

"In a sieve I'll thither sail": *Macbeth* Comes to Madagascar in *Makibefo*

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Early in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the First Witch complains about a sailor's wife who refused to give her any chestnuts. In what seems to be a threat of vengeance, she says, "Her husband's to Aleppo gone, Master o'th' Tiger: / But in a sieve I'll thither sail, / And like a rat without a tail, / I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do."¹ The title of this essay is intended to reflect the far-flung nature of the statement as well as the fragility of depending on a sieve for such travel. But even though great distances and fragile vehicles are involved, the claim that something will be done is repeated twice. When Shakespeare travels cross-culturally, it can be just such a lengthy and perilous journey; bringing Shakespeare in or passing Shakespeare through a sieve means that something will inevitably be lost. In the best cases, however, Shakespeare does, and he does, and he does.

In 1999, director Alexander Abela released a film entitled *Makibefo*.² The film "takes Macbeth to the Antandroy people of Faux Cap in the south-east corner of Madagascar,"³ exchanging the wastes of Scotland for the beaches of Madagascar—that much is fairly clear. What is less plain is what the film brings back from its journey and how the non-Malagasy should respond to the film.

Alexander Abela "was born in Britain"⁴ with a mixed heritage: "On his father's side hailing from . . . Lebanon and Malta, and

on his mother's side hailing from Greece, Italy, and Syria."⁵ In an interview with Mark Thornton Burnett, Abela reflected that he "belong[s] nowhere. I feel English but in England I'm not accepted as an Englishman . . . [the] Lebanese . . . don't really accept me, and in Greece or Italy I don't feel at home."⁶ This perceived displacement may be one of the keys to the success of his work with what might equally be called "displaced Shakespeare."

At the end of "Madagascan Will: Cinematic Shakespeares / Transnational Exchanges," Mark Thornton Burnett offers this charge:

Urgently needed is a move away from the separate bracketing of the "foreign Shakespeare" and a reversal of the unidirectional "cultural flow" that, as Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan state, invariably travels "from the 'west' to the 'rest.'" As Romana Wray argues, there is surely possible in the discipline of Shakespeare on film "integration . . . a prioritizing of the 'inclusive,' and . . . a critical method that is as particular as it is comprehensive."⁷

Burnett's desire is something like that expressed by Alexander C. Y. Huang in *Chinese Shakespeares*, where he convincingly displays the necessity for critical language that will be dismissive of neither Shakespeare nor China, rightly objecting to the attitude that he describes as the "This is how they do Shakespeare over there; how quaint" mentality too often brought to bear on the subject.⁸

I began the project of writing this essay with these ideas in mind. The spectre of Laura Bohannan's "Shakespeare in the Bush," with its pejorative title and condescending tone in describing what, for Bohannan, is the utter inability of the Tiv people of Nigeria to comprehend the plot of *Hamlet*, also hovered in the background.⁹ In her account, an attempt to present the plot of *Hamlet* to the Tiv results in their interrupting the narrative with what, to her, are irrelevant questions and correcting the story with what, to her, are unacceptable alterations to the plot. Her presentation of the story and the Tiv's interruptions and questions are amply illustrated by this exchange:

That night Hamlet kept watch with the three who had seen his dead father. The dead chief again appeared, and although the others were afraid, Hamlet followed his dead father off to one side. When they were alone, Hamlet's dead father spoke.
"Omens can't talk!" The old man was emphatic.

“Hamlet’s dead father wasn’t an omen. Seeing him might have been an omen, but he was not.” My audience looked as confused as I sounded. “It was Hamlet’s dead father. It was a thing we call a ‘ghost.’” I had to use the English word, for unlike many of the neighboring tribes, these people didn’t believe in the survival after death of any individuating part of the personality.

“What is a ‘ghost?’ An omen?”

“No, a ‘ghost’ is someone who is dead but who walks around and can talk, and people can hear him and see him but not touch him.”

They objected. “One can touch zombis.”

“No, no! It was not a dead body the witches had animated to sacrifice and eat. No one else made Hamlet’s dead father walk. He did it himself.”

“Dead men can’t walk,” protested my audience as one man.

I was quite willing to compromise.

“A ‘ghost’ is the dead man’s shadow.”

But again they objected. “Dead men cast no shadows.”

“They do in my country,” I snapped.¹⁰

The conclusion she reaches is that Shakespeare is not and cannot be universal. My response is to explore how elements in the plot of Shakespeare’s play could be altered to tell a comprehensible and moving story to the Tiv people. A careful consideration of Tiv beliefs could make the transmission of a comprehensible *Hamlet* relatively easy and poignant. The objection to the ghost of Hamlet’s father could be overcome by presenting that character as either “an omen sent by a witch” (29) or “a dead body the witches had animated to sacrifice and eat” (30)—in other words, a *Zombi*—suggestions made by members of the Tiv. Claudius could also be held responsible for Hamlet’s madness because of witchcraft, and Laertes could have “killed his sister by witchcraft, drowning her so he could secretly sell her body to the witches” (33).

When first introduced to *Makibefo*, I considered the film a chance to provide evidence contrary to Bohannon’s thesis, establishing that a Shakespeare play could be made deeply and thoroughly comprehensible to another culture. My hope was to be able to view, appreciate, and comment on *Makibefo* as a Malagasy artifact, significant in its own right—and also quite interesting because of its retelling of the plot of *Macbeth*. Nonetheless, I find it difficult to say much of substance about the film without

constant reference to Shakespeare's play. What seems evident is that Bohannan's claim that Shakespeare is not universal is only the case when Shakespeare becomes an inflexible entity presented without consideration of audience, historical setting, or cultural context. Consider, for example, the critical and commercial success of Akira Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood*, which is both foreign and comprehensible to Scottish audiences and local and comprehensible to Japanese audiences.¹¹

In other words, *Makibefo* is a place where east and west can meet. Unlike the James Ivory film *Shakespeare Wallah*, in which a troupe of actors perform Shakespeare to a postcolonial India to which Shakespeare is less and less relevant, *Makibefo* has the opportunity to be that which Laura Bohannan sought and dismissed as impossible: a retelling of a Shakespeare play that is comprehensible, relevant, and meaningful to spectators from a multiplicity of cultures.¹²

The most extensive account of the process of the production of *Makibefo* is Burnett's. He gives us information regarding how the plot of *Macbeth* was first brought to the Antandroy: "It is clear from *Makibefo* that the re-imagining of the play derived from a non-textual encounter with Shakespeare, and this is confirmed in the director's observation that a 'comic strip . . . and photographs' were initially used in local explanations of the Bardic narrative."¹³ Vanessa Gerhards fleshes this out somewhat, mentioning that "the Antandroy were unfamiliar with modern and contemporary films, TV, or Shakespeare before Abela arrived."¹⁴ The material I've read on the film is silent on Abela's familiarity with the Antandroy before arriving in Madagascar, but the film itself provides ample evidence that the making of the film involved more than simply—and "simply" isn't the right word—teaching the Antandroy Shakespeare. Indeed, the closing credits help illustrate this:

The Antandroy people of Madagascar who played the characters and helped in the making of this film are an ancient tribe with a truly great sense of pride, honour and tradition. A poor people in what is already a poor country, they have few possessions and little knowledge of the outside world. As simple fishermen, they live off the ocean that crashes against their unchanging shoreline and take one day at a time. The majority of the actors have never seen a television let alone a film, and have never acted before in their lives.¹⁵

Indeed, there is not much modern scholarly attention paid to the Antandroy. They are often only briefly mentioned as one of many tribal groups, as in this explanation of the etymology of their name: “In many cases, ecological references for people who live in a particular habitat without necessarily having distinct socio-cultural characteristics are identified with tribal identity. The island of Madagascar is a prime example, with such references as “Antanala” (the forest people), “Antandroy” (the people of the thorny cactus forest), and “Antankarana” (the people of the rocks and caves).”¹⁶

The dual direction of the cultural exchange is navigated throughout the film by the narrator, though various discrepancies between the narrator of the film and the story of the film form a complicated matrix of the exchange. Additionally, many elements of the film may be lost on viewers who have only a vague understanding of the cultures of Madagascar. When I first saw the film, I missed much of significance because of my ignorance; doubtless, I still miss a great deal, but the research I have been able to do has enabled me to see more of the elements of Malagasy culture that are part of this film.

The opening shot of *Makibefo* is just such an element. It provides an image of four carved wooded posts called *aloalo* in the sand of a beach with the ocean in the background (*see fig. 1*).¹⁷ These are funeral sculptures usually placed over a family tomb, as in *fig. 2*.¹⁸ From the limited material I have been able to find on *aloalo*, their placement in this film seems very unusual, especially given that “the family tomb is the most sacred of all hallowed places”¹⁹ and that maintaining it and the land associated with it is important enough to cause considerable economic hardship, including bringing migrant workers back to the tomb frequently despite the consequent loss of productivity.²⁰ The *aloalo* on the shore suggest either that this is a burial ground or that we are to consider the land itself to be tomblike.

The opening shot provides an unmediated glance at an element of Malagasy culture; however, a mediator soon arrives in the form of the film’s narrator. It is interesting to note that the question of audience, for the DVD release at least, is somewhat indicated by the languages available in the subtitles. English, English for the hearing impaired, German, French, Spanish, and Portuguese are



Fig. 1. *Aloalo* in the Opening Shot of *Makibefo*



Fig. 2. “*Aloalo* and cattle horns on a Mahafaly tomb in southwestern Madagascar.”

all available—but not the language of the Antandroy. Those who speak the dialect of Malagasy employed by the Antandroy use do not need subtitles, of course—except, perhaps, for that part of the film that is in English, which is confined to the role of the narrator. In the closing credits, this role is listed as “Storyteller”—Gilbert Laumord is the actor portraying the role. A glance at his LinkedIn page lets us know that he’s from Guadeloupe, French West Indies.²¹

After the opening shot, we are introduced to the narrator. The camera settles on a man sitting on the beach near the *aloalo*. He has his eyes closed, and he appears to be deep in thought. But he opens his eyes, focuses them on the camera, and begins to deliver,

in slightly-accented English, a narration that provides us with an introduction to the story we're about to hear.²² His narration follows the plot of Shakespeare's play far more closely than the film itself will. His voice, therefore, seems to serve as a deliberate connection between the western audience viewing this film and the Malagasy structures and cultural elements that make up the film. He begins with these words:

In a land washed by the ocean a tribe of people lived in sight of sands and crashing waves. Their king was a noble king, who gave his people peace and harmony. And amongst his subjects many were good and true. But none more so than Makibefo. Indeed, it was the king who entrusted Makibefo to capture a fugitive and to bring him back to the village.²³

No title card has yet appeared, but the setting and the direction of the storytelling leads us to see Makibefo as the central figure.²⁴ For those familiar with *Macbeth*, this introduction also offers the first evidence of a slight deviation from Shakespeare's plot, turning the rebellion of Macdonwald and his collusion with Norway into an errand to bring back a fugitive.²⁵

As the narrator continues, another alteration to Shakespeare's plot becomes clear:

On the way, Makibefo, in the company of a trusted friend, met a witch doctor, who told him that though the king was merciful he was also weak. He prophesied that a time would come, as surely as the tides, when peace and harmony would no longer sweeten the lives of the people. The witch doctor looked deep into the eyes of Makibefo and saw that the gods had singled him out as a future leader. He inscribed solemnly the ancient symbol of the favoured one on his head band.

Here, the narrator allows us to understand that the three Weïrd Sisters have been conflated into one "witch doctor," to use the narrator's term. For the remainder of this essay, I'll employ the (perhaps) more apropos Malagasy term *ombiasy*—"Healer, seer, advisor, spirit medium, shaman"²⁶—to describe this character. Not much later in the play, the words of the narrator are enacted for the camera—but with, as we shall see, some key differences. Here, the *ombiasy*'s declaration is supported with a connection to the tides that wash over the land. The prediction he makes will come to pass as inevitably as do the tides.

In the narration that follows, we get a summary of how the *ombiasy's* first prediction comes to fruition:

The king indeed was merciful and pardoned the fugitive. But his son had no mercy and killed him instantly. The witch doctor proved to be the teller of truths and Makibefo began to believe that he was a man destined for greatness.

In both narratives—the Malagasy text and Shakespeare's—the eponymous character is convinced of the veracity of the full prophecy because a part of it comes to pass.

The narration stops short of telling us the entire plot of the film, but it does take us to a depiction of how Makibefo's wife responds to her husband:

His wife too had understood the ancient symbol. Her husband had been blessed by the gods. She exalts him to overthrow the king. Makibefo recognized the truth in his wife's words. But he knew too that once he had committed the ultimate treachery there would be no turning back. The blood that they would wash from their hands would not so easily be washed from their souls.

The opening narration closes with a line that seems to allude to the opening of Lawrence Olivier's *Hamlet* ("This is the tale of a man who could not make up his mind"²⁷):

This is a tale of damnation.

It is spoken after the camera cuts to a book lying on the beach and after the narrator has picked it up and opened it. Like Lawrence Olivier's line, *Makibefo's* tends to close out possibilities—to simplify the complexities inherent in the film itself (and in the play that inspires it) into a single sentence.

In terms of both the film *Makibefo* and the play *Macbeth*, it is an oversimplification. But it may be a necessary one. Whatever audience is viewing this film—initially, it would have been a French audience, though "Makibefo initially played only in one theatre for a three-week period"—that audience is presented with a framework for viewing it.²⁸ Given that it's a "tale of damnation," considerable latitude is provided for the way that damnation plays out. Still, as in Olivier, we're given a yardstick by which we can measure the film itself.

Vanessa Gerhards's reading of this opening connects it to the local culture, arguing that it moves from oral to written tradition: "Stories are passed on orally from one person to another in the local culture and the film takes up this tradition in order to place itself firmly into the Antandroy life and context; a film *by* them and *for* them."²⁹ She points out that the conclusion to the narrator's introduction turns to "the next level of storytelling . . . reading the written word aloud to someone else."³⁰ However, the levels don't stop there. In addition to these two layers, the film itself provides a third—the transmission of both oral and written language by the medium of video. And that third layer is itself complicated in numerous ways. Just as Olivier's *Hamlet* is not just a story of "a man who could not make up his mind," *Makibefo* is not just "a tale of damnation."

The narrator's opening the book can be read in different ways, but the likeliest reading is one that suggests that the story we are about to see comes from the book itself. At the end of Makibefo's encounter with the *ombiasy*, the film suddenly cuts to the narrator, who glances between the book and the camera, giving the impression that he is breaking off from the story he has been relating to us to offer some additional explanation. He says (or reads) this: "Hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter. Why do you start and seem to fear things that do sound so fair?" Here, and at ten other points during the film, the narrator reads a portion of the text of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* that relates to the events portrayed in the film.³¹

If the narrator exists in a liminal position between east and west, the character of the *ombiasy* is more firmly rooted in the culture of Madagascar. Instead of the three marginalized, ambiguous figures of Macbeth's text, Makibefo is encountered by a single *ombiasy*—a more central, more respected figure in the culture—one whom it would not be inappropriate for even a king to consult. In the film, the *ombiasy* suddenly appears to Makibefo and Bakoua (the film's Banquo analogue) while they are resting during their journey back to Danikany (the Duncan analogue) with their prisoner. The narrator's account of the meeting is far more detailed than the meeting itself, which is quite sparse and only contains one line of dialogue from the *ombiasy*.

The film shows us the *ombiasy's* unexpected arrival and his lengthy and penetrating stare at Makibefo. He then participates in a particular kind of divination called *sikidy*, which involves throwing seeds and arranging them mathematically into columns.³² After completing the *sikidy*, he faces Makibefo and says, "Malikomy will murder your prisoner against Danikany's will. What he will lose, you will gain and king you shall be." He then proceeds to make circular marks on Makibefo's forehead, indicating the position where a symbol of high office, as in fig. 3, will be placed.³³



Kanusiky-Sakalava, of Morondova.
(From a Photograph by Dr A. Völtzkow.)

Fig. 3: "Kanusiky-Sakalava, of Morondova."

While this ritualistic marking takes place, Bakoua looks on askance, finally interrupting the ceremony by taking the *ombiasy's* arm and saying, "Enough of your lies!" The *ombiasy* leaps out of the frame, and the film gives us a jump cut to a snake slithering across the sand. A voiceover from the narrator overlaps the stunned reactions of the men, who fall backward into the sand: "Hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter. Why do you start and seem to fear things that do sound so fair?"

The disjunction between the scene and the two quotations from *Macbeth* conflated in a single line is intriguing. The *ombiasy* has indeed told Makibefo that he will be king, but the two men have not started at that fair-sounding news. Instead, they started at what appeared to be the *ombiasy* transforming into a snake.

The role of the Lady Macbeth analogue in response to the news serves the same function in Antandroy culture as it does in Shakespeare. She is acting outside the norms of her culture. The film underlines this in two ways. First, she attempts, against her husband's objections, to put some paint on her husband's forehead. He pushes it away twice, but the third time, she puts a dot on his forehead and then traces a circle around it. Her persistence and her clear desire to gain a higher station in her society are illustrated in this action. As Burnett puts it,

The representation of Valy Makibefo/Lady Macbeth's . . . more obvious agitation for greatness carries in its wake the cultural specificities of the histories of Madagascar and the place of women in the local economy. Electing to live outside the village, Valy Makibefo/Lady Macbeth, it is implied, entertains an alternative perspective on the world to that of the other villagers. Her alacrity in painting the local symbol of royalty on her husband's forehead, and the emblematic devices displayed on her togalike shawl, announce her will to betterment.³⁴

The second place her ambition is underlined in the film is in an equivalent to the dagger scene in *Macbeth*. Makibefo is sitting on the shore when the Lady Macbeth analogue approaches him. She arrives with a literal dagger (immediately after the narrator, in voiceover, says, "Come, thick night, and pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell"), and she attempts to hand it to him. When he does not take it, she places it blade down in the sand immediately in front of him and retreats, crouching in the sand a few feet away from him. When he still delays, she reclaims the knife and heads to the dwelling of the Duncan analogue. We then see her ready to stab Duncan herself, but Makibefo takes the dagger from her and performs the deed himself.

Although the scholarly material on the Antandroy is sparse, the consensus of a number of more informal sources is uniform in stating that the Antandroy culture is patriarchal. For a wife to be ambitious to this degree—to contemplate and to be ready to act

out the murder of the leader to ensure a higher place in society for herself (and, coincidentally, for her husband) runs contrary to the expected gender roles of the society. We have, in *Makibefo*, Lady Macbeth easily transplanted into Antandroy culture.

By the scene that is analogous to the feast in Act III, scene iv of the play, Makibefo has dispatched Danikany (Duncan), and we have seen Bakoua (Banquo) victorious at a wrestling competition that seems to be a part of the obsequies for Danikany. Scenes of a *zebu* being led out of its pen for slaughter (and/or sacrifice—the distinction isn't clear) are interspersed with scenes of Bakoua walking along the shore. While the *zebu* is tied and readied for sacrifice/slaughter, two men approach Bakoua, who readies his spear to defend himself. As the *zebu's* throat is slit, Bakoua is killed by the two men. The next sequence begins with Makibefo, now with the circle of office on his forehead, raising the head of the *zebu* above his head, proclaiming, "I am your new king" (see fig. 4). It is also the first time we see the circle of office on his forehead.



Fig. 4: Makibefo Raises the *Zebu* Head

My first thought on viewing the scene demonstrates my western, *Macbeth*-trained sensibility: I connected the *zebu's* head with Macbeth's head as presented by Macduff at the end of Shakespeare's play, and I wondered whether the end of the film would catch up the image. I should, instead (or in addition), have considered the image of the horns of the *zebu*—an image that is provided in the horn-topped *aloalo* of the opening shot (see fig. 1).

Burnett helps explain the cultural elements of this moment in the film:

In the protagonist's lifting to the sky of the decapitated, horned head of the *zebu* is communicated both a diabolical association (Makibefo metaphorically crowns himself with the sign of his evil) and a totemic suggestion (because the frequently seen totems are also horned, a manipulation of the local cult is implied).³⁵

The image, therefore, puts Makibefo in two positions: he is an *aloalo* indicating something dead underneath, and he is embodying a position of prestige. Fig. 5 provides an image of a Antandroy man with his hair shaped into the image of horns, which seems to indicate some level of status in the Antandroy culture.³⁶

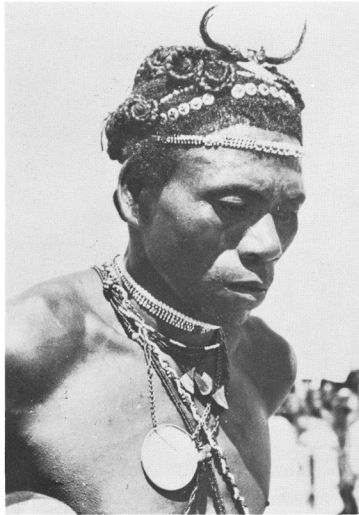


Fig. 5: "An Antandroy tribesman."

The scene with the *zebu* head also connects the world of the Antandroy to the world of the filmmakers, though we only learn this through the penultimate shot in the credits:

An on-screen announcement informs us that the "ox . . . was sacrificed in our honour according to the customs of the Antandroy people and was distributed to the families involved in the making of *Makibefo*." The *apologia* is provided for the benefit of Western audiences at the same time as an authorial

voice enters the narrative in order to stress an experience defined by mutual respect.³⁷

The ending scene of *Makibefo* provides a point of clear and direct connection between the Antandroy narrative and Shakespeare's play. The Macduff analog arrives with a number of pirogues (standing in for Birnam forest) and challenges Makibefo. Makibefo (according to the subtitles) says this as they ready themselves for the battle:

Makidofy! Makidofy! Fight me! . . . Makidofy, you of all men I have avoided. My soul is too much charged with your blood already. And you are not of a woman born. Fight me!

As Makibefo and Makidofy circle each other, Makibefo suddenly seems to give up. As a soundtrack of rhythmic breathing increases in volume, he sinks to the sand without raising his spear. Makidofy then stabs him, and the narrator delivers these lines:

Let the angel whom thou still hast served tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb ripp'd. I will not yield to kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet and to be baited with the rabble's curse. Thou opposed, being of no woman born, yet I will try the last. Before my body I throw my warlike shield! Lay on, Macduff. And damn'd be him that cries, "Hold, enough!"

Makidofy removes the headband that symbolizes the office of the leader, and, with a final breath, Makibefo lies still. The image then crossfades to the waves breaking on the shore and then crossfades again to the narrator, who closes his book and simply stares into the camera. The credits (all in English) then roll, taking us from the description of the Antandroy people through the cast to the final note about the Zebu.

For Burnett, that notice provides one point where "the transnational exchanges that help to shape the film are recognized but not elaborated upon, and a mixed sense of unmanageable distance, shared endeavours and different agendas is momentarily suggested."³⁸ I'm not convinced that it must be read in this relatively pessimistic way. In *A Dream in Hanoi*, a documentary about a collaborative production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* put on by Vietnamese and American actors in Vietnam, the cultural conflicts—though they are eventually and successfully overcome—nearly bring the production to a standstill. Yet the

motive force of the Shakespeare play and the actors' determination to pursue the collaboration present a unity despite cultural difference. More demonstrative of "unmanageable distance" is Orson Welles's *Voodoo Macbeth*, which sets the play in Haiti with only standard editing to the text and does not provide much insight into Haitian history or culture.³⁹ But *Makibefo*, like the better-known *Maqbool*⁴⁰ or Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood*,⁴¹ seems verily to transcend "the separate bracketing of the 'foreign Shakespeare'"⁴² decried by Burnett and others to provide something very rich and only moderately strange to audiences from both east and west.

Notes

1. William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Arden Third Series, ed. Sandra Clark and Pamela Mason (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), L.iii.7-10.
2. *Makibefo*, directed by Alexander Abela, featuring Martin Zia, Neoliny Dety, and Gilbert Laumord (1999; DVD, Philipp Hinz | Scoville Film, 2008).
3. Mark Thornton Burnett, "Madagascan Will: Cinematic Shakespeares/Transnational Exchanges," *Shakespeare Survey* 61 (2008): 239.
4. Burnett, *Shakespeare and World Cinema*, 25.
5. Burnett, *Shakespeare and World Cinema*, 25.
6. Alexander Abela, qtd. in Burnett, *Shakespeare and World Cinema*, 25.
7. Burnett, "Madagascan Will: Cinematic Shakespeares/Transnational Exchanges," 254-55.
8. Alexander C. Y. Huang, *Chinese Shakespeares: Two Centuries of Cultural Exchange* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 36.
9. Laura Bohannon, "Shakespeare in the Bush," *Natural History* (August-September 1966): 28-33.
10. Bohannon, "Shakespeare in the Bush," 30.
11. *Throne of Blood* [Kumonosu jô (a.k.a. *The Castle of the Spider's Web*)], directed by Akira Kurosawa, featuring Toshirô Mifune and Isuzu Yamada (1957; DVD, Criterion, 2003).
12. *Shakespeare Wallah*, directed by James Ivory, featuring Shashi Kapoor and Felicity Kendal (1965; DVD, Merchant Ivory, 2004).
13. Burnett, "Madagascan Will: Cinematic Shakespeares/Transnational Exchanges," 240.
14. Vanessa Gerhards, "Multicultural Macbeths: *Maqbool* and *Makibefo*," in *Locating Shakespeare in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Gabrielle Malcolm and Kelli Marshall (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2012), 185.
15. *Makibefo*.
16. S. N. Sangmpam, *Ethnicities and Tribes in Sub-Saharan Africa: Opening Old Wounds* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 9.
17. Sangmpam, *Ethnicities and Tribes in Sub-Saharan Africa*, 9; *Makibefo*.
18. Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, *The Malagasy Republic: Madagascar Today* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), inset between 148 and 149.

19. Thompson and Adloff, *The Malagasy Republic*, 187.
20. Thompson and Adloff, *The Malagasy Republic*, 188; cf. 258, 264, and 324.
21. Gilbert Laumord, LinkedIn, <https://gp.linkedin.com/in/gilbert-laumord-gilbert-58279969>.
22. No Henry Higgins, I cannot presume to identify the precise accent here, but it may be that we are hearing the accent of an English speaker from Guadeloupe.
23. All material quoted from the film is drawn from the film's subtitles and follows their spelling and punctuation.
24. We won't see one until three minutes into the film, and then we just get "Blue Eye Films presents." At 5:23, we get "Makibefo" with the parenthetical "(Macbeth)" appearing below it a few seconds later. No other titles or credits appear until the end of the film.
25. Please note that, in pointing out the differences between Shakespeare's play and *Makibefo*, I do not intend to be criticizing the film for its alterations; however, that method provides the clearest understanding of the way the Malagasy version of the plot works.
26. Robert H. Bennett, *I Am Not Afraid: Demon Possession and Spiritual Warfare: True Accounts from the Lutheran Church of Madagascar* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2013), xx.
27. *Hamlet*, directed by Laurence Olivier, featuring Laurence Olivier, Jean Simmons, Basil Sydney, Eileen Herlie, Norman Wooland, Felix Aylmer, and Terence Morgan (1948; DVD, Criterion, 2000).
28. Burnett, *Shakespeare and World Cinema*, 26.
29. Gerhards, "Multicultural Macbeths: *Maqbool* and *Makibefo*," 185.
30. Gerhards, "Multicultural Macbeths: *Maqbool* and *Makibefo*," 185.
31. The other points are these lines: (as Makibefo travels back to the village) "Hail, King that shalt be! This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou might not lose the dues of rejoicing by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell"; (after the Lady Macbeth analogue tries on a crown of sorts) "That I may pour my spirits in thine ear, and chastise with the valor of my tongue all that impedes thee from the golden round, which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem to have thee crown'd withal"; (after the execution of Kidoure) "Can the devil speak true? Truth is told, as happy prologues to the act of the imperial theme. This supernatural soliciting cannot be ill, cannot be good. If ill, why hath it given me earnest of success commencing in a truth? Cawdor is dead! If good, why do I yield to that suggestion whose horrid image doth unfix my hair and make my seated heart knock at my ribs, against the use of nature? Present fears are less than horrible imaginings. My thought, whose murder is yet but fantastical, shakes so my single state of man that function is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is but what is not"; (after the Macbeths agree to go through with their plan) "If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly. If the assassination could trammel up the consequence, and catch with his surcease, success; that but this blow might be the be-all and the end-all, here, but here, upon this bank and shoal of time, we'll jump the life to come"; (when Makibefo is presented with the dagger) "Come, thick night, and pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell";

(after the ghost of Bakoua appears at the feast) "Blood has been shed ere now, i' the olden time, ere humane statute purged the gentle weal; Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd too terrible for the ear. The time has been that, when the brains were out, the man would die and there an end; but now they rise again, with twenty mortal murders on their crowns, and push us from our stools. This is more strange than such a murder is. I will tomorrow, and betimes I will, to the witch doctor. More shall he speak; for now I am bent to know, by the worst means, the worst. For mine own good all causes shall give way. I am in blood stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more, returning were as tedious as go o'er. Strange things I have in head that will to hand which must be acted ere they may be scann'd"; (after the Macduff analogue has fled) "Now does he feel his secret murders sticking on his hands, now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach; those he commands move only in command, nothing in love"; (after Lady Macbeth's walking in to the ocean) "Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow creeps in this petty pace from day to day to the last syllable of recorded time. And all our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing"; (after the Macduff analogue returns) "Led on by Malcolm, his brother Donalbain, and the good Macduff. Revenges burn in them; for their dear causes would to the bleeding and the grim alarm excite the mortified man"; and (after the final battle) "Let the angel whom thou still hast served tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb ripp'd. I will not yield to kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet and to be baited with the rabble's curse. Thou opposed, being of no woman born, yet I will try the last. Before my body I throw my warlike shield! Lay on, Macduff. And damn'd be him that cries, 'Hold, enough!'"

32. Cf. James V. Rauff, "The Varieties of Mathematical Experience," *Natural History* (September 2003): 54-55, 58-60.

33. C. Keller, *Madagascar, Mauritius, and the Other East-African Islands* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1901), 66.

34. Burnett, *Shakespeare and World Cinema*, 30.

35. Burnett, "Madagascan Will: Cinematic Shakespeares/Transnational Exchanges," 241.

36. Thompson and Adloff, *The Malagasy Republic: Madagascar Today*, inset between 148 and 149.

37. Burnett, "Madagascan Will: Cinematic Shakespeares/Transnational Exchanges," 241.

38. Burnett, "Madagascan Will: Cinematic Shakespeares/Transnational Exchanges," 241.

39. *Macbeth* [a.k.a. *The Voodoo Macbeth*], directed by Orson Welles, featuring Jack Carter, Edna Thomas, Canada Lee, Maurice Ellis, Federal Theatre Project (1936; *We Work Again*, Federal Works Agency, 1937).

40. *Maqbool*, directed by Vishal Bharadwaj, featuring Irfan Khan and Tabu (2003; DVD, Music Today, 2004).

41. *Throne of Blood*.

42. Burnett, "Madagascan Will: Cinematic Shakespeare/Transnational Exchanges," 254.