enforce penal sanctions for breach of contract.

During the early period labour conditions were, naturally, the worst. There were few attempts to provide sanitary housing or medical care. Accident insurance was unknown for black labour and barely implemented for white labour. The abuses of government were as serious as those of private employers. Indeed, a Portuguese physician reporting on the outbreak of plague in Lourenço Marques in 1908 reserved his harshest criticism for the government itself and in particular the pigsty in which it housed the public works *chibalo* labour.

The round-up of peasants for forced labour and for World War I military service escalated legal and also clandestine emigration to South Africa. This emigration, in combination with the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918, the devastating effects on the health of Africans of the alcohol trade together with the harsh and excessive use of *chibalo* labour, resulted in the actual depopulation of large areas of southern Mozambique. Thus between 1908 and 1923 the population of Inhambane district declined from 415,348 to 198,055. Even allowing for the vagaries of colonial statistics, there is substantial supporting evidence that the labour force during this period was indeed being depleted.

Where it could, labour elected not to work for Portuguese enterprises in the city. By contrast, British-capitalised firms in Lourenço Marques were generally well supplied with labour, informants recalled, because when there was a job to be done the British firms would put out the word that work was avail-

able, at a certain wage for a certain job, and labourers could sign up. When Portuguese firms needed labour, they used their influence to arrange a **rusga** — a round-up — the day before, and all Africans whose employers did not come to the police station to pick them up would be considered vagrants, and as such, volunteers for the job.

The chibalo system was thus differentially used by different city enterprises, with the lower-capitalised Portuguese firms tending to rely on forced labour round-ups. But in general chibalo functioned to hold down all wages and to keep fringe benefits to a minimum for all workers, regardless of employer, by weakening the bargaining position of workers. During key periods the state replaced volunteer labour already in employment with chibalo contingents in order to bring down wages.

For example in 1910, twelve hundred chibalo labourers were brought in from Inhambane to the Lourenço Marques port complex with the stated intention of bringing down the cost of casual port labour, a tactic which was employed again in 1919.

The tactic of replacing more expensive volunteer labour directly with cheaper chibalo labour played a key role in periods of falling real wages, such as the period from World War I to 1921. Former port workers who refused to volunteer for the devalued wages were rounded up and distributed to various sections of the port, including private forwarding companies. Labour costs were further decreased by employing women in the timber yards at half the wage men earned, and up to 1914 or 1915, by employing children in the coaling yards at women's wages.

### **STRATEGIES AGAINST CHIBALO**

In the capital city, the local African population, migrants, and chibalo workers all struggled, in the face of strong police and military coercion, to protect their interests. Many strategies emerged, but the case of the Mchope sanitation workers is an example of accommodation to the system which is perhaps exceptional, at least in southern Mozambique. My research is still incomplete, but it seems from city archives, oral collections and published ethnographic material that in the early years of city sanitation work the Mchopes were the one

group who neither died nor deserted while working chibalo sanitation brigades. Mchopes then became the preferred chibalo for sanitation, and as a group they were able to shape the situation to their advantage to a certain extent.

Beginning in 1908 city sanitation was undertaken on a contract basis by a Portuguese firm which handled numerous state activities and received large supplies of chibalo labour in the process. The firm could, however, be fined if sanitation work was carelessly or improperly handled, and indeed sanitation contractors were heavily fined during the first few years for sloppy work. Mchope workers soon realized that they could create a costly mess for the contractor.

The sanitation workers devised a task-oriented system, working quickly in order to have longer leisure hours. During their leisure time they took on odd jobs as gardeners, made baskets and handcrafts for sale, and by the 1930s and 1940s, were reworking trash from wealthier residential and industrial areas into marketable products. Officials winked at the workers' technically illegal self-organised subsidy to sanitation wages. Some Mchopes also worked out a system of tips, taking particular care with the slop buckets and trash cans of homeowners who showed proper appreciation and managing to overturn the buckets of uncooperative patrons. The single exception to force as the base for chibalo recruitment was Mchope sanitation work, where workers volunteered and many returned year after year on contract.

Others devised ways not of manipulating chibalo, but of evading it. The most common strategy of escape was emigration to the labour markets of South Africa, where wages were higher. Some new entrants to Lourenço Marques devised an alternate strategy: this was to work out a deal, usually with an Indian shopkeeper or a working-class Portuguese family, to be registered, in exchange for a small fee, as their house or shop servant. It was a bogus registration but it provided the cover for remaining in the urban area and evading chibalo for vagrancy while the new entrant scratched a living from so-called clandestine activities. These ranged from marketing beverages brewed from cashew nuts or other local products, to unlicensed trading of various sorts. The city's licensing system barred petty trade and service activity which might compete with white trading enterprises, but some Africans managed to get by the system and to sustain unlicensed trad-

ing. They thus managed to manipulate the requirements of chibalo registration to escape from the category of manual labour.

There were some occupations outside manual labour that were legal and provided an independent living. Laundry work was one of these. By the turn of the century, African men and women handled most of the white city's laundry. Migrant men handled the pick-up, distribution and collection of fees; and the women did the actual washing. But even this was to change after 1933, when under the New State of Salazar it was no longer acceptable that women prisoners (usually arrested for prostitution, drunkenness or the clandestine sale of brewed or distilled drinks) be employed on city roadwork; instead the women were sent to the São José Mission and put to work there doing laundry at reduced rates for the local white population. This change in chibalo policy, ostensibly a reform, thus undercut the capacity of this laundry work strata to make an independent living.

It can be seen from these instances how the chibalo system funneled not only cheap labour but also cheap services to the city. Certain occupations were left in African hands for a while precisely because they provided cheap services. When it suited white entrepreneurs, or even the White working class, these occupations — and laundry work is a case in point — were undercut, and this strata lost its independent living. The charcoal and firewood business is another instance of a similar process. This was in African hands initially, and was then removed, only to be returned to African operators, but only later after the city was well enough served with electricity and gas so that the Portuguese concession-holders could move on to more profitable enterprises.

### **CHIBALO AND DE-SKILLING**

It has been seen above how the controls made possible by chibalo labour were used to undercut workers' standards from below and also to squeeze those strata of the urban population who managed for a while to scratch an independent economic livelihood. Chibalo also had a part in devaluing African skill in the urban employment market, and in enforcing the employment colour bar. This process can be seen by looking somewhat more fully at the distinct structure of the city's employment structure, and the labour market in which



chibalo operated.

Unlike the mine labour recruitment system operated by WENELA, which at that stage of the mining industry handled a fairly homogenous labour force through a highly centralised labour supply machinery, the labour market in Lourenço Marques and its urban environs was very different; it resembled an irrigation maze into which ran different employer channels needing differing labour quotas and skills. State and private capital of various sorts all needed labour, and labour was differently forthcoming from different strata within the growing African population. Thus, the African labour force of the city was as diverse as the groups competing for labour, and there was a broad range of working conditions and wages, and varying openings for the acquisition of skill. At one end of the labour market was the unskilled labour provided by a peasantry pillaged for the lowest-paid urban occupations; at the other end were the products of mission education, with a long history of contact with the European population, who not only supplied the headmen, the supervisors of labour and the interpreters, but from whom came the artisan workmen of the skilled and semi-skilled positions which only later became te preserve of white labour.

There were substantial wage differentials within this African workforce. In 1909, for example, a skilled African woodcutter could earn between 1\$000 and 1\$600 reis per day, and an African carpenter in the first decade of the twentieth century could earn 2\$000 to 3\$000 reis per day. A chibalo worker in the same period earned between \$200 and \$300 reis per day.

In the early period the sons of African and Afro-European officials and traders filled important posts in the state bureaucracy, and until about 1912 the city still drew primarily on African, Chinese and British Indian skills. But the influx of white Portuguese settlers and civil servants was to change this, and these newcomers severely undercut the access to these upper employment levels of the locally educated African and mixed populations. Experienced locals were replaced by inexperienced immigrants; the patterns of patronage changed, and whites took priority over Africans in the spirit of the saying: **'... The eternal [characteristic] of our government, whatever its colour may be, is to arrange jobs for men and not men for jobs.'**

African entry, especially to civil service positions, was effectively curbed. Africans trained on the job remained perpetually in the position of native assistant or apprentice despite the fact that they did skilled work which their European superiors simply signed for. African trainees and apprentices were, until the mid-1950s, used as cheap labour and seldom promoted. Pay differentials in 1906 between black and white carpenters were approximately three to one in favor of whites. By 1960 the difference was five, six, or as much as thirteen to one depending upon skill.

The depreciation of African skill occurred over time, and the use of chibalo labour was an important cause. Thus, for instance, the African press is full of complaints of state and private construction rounding up African artisans for use as chibalos on their projects rather than hiring their skills.

Military conscription was also a means by which white skill was favoured over African. Education and training opportunities for Africans were greater in Lourenço Marques than anywhere else, and this was the largest concentration of the skilled and educated. But educated Africans could not get exemption from military service, and while statistics for the earlier years are still being processed, those for the period 1937 to 1955, for instance, show that while the capital provided only 6 per cent of all military recruits, 72 per cent of those conscripted from Lourenço Marques were skilled workers.

During the years after the installation of the republic, as the white population grew, there was increasing political pressure on state and private capital to employ white skill rather than cheaper African and Asian labour. But there were instances when the use of chibalo labour undercut the interests of all skilled labour, white and black and brown. The Maxaquene landfill project, the last of the major earthworks which gave Lourenço Marques its present topography, is a good example. The project involved construction of a seawall, extensive grading and drainage work. Portuguese artisans mounted a strong lobby to insure that the contract would go to a firm which planned to construct a reinforced concrete wall and make maximum use of skilled masons. The contract ultimately went to a coalition of Portuguese contractors who relied instead on large supplies of chibalo labour and prisoners who had to break rocks with pick and shovel, carry boulders, and shovel sand. Work conditions at the con-

struction site and at the coalition's quarries, which supplied fill for the project, were severely criticized for the reported high incidence of accidents and deaths among African workers, but efforts to investigate the charges were frustrated allegedly due to the considerable political clout of the contractors.

The impact of the chibalo system could thus be seen at the end of the first period, before the institution of the Republic. At one end of the process chibalo had forced peasant producers into unskilled wage labour, but it was temporary, poorly paid, dead-end work which was neither designed nor intended to generate or support a full proletariat. Within the urban labour market, chibalo labour was used to depress the wages and conditions of more stable labour forces. And within the skilled and administrative strata Africans were increasingly being marginalised, and they were replaced by whites. The results were already beginning to appear in this period: this was the making of a marginal and squeezed working class.

### **THE CHIBALO SYSTEM AND SWEATED LABOUR: 1927 TO 1953**

In about 1927 these patterns began to change. The administration stabilized under Salazar's New State. Bureaucratic corruption and supplies of chibalo to private interests on a patronage basis were curbed. However, the state use of forced labour was in fact expanded and regularized during this period. The colonial government made efforts to enforce minimum labour conditions, to ensure wage payment, proper transportation, and repatriation, and to eliminate indiscipline particularly at the local level of the native affairs bureaucracy. Henceforth chibalo labour would be distributed to private enterprise as a form of government patronage as opposed to individual patronage for private profit.

The insecurity of the early period diminished somewhat. Families no longer sent a small boy along with the chibalo captive to help him supplement his rations and ensure his survival. However, the system was still despised, and if possible evaded because of the ridiculously low wages. Men continued to emigrate to avoid working chibalo. By 1927 most chibalo workers were paid, though corruption did continue and women were still used, without pay, to cultivate an admin-

istrator's garden or clear a road. The majority of chibalo workers, however, received most of the stipulated chibalo wage.

Informants nevertheless consistently referred to chibalo as labour **de graça** — unpaid labour — insisting that the amount was so small as to be an affront. Saul Tembe, an informant who was introduced to forced labour gathering hay for zoo animals at age twelve, explained to me why he spent most of his adult life working in the natal sugar industry on a government passport, or lacking that, as a clandestine migrant: **'Here [in Mozambique] we were forced to work for nothing. After a person has worked for nothing he does not want to stay here. Many people fled to the neighbouring countries. Here work was for nothing, wages were the *palma-tória* — ferule — and corn flour.'**

The Salazar regime's approach to port labour in Lourenço Marques was typical of labour relations in this period. Since 1906 the state had controlled rail yard labour, but until 1929, wharf labour and stevedoring labour were employed by private forwarding companies outside direct government control. The regime of the private forwarding firms was becoming troublesome due to the upward pressure their wages placed on the state-controlled sections of the port. When the state took over, this was at first welcomed by the skilled and semi-skilled Mozambican workers since they hoped it would mean more widespread use of the Portuguese language and thus allow them to assume the better positions formerly occupied by English-speaking Mauritians and Natal Africans. Their hopes were soon dashed when the government placed white Portuguese in these positions, thus effectively capping black upward mobility.

The state then proceeded to displace some 4,000 casual port workers by bringing in an additional 1,500 chibalo labourers who would work the wharves in around-the-clock shifts. The situation was further exacerbated in 1933 when the government cut wages for volunteer port labour, black and white, from 10 to 30 per cent. Most African dockworkers had their pay cut from 12\$50 escudos to 12\$00 escudos a day. When they refused to work at the lower wage they were locked up by police in the fenced-off port area until all boats in the channel were unloaded by chibalo workers or volunteers who could be intimidated into working. When the boats were empty the volunteers were simply allowed to leave. It was

clear that more chibalo workers would be brought in to unload the next boats. Casual labourers had little choice but to return to work, since by staying away they risked arrest as vagrants, and as vagrants they would soon be unloading the next boats as chibalo labour at 6\$00 escudos a day rather than their reduced 12\$00. It is no coincidence that there was serious black rioting through the white residential areas the following New Year's Eve under the cover of merrymaking.

Most port workers chose to remain as casual labour and tried to make up their pay loss through overtime work. The cost of overtime in terms of worker health and safety was evident in the testimony of Roberto Tembe, a tally clerk at the port since 1927. Tembe stressed the dangers involved in trying to catch a few hours rest. He said that men worked themselves to death, or died as a result of being crushed when the locomotive under which they were hiding in order to rest without risk of being caught off the work site (and forfeiting their pay) started up without warning. **'When there was work to do you all worked until you dropped, because if you did not there was someone to take your place... The administrator would say, "If you don't like it, get out". We can get two more busfuls in Xipamanine [the African marketplace].'**

At the port the difference between casual and chibalo labour involved more than wages. Chibalo workers also had some incentive to work overtime and to time bargain since they would receive overtime pay at volunteer rates, but they risked nothing by leaving the worksite when their shift was over. Ironically, their relative job security as contract chibalo allowed them a measure of privilege. They could, and regularly did, refuse heavy work. African foremen organized tasks so that the most difficult jobs fell to volunteers who received a higher cash wage. The foreman's expectations of chibalo labour were lower.

### **CLOSET CHIBALO: 1953 TO 1962**

From about 1953 to 1962, changing patterns of capital investment brought about changes in the labour economy. The colonial government embarked on a series of six-year development plans involving a good deal of construction and investment in an expanded transit trade. At about the same time insurance companies, mutual savings institutes, and banks, which had managed to accumulate capital in the first twenty

years of the New State, began to advance capital for investment in housing, commercial construction, and the tourist industry. The period also saw the development of some secondary industry. This new capital brought with it a certain expansion of volunteer labour opportunities for Africans. Up to the early 1950s chibalo and prison labour had been the backbone of the city's construction industry, but now it became politically unacceptable and economically unnecessary. Men like Saul Tembe could return from the sugar fields and find work in city construction.

Chibalo labour did not disappear completely. Despite Portuguese posturing to the contrary, chibalo was still widely employed in rural areas, and in the city it discretely fulfilled three of its historical functions: political patronage in the form of a subsidy to petty Portuguese capitalism, as a core labour pool at the port, and as a sanction to ensure worker discipline. Chibalo continued to be used to satisfy the supporters of the regime. For example, when groups such as the Indo-Portuguese Association, the Naval Club, or the Sporting Club of Lourenço Marques needed a small crew of labourers to tend their tennis courts, clear their grass or the like, they simply asked the Curator of Native Affairs for labourers, and they received them. Small groups of chibalo continued to be supplied to low-profit small industries (most often run by old colonists) as a subsidy to petty capitalism.

Chibalo continued to function as the core group at the port, thereby undermining any attempts by port labour to organize. And finally, chibalo continued to function as a common sanction employed by the powerful native affairs department. For example, volunteer stevedores caught in an attempt to alter their pay tickets in 1955 were all sentenced to three months of chibalo at the port. Those suspected as the leaders of the plot, were sent off to São Tomé for nine years. Time and time again, when informants were asked about strikes and work stoppages, they stressed the futility of it all, saying, '**There was always chibalo.**' The answer to resistance was, '**Send him off to chibalo.**' Chibalo was feared even more than the dreaded *pamatório*, its humiliation and pain were longer lived.

An African proletariat did develop in Lourenço Marques, but it was a relatively small and marginal group often dependent on the wages of all family members, or a subsidy from

male kin in the mines in order to pay for bridewealth or education. Only a tiny group of old established local African families, whose members were among the most educated Africans in the country, lived in relative stability from their skills, their professions, their trade, or their rents. However, the chibalo system undercut even their own economic advance by holding down the general level of African wages so that the local African consumer market upon which this group depended remained relatively weak. It was only at the beginning of the armed struggle that wage increases in Mozambique, in combination with wage increases at the mines, generated an increase in African purchasing power, thus strengthening the sales and service potential of the local market. This period was marked by the rapid proliferation of so-called clandestine markets and enterprise in the peri-urban area to serve the newly-invigorated African consumer market.

In summary, the chibalo system throughout the period up to 1962 functioned as a subsidy to state and private capitalism in Lourenço Marques. It forced peasants into wage labour, but it was temporary and bonded labour in either unskilled manual labour or designated service positions. It curbed the development of skilled African workers; or an African petit-bourgeoisie. The chibalo system was used by the state to keep the working class marginal and powerless. The chibalo workers comprised the great majority of the city's labour force and were of course, the most deeply exploited. They worked and lived apart from the urban African population. The system had in fact created a group of subworkers: these were not workers, they were chibalos. They were used to undercut working class demands. They were resented and pitied. They were the instrument and the victims of state and private capital. They were symbolic of the state's coercive labour control.

A small urban working class had developed around the city's few protected industries, where the greater skill level required curbed the use of short-term chibalo labour; and in the lowest levels of the state bureaucracy. But only with more sustained capital investment, when it became possible to raise African wages sufficiently to allow unbonded labour to replace chibalo, was there a larger potential for the development of an African working class in the city. In the later period peasant-workers who were increasingly hard-pressed to subsist in the peasant economy, needed to bring their families to

the city and indeed many did so when the wage increases of the late 1950s and particularly the 1960s freed them from their dependence on agricultural production in the sagging peasant sector. But the chibalo system had been employed to trap most Africans in the position of temporary peasant-worker and the system was only curtailed when it suited the needs and interests of state and private capital.

### BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

This article is based on 'Forced Labour and the Origin of an African Working Class: Lourenço Marques, 1870-1962' by Jeanne Penvenne, a Working Paper published by African Studies Centre, Boston University.

### ARCHIVES

Archival information on chibalo labour used in the preparation of this article was drawn principally from the Administração do Concelho de Lourenço Marques for the period 1903-1935 and from the Administração do Concelho de Lourenço Marques for the period 1935-1962. Other archives consulted in the preparation of this study included the Archives of the Câmara Municipal de Lourenço Marques and the documents collection (US Consular despatches 1950-1963) African Studies Library, Boston University Library, Boston, Massachusetts.

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