



Book Review of *MPHYANGA? Contos Sena – Leadership, Participative Development and Empowerment of Women*

No. 2 in the “Sabedoria do Povo, Hoje” Series

Compiled and presented by Joseph Pampalk

Published by Paulinas, Maputo, Mozambique, 2008

ISBN 978-9966-08-341-8

Paperback, 395 pages

Price: Euro 9.5

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After a Second Edition of *Nzerumbawiri – Provérbios Sena* was recently published with a total of 652 Sena Proverbs (containing 227 new proverbs), this new collection of 55 Sena stories in Mozambique by the same author is very rich in its cultural and social value. The approximately one million Asena people live in the central provinces of Mozambique especially in Sofala, Manica e Tete, and Zambesia

“MPHYANGA?” means “is it mine?” and takes this name from the first story.

The author has in mind, through the different contents of the stories collected during many years after a great sense of listening and respect for the traditional oral literature and wisdom, to challenge the reader to reflect about these main questions and topics: human responsibility and participation of diversities to create the sense of national unity in communitarian development; how to overcome suffering and poverty; how to exercise public service; how to integrate diversity into the same dignity; how to transform what is negative in our society into positive occasions of growth; how to rebuild social cells in crises; how to live and work together as men and women without prejudices; how to educate children; and then as a conclusion: how to continue to build our own identity.

The thematic index at the beginning is very useful to give a quick overview and to orient the reader to choose a particular story related to this or that social topic that is conducive to group reflection and discussion: For example: The first story “O Passarinho Timba” (Portuguese for “The Small Sparrow”) that is “Timba-Nkhalamu” in Sena is about a small bird that wants to become big like a lion. After reading the story we can ask ourselves: Is what is described in this story still happening today? How and why and where? How can we overcome that? Certainly this work will offer a good contribution to keep the value of the traditional oral literature and wisdom which can be understood and become dynamic in the world of today and to offer a key to read our reality and to become critical of, and responsible for, the changes in our society.

In the book the Sena text of the stories is printed after the Portuguese version. In some cases the original story is taken from Ronga language or quoted from another language of Mozambique.

This book will be of interest not only for Mozambicans

and Africans, but for many other people since the comments of the stories in the last part of the book will captivate them to better understand their hidden value.

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