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Óscar Ribas and the Kimbundu Language: Literary Works Uanga and Missosso

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ABSTRACT: Angolan writer Óscar Bento Ribas presented the Kimbundu language as an integral component of Angola´s cultural heritage. This perspective motivated the authors to addresse the following research question: How do Óscar Bento Ribas´s works Spell (Uanga) and Stories (Missosso) function as vehicles for safeguarding and promoting the Kimbundu language and the knowledge systems embedded within them? The aim of study was analysing the linguistic and discursive strategies employed by Óscar Bento Ribas to present Kimbundu as a cultural heritage of Angola.

Methods: The methodology adopted consisted of a qualitative textual analysis of the aforementioned works, focusing on the identification, collection and semantic-cultural interpretation of Kimbundu terms.

Results: The study revealed the cultural practices and oral traditions of the Angolan people as conveyed through traditional tales, novels, and poetry.

Conclusion: These works portray lived experiences transmitted across generations, in which words originating from the Kimbundu language are preserved, recognized and disseminated.

KEYWORDS: Angola, Óscar Ribas, Phraseology in the Kimbundu language.

INTRODUCTION

Literature functions as a repository of the oral traditions of peoples, serving as a means of recognizing and preserving sociocultural identity through the examination of historical and social memory. In this context, writers who engage with elements national culture and collective knowledge contribute significantly to the preservation of cultural identity. Through their literary production, such authors enable access to diverse cultural traditions; however, this cultural legacy remains largely unknown to younger generations (Neves, 2008).

Óscar Bento Ribas was an Angolan writer who played a central role in preserving the oral traditions of the Angolan people through literature. Through narrative and lyrical expression, he represented key aspects of Angolan culture and identity. His work examines stories, customs, practices, and forms of popular knowledge from the perspective of oral tradition. Across his stories, novels, dramas, and poetry, Ribas conveys cultural and identity-related elements characteristic to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Tindó, 2010).

The Angolan writer Óscar Bento Ribas, son of Arnaldo Gonçalves Ribas, of Portuguese origin, and Maria da Conceição Bento Faria, an Angolan, was born in Luanda, Angola, on August 17, 1909. He completed his primary and secondary education at the Seminary and lyceum Salvador Correia in Luanda (Tavares, 2019), and later pursued studies in commercial arithmetic in Portugal (Texeira, 2018, Calivala, 2015).

He later developed an interest in philology, oral literature, and traditional religions. Within this context, he conducted research on the traditions and customs of the Kimbundu people, who inhabit the northern region of Angola, encompassing the present-day provinces of Luanda, Bengo, Cuanza Norte, and Cuanza Sul. The social organization of this community was structured around clans and extended families of farmers and herders, whose primary economic activities centred on the cultivation of cassava, corn, beans, and sweet potatoes. In addition, they engaged livestock raising, fished, and hunting under the leadership of local chiefs, known as Soba, who played a central role in conflict resolution and the preservation of cultural traditions (Sousa, 2010).

In this context, Ribas presents the Kimbundu language as a form of cultural heritage, a means of communication through which the traditions, knowledge, and customs of the Angolan people have been transmitted across generation (Calivala, 2015). This perspective motivated the present investigation, which addresses the following research question:

How do Óscar Bento Ribas´s works Spell (Uanga) and Stories (Missosso) function as vehicles for safeguarding and promoting the Kimbundu language and the knowledge systems embedded within them?

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Research on the literary works of Óscar Bento Ribas has revealed oral traditions transmitted across generation that reflect the identity of the Angolan people (Tindo, 2010). The literary heritage demonstrates a sustained effort to safeguard cultural identity, at the levels of community, ethnic group, society, and nation, while promoting cultural diversity through a variety of cultural expressions (Calivala, 2015).

This study examined biographical information on Óscar Bento Ribas and selected excerpts from his literary works Spell (Uanga) and Stories (Missosso), which contribute to the preservation and promotion of the Kimbundu language. The primary objective of this research was to analyse the linguistic and discursive strategies employed by Óscar Bento Ribas to represent Angola's Kimbundu cultural heritage. The following specific objectives were formulated:

1. Identify the linguistic elements of the Kimbundu language, including terms, idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and riddles, present in the works Spell (Uanga) and Stories (Missosso);
2. Analyse the cultural significance of the terms, phrases, proverbs, and riddles featured in the works Spell (Uanga) and Stories (Missosso), highlighting how they reflect the Angolan worldview and social ethics.

Qualitative textual analysis was employed as the methodology approach, focusing on the collection and semantic-cultural interpretation of Kimbundu terms through a mixed-methods framework, combining data analysis and interpretative procedures. Accordingly, the structure is presented in the following sections:

- Spell (Uanga). Exploring the spirituality of the people through Kimbundu;
- Stories (Missosso). Tradition expressed through words and customs.

The analysis of the literary works Spell (Uanga) and Stories (Missosso) provided insights into the oral traditions of the Angolan people, reflecting the characteristics of the Kimbundu community, as well as the diverse cultural expressions and practices that preserve the nation's core values, embedded in human relationships, mysticism, emotions, and lived experiences.

METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a qualitative, descriptive-interpretative approach, focusing on the linguistic and cultural analysis of Óscar Ribas´s works Spell (Uanga) and Stories (Missosso). The data sources consist of the complete published editions of both works, from which phraseological expressions, proverbs, and riddles in the Kimbundu language were identified and extracted. This analysis makes it possible to characterize the role of the expressions, recognized by Ribas, as vehicles of cultural memory, identity, and transmission of traditional Angolan knowledge.

These materials were compiled through close analytical reading and systematic manual documentation. The procedures involved the thematic and functional classification of the identified units, followed by their discursive contextualization within the texts and their cultural interpretation. The analysis drew on methodological frameworks from applied linguistics and ethno linguistics, combining phraseological analysis, content analysis, and a comparative approach based on oral source and bibliographic materials related to Kimbundu traditions.

RESULTS

Óscar Bento Ribas' literary trajectory was marked by significant challenges resulting from visual impairment caused by glaucoma, a condition that led to his complete loss of sight at the age of 36. Nevertheless, his intellectual motivation and literary creativity enabled him to pursue a productive and meaningful life. Throughout this period, he consistently relied on the support of family members and close collaborators, who facilitated his access to information and, above all, supported the development of this writing. Among those who played a key role were Maria da Conceição Bento Faria, Maria Cândida Bento Ribas, Rita Manuel, Virgínia Francisco dos Santos, Adelina João Rodriguez, and Carlota Joaquina Nunes de Barros.

Principal literary works of Óscar Bento Ribas include: Passing Clouds (Nuvens que Passam) (1927); The Redemption of a Fault (O Resgate de uma Falta) (1929); Flowers and Thorns (Flores e Espinhos) (1948); Uanga (Spell) (1951); Echoes of My Land (Ecos da Minha Terra) (1952); Spiritual Manifestations (Ilundo) (1958); Stories I, II, III (Missosso) (1961, 1962, 1964); Angolan Regional Food (Alimentação Regional Angolana) (1965); Associations and Recreation (Izomba) (1965); Telling Stories (Sunguilando) (1967); Distraction (Quilanduquilo) (1973); All This Happened (Tudo Isto Aconteceu) (1975); Themes of Angolan Life and their Incidences (Temas da Vida Angolana e suas Incidências) (1987); Cultivating the Muses (Cultuando as Musas) (1993) and the Dictionary of Angolan Regionalisms (Dicionário de Regionalismos Angolanos) (1997).

Óscar Bento Ribas was recognized by both national and international institutions, receiving numerous awards, including the Margaret Wrong Award (1952), the Ethnography Award from the Institute of Angola (1952), and the Monsignor Alves da Cunha Award (1964) He was also honored with the Gonçalves Dias Literary Medal from the National Library of Rio de Janeiro (1968); the Diploma of Merit from the Secretary of State for Culture in Luanda, Angola (1989); the Municipal Medal of Merit from the Municipality of Cascais (Portugal) in 1995 and the Guest Researcher Diploma from the Modern University of Lisbon (Portugal) in 1996).

Spell (Uanga). Exploring the spirituality of the people through Kimbundu

In 1951, Óscar Bento Ribas wrote the folkloric novel “Uanga” (Spell, Witchcraft, Evil Eye), a narrative centred on the cultural traditions of the Angolan people. These works, which incorporate passages in the native Kimbundu language, depicts spirituality through traditional forms of expression employed in contexts such as initiation ceremonies, funeral lamentations, evocations of ancestors, the exaltation of spiritual leaders and mythical figures, requests for divine guidance or protection, and ritualized rhythms accompanied by music and dance.

The following section presents phrases in the Kimbundu language, extracted from Spell (Uanga), followed by their respective interpretations in English (INLD 2009a, 255p). The phraseologies analyzed in this study are presented with the original numbering adopted in the literary work that constituted the corpus of the analysis. This numbering aims to respect the organization proposed by the author and facilitate the location and comparison of occurrences in the reference text.

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Table 1. Presents phrases in Kimbundu language.

Phraseology 13		
Humbì		ietu-é,
humbi	ia	alunga!
Ndé,		ka-di-beke,
humbi ietu-é.		
Muhatu		uasenge,
uaxisa	o	jihenda.
Ndé,		ka-di-beke,
humbi ietu-é.		
Kahonjo		kabolo
kakisa	o	jihenda.
Ndé,		ka-di-beke,
humbi ietu-é.		
Ngibokola		momo,
ngitundila		momo...
Ndé,		ka-di-beke,
humbi ietu-é.		

Within this phraseology, the terms employed convey a collective appeal for forgiveness or spiritual intervention, reflecting a sense of resignation expressed through a song of humility and surrender.

Table 2, Phraseology of terms employed for forgiveness or spiritual intervention.

Phraseolog14	**Phraseolog 15**	**Phraseolog 16**	**Phraseolog 17**	**Phraseology18**	**Phraseology19**	**Phraseology20**	**Phraseology 21**
Nongonongo jami!	Nongojoka	Benu-diu!	Diize!	Mbote, u-i-banga múkua-muxima	Mutu keji i mu-banga mukuá.	Mukandanda, mukulu-nzumbi, zá kunu uetu, tu-u-mone, zá kunu uetu, utangel!... Mukandanda, mukulu-nzumbi, ku Alunga ku aleba, kuiê mutu, kavutukê! Nzumbi, zaka, zaka! Uh! Ué! Nzumbi, uenda kutolomba! Uá! Ué! Nzumbi, mu Akulu Kazongo! Uá! Ué! Nzumbi, uenda kuxakata! Uá! Ué!	Nzamba jiiz'ojo! Nzamb'é, jabamda mulundu, kokolo! Iene imoxi, iana a uola! Iene imoxi, iana a uola! Ngudi ia musunda uádia boxi! Ngudi ia musunda uádia bulu! Ngong'ojo, jobabele! Ngong'ojo, jobabele! Ngudi ia ngongo, k'o inho ku a-mu-zulu! Uasu! Uasu ku mbinda, uasu ku ngoma! Uasu!

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Table 3. Phraseology of terms employed for forgiveness or spiritual intervention.

Phraseolog 22	Phraseolog 23	Phraseolog 24
Kuxangela akuá	Ngongo, ngongo, mon'ami, ngó-é! Ngongo a-i-vala, ngongo ka-i-lukâ, ngó-é! Mbinza i ngasumba, ia ingene ia ákua-ngongo, ngó-é! Ngongo, ngongo, mon'ami, ngó-é! Dilesu di ngasumba, dia ingene dia ákua-ngongo, ngó-é! Ngongo, ngongo, mon'ami, ngó-é! Milele i ngasumba, ia ngene ia âkua-ngongo, ngó-é! Ngongo, ngongo, mon'ami, ngó-é!	Ákua-ngongo a mbadi, nuádia inhi ku nuatunda? Tuádia itande. Ni uelu uenu, jobabele!

In these phrases, the terms refer to the ritual context in which the spirit manifests or spiritual healing occurs, potentially representing the liberation, purification, or farewell of the spirit. Óscar Bento Ribas' work Spell (Uanga) portrays, through these Kimbundu expressions, a spiritual or ceremonial journey of invocation, healing, initiation, or funeral farewell, in which sacred entities intervene, interceding amid suffering and the quest for redemption.

Stories (Missosso). Tradition expressed through words and customs

Between 1961 and 1964, Óscar Bento Ribas published a collection of short stories entitled Stories (Missosso). The first volume, released in 1961 and dedicated to his brothers Mário Ribas and Joaquim Ribas, features both animals and humans as central characters. The second volume, published in 1962, was dedicated to his intellectual peers: Prof. Dr. Alfred Radspieler, Dr. Álvaro Saraiva de Carvalho, Prof. Dr. Dante de Laytano, and Mário Mota, and is characterized by the extensive use of onomatopoeic phrases and expressive linguistic forms. The third volume, published in 1964 and dedicated to all good hearts, portrays episode of local life and includes riddles transmitted orally across generation (INLD, 2009b, INLD, 2009c, INLD, 2009d).

In Stories I (Missosso I), Óscar Bento Ribas presents a collection of proverbs that encapsulate the worldview, moral teachings, and cultural richness of the Angolan people. The proverbs, recorded in Kuimbundu, were compiled and documented in this work (INLD (2009b, 157-243p).

The following section presents proverbs in the Kimbundu language, accompanied by their English translations. The proverbs analyzed in this study are presented with the original numbering adopted in the literary work that constituted the corpus of the analysis. This numbering aims to respect the organization proposed by the author and facilitate the location and comparison of occurrences in the reference text.

Proverbs

2

Ngabande ku nzamba, makamba ma-ngi-tenena; nzamba iafu, makamba ma-ngi-muangana.

I rode an elephant, my friends completed me; the elephant died, my friends scattered.

3 Tula maku nzamba, nda makamba ma-ku-moneke.

Ride an elephant so your friends will appear.

6

Ngajiba xitu, makamba, ndumba; uta uabudika, makamba ma-ngi-lenge.

I hunted game, I had many friends; the rifle broke, my friends fled.

8

Nzamba kanemene mukomb ué

The elephant does not feel the weight of its trunk. With our relatives or possessions, their discomfort cause us little distress.

9

Kubitê tambi, se ku-i-dila.

Not a death goes by without you crying over it. Sticking your nose where it doesn't belong.

18

Sanji únua mu diaki diê.

The hen drinks from her own egg.

51

Ki enda nhoka, Nzambi ua-ki-ijia.

Only God knows how the snake is doing. Life is a mystery.

96

Poko is nvunda ibuila mu nvunda.

A knife in a fight ends in a fight. He who kills with iron dies by iron.

103

Kutuba kweza muvu redzenga.

A mixture of one day of grace that a whole year cannot bring.

For one hope, we squander all our possessions.

142

Uai bua mukuenu, udimuka; kuaxé o tanga, uxa o kaba.

If you go to someone else's house, be smart: if you don't leave your underwear, leave your skin. In unfamiliar places, we must be cautious.

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204

Ku matunda, mazuata; ku maia (anga meza), mazula.

Where they came from, they are dressed; where they are going (or coming from), they are undressed. Whoever tells a story adds a point.

291

Dikumba dia rnuxima, sabi, ngiê.

The lock of the heart, the key is its owner. Each person acts according to their feelings.

315

A-ku-vala ni uaiba, ngolela ji-ku-buila ku muxima.

If you were born with an ugly relative, you will run out of jokes in your heart. Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones at their neighbors' roofs.

The collection of proverbs in Kimbundu presented by Óscar Bento Ribas reveals forms of popular knowledge that emphasize loyalty, the value of cunning over physical strength, criticism of deceptive appearances, prudence, resilience in the face of adversity, ethical principles, and the acceptance of the natural cycles of life. Ribas also addressed riddles as a fundamental expression of the oral tradition, in which imagination, symbolic meaning, linguistic creativity, and aesthetic harmony articulate collective worldviews and representations of everyday lives.

The following section presents phrases in the Kimbundu language, extracted from Stories II (Missosso II), accompanied by their English translations. (INLD (2009c, pp. 92-118). The phraseologies analyzed in this study are presented with the original numbering adopted in the literary work that constituted the corpus of the analysis. This numbering aims to respect the organization proposed by the author and facilitate the location and comparison of occurrences in the reference text.

DISDAIN

A 2

Uolo-di-zenza kala diiaki.

Taking care as if it were an egg

7

Ualalama kala kabalu kadi njíbidi.

As restless as a horse that has eaten ginger.

10

Uabenge kala mbua iavala.

Greedy as a bitch with puppies.

B4

Divumu dia-mu-di kala mubadi.

A belly like a greengrocer's.

8

Uedi o muzumbu kala sapatu.

Lips like shoes.

13

Kanu diolo-um-nua kala kimbungu.

Mouth smelling like a wolf.

15

Uakulu o dikanu kala ngaieta.

Mouth as long as a harmonica.

C4

Uedi o mútue kala muondo.

Cabeça como de tartaruga de água doce.

20

Uakuata o polo kala tuta dia nvula.

Face like a rain cloud.

D 2

Uedi o maju kala jingálufu.

Teeth like forks.

F 2

Uaiba kala nzala um mala.

Ugly as hunger in the stomach.

L1

Ualebe o dimi kala suiji.

A tongue as long as a rattlesnake's.

N 6

Uakuata o mazunu kala mbonzo iadiata o ngenji.

Nose like a sweet potato stepped on by a stranger.

O 26

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Uakuata o mátui kala dimandondo.
Ears like a bat's.
P 18
Inama ia-mu-lebelela kala njila ia menha.
Long legs like a water bird.
T 3
Uajiza kala xitu ia mixiba.
Stubborn as sinew

In this manner, Óscar Bento Ribas, in Stories II (Missosso II), reveals the expressive richness of Angolan oral tradition. The use of disdainful comparisons reflects the people´s critical and creative sensibilities, through which cultural identity is preserved and affirmed by means of popular imagery. Simultaneously, Ribas examines riddles as a key manifestation of oral tradition, in which imagination, semantic depth, linguistic expression, and aesthetic harmony articulate shared conceptions and representations of everyday lives.

The following section present riddles in Kimbundu language, collected in Stories III (Missosso III), along with their English translations. (INLD (2009d, 164-213p). The riddles analyzed in this study are presented with the original numbering adopted in the literary work that constituted the corpus of the analysis. This numbering aims to respect the organization proposed by the author and facilitate the location and comparison of occurrences in the reference text.

RIDDLES
34
Pergunta: Mona uatundu ku-um-vala. Kubita izuua, uateme.
Resposta: Ndungu.
Question: It is a newborn child. Days later, it became evil.
Answer: The spiciness
60
Pergunta: Dizanga diateka Nzambi.
Resposta: Dikoko.
Question: It is a pond that God has filled.
Answer: The coconut.
70
Pergunta: Mu axaxi a kalunga, jinjanena mu jinjanena.
Resposta: Uanda.
Question: In the middle of the sea, there are windows upon windows.
Answer: The fishing net.
74
Pergunta: Ilumba iadi ku tandu a mulundu.
Resposta: Mátui.
Question: There are two apples on top of a hill.
Answer: The ears.
93
Pergunta: Moxi, ulu; ku tandu, palata.
Resposta: Diiaki.
Question: Inside, gold; on top, silver.
Answer: The egg.
96
Pergunta: Kaveia kakotama, kakotama kiá. Kizuua kia kubetuka, kizuua kia kúfua.
Resposta: Pexi.
Question: She is a little old lady with a hunchback, always with a hunchback. The day she straightens up is the day she dies.
Answer: The smoking pipe.
97
Pergunta: Kaveia kene inzo iê. Kindala ki akombo, kindala um axidi kiá.
Resposta: Dizunu.
Question: An elderly woman has her house. As soon as she sweeps it, it gets dirty again.
Answer: The nose.
102
Pergunta: Mona a Kimalauezo kia Tumba a Ndala uatunga bu axaxi ka jipoko. Ji-um-kuamê.
Resposta: Dimi.
Question: Quimalauezo's son lives among knives. But they do not hurt him.
Answer: The tongue.
162
Pergunta: Anhata, anhata kiá.

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Resposta: O hama.

Question Transporting, always transporting.

Answer: The bed.

In the collection of riddles and comparisons presented in the Stories (Missosso), the vitality of popular imagination is clearly evident. The riddles, structured through the interplay of words, images, and rhythms, disclose ways of perceiving and interpreting reality according to a metaphorical logic deeply rooted in Angolan everyday life. The comparisons, in turn, express the community´s critical humor and linguistic creativity, functioning as form of social commentary that highlight and celebrate popular expressiveness. By valuing these oral forms, Ribas demonstrates that Angolan culture affirms itself through the dynamic articulation of collective memory, aesthetic sensibility, and moral reflection.

DISCUSSION

Craib (2024) examined how Óscar Bento Ribas uncovers and preserves Angolan cultural traditions through his literary corpus, which includes short stories, poems, novels, dramas, and essays. The study is based on the observation that Ribas's works, despite their richness in customs, oral traditions, and Kimbundu language expressions, remain relatively unknow among younger generations.

Pedro and Sibi (2019) concur in emphasizing the central role of Óscar Bento Ribas in the preservation and valorization of Angolan culture, recognizing that he seamlessly integrated literature and ethnography. Ribas contributed to the documentation of traditions, languages, myths and customs, as well as to the enduring impact he has had on the cultural formation of successive generations.

Calivala (2015) and Quixico (2022) analyzed Óscar Ribas's novel Spell (Uanga) from both ethnographic and literary perspective, emphasizing how the author compiles and documents elements of Angolan folklore and culture, particularly those of Luanda society at the end of the 19th century. The study explores how Ribas's work represents traditions, beliefs, customs, and popular narratives, framing them as part of the nation´s sociocultural heritage. It highlights the novel's role as a tool for cultural preservation and transmission, illustrating the intersection of literature and ethnography in transforming oral practices and narratives into written form, thereby contributing to the valorization of Angolan memory and identity.

According to Canda (2015), Óscar Bento Ribas was a pivotal figure in the development of modern Angolan literature, distinguished by his work as a writer, ethnographer, researcher, and lexicographer. He devoted himself to collecting and valuing Kimbundu oral traditions, transforming oral narratives into literary texts with a strong ethnographic orientation. Moreover, he promoted the study of works such as Spell (Uanga) as key to understanding Angolan sociocultural dynamics.

Sousa (2010) examines how the Angolan writer Óscar Ribas transcribes and transforms traditional Angolan oral narratives into written texts. The author highlights the influence of European culture, particularly Portuguese, on traditional Angolan folktales.

Tindó (2011) analyzed the significance of the Angolan author Óscar Ribas in the compilation, documentation, and valorization of Angolan oral tradition, portraying him as an exceptional storyteller rooted in the art of campfire narration. The study examines how the so-called literatures of the night, including narratives, tales, proverbs, and other forms of orally transmitted traditional knowledge, were appropriated and aesthetically reconfigured by Ribas in his literary works.

Neves (2008) propose a comparative analysis that establishes a dialogue between two intellectuals, the Brazilian folklorist Luís da Câmara Cascudo and the Angolan writer Óscar Ribas. The study explores similarities in their intellectual trajectories, emphasizing that both authors successfully reconciled literary production with systematic research on folklore and cultural traditions in their respective countries.

These studies converge in recognizing Óscar Bento Ribas as central figure in the preservation, documentation, and literary reinterpretation of Angolan cultural traditions. His literary trajectory, encompassing a diverse corpus of stories, novels, poems, dramas, and essays, demonstrate a seamless integration of literature and ethnography. Ribas transformed oral practices, proverbs, riddles, and local narratives into written texts, thereby safeguarding collective memory and reinforcing cultural identity.

The analysis of the phraseologies, proverbs, and riddles found in the literary works Spell and Stories underscores the central role of the Kimbundu language in Óscar Bento Ribas' oeuvre as a vehicle for cultural memory, spirituality, and symbolic organization of Angolan collective experience. Rather than functioning as mere linguistic records, these forms of expression constitute systems of knowledge in which language, ritual, ethics, and aesthetics are inextricably intertwined.

In the literary work Spell, the phraseology reveals a form of language that conveys semantic meanings related to ritual acts, in which the sacred, ancestors, and spiritual entities are invoked and made present. The use of repetition, parallelism, interjections, and musical rhythm suggest that, in the Kimbundu language, the word possesses an operative dimension, capable of mediating between the visible and invisible worlds. Language thus assumes a mediating function, operating as an instrument of invocation, healing, purification, and spiritual farewell.

These ritualized expressions point to a conception of collective spirituality in which suffering, illness, or death are not experienced as purely individual conditions, but as events that implicated the community and required shared symbolic responses. The recurrent use of terms associated with humility supplication, and resignation suggests an ethic of submission to the sacred, whereby the restoration of balance depends upon the intervention of transcendental forces. In this sense, Spell may be interpreted as a symbolic narrative of initiation, in which the Kimbundu language structures both the spiritual journey of the characters and that of the community itself.

In the literary works Stories, oral tradition manifests itself primarily through proverbs, comparisons, and riddles, revealing another dimension of the same cultural matrix. The proverbs collected by Óscar Bento Ribas condense moral principles, norms of social coexistence, and interpretations of human experience, frequently drawing on metaphors associated with fauna, nature, and rural daily life. The recurrent imagery of the elephant, hunting, the stranger's house, or the egg reflects a pragmatic worldview in which cunning, prudence, and an awareness of human limitations are valued over brute force or ostentation.

The comparisons found in Stories II (Missosso II), in turn, reveal a form a language marked by critical humor and popular creativity. Through the use of vivid imagery, these expressions function as instruments of social commentary, regulating behaviors and reinforcing community

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values. The body emerges as a privileged site of metaphor (mouth, tongue, nose, teeth, face), suggesting a conception of language as an extension of corporeality, in which speaking, eating, and acting are symbolically interconnected.

The riddles presented in the literary work Stories III (Missosso III) highlight the playful and pedagogical dimension of orality. Structured around metaphorical enigmas, the riddles stimulate reasoning, imagination, and the intergenerational transmission of knowledge. The metaphorical logic that underpins them reveals a particular mode of understanding the world, grounded in sensory observation, analogy, and semantic ambiguity. Knowledge is thus collectively constructed through interpretation engagement.

The literary works Spell and Stories demonstrate that Óscar Bento Ribas's oeuvre constitutes a project dedicated of the preservation and valorization of the Kimbundu language and Angolan oral tradition. By integrating these expressive forms into the written domain, Óscar Bento Ribas not only documented cultural practices but also legitimized orality as a valid mode of knowledge production and aesthetic expression. His literary work thus presents the Kimbundu language as a space of memory, resistance, and symbolic continuity.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Overall, Óscar Bento Ribas´s works reveal the complexity of cultural influences in Angola, intertwining oral tradition and local customs with elements inherited from Portuguese colonial culture. Through this interplay, Ribas underscore the central role of ollective memory and oral tradition in the construction and preservation of Angolan cultural identity.

The analysis of Óscar Bento Ribas' literary works Spell (Uanga) and Stories (Missosso) enabled access to a wide range of phrases, idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and riddles in the Kimbundu language, offering valuable insight into Angolan collective identity and popular wisdom, deeply imbued with cultural values and traditional practices. The phraseologies units, proverbs, and riddles in Kimbundu compiled and reworked by Óscar in Spell (Uanga) and Stories (Missosso) constitute significant vehicles for transmitting of the Angolan worldview, revealing key dimensions of the people´s spirituality, moral codes, and collective sensibility.

In the literary work Spell (Uanga), ritual expressions evoke symbolic universes associated with spiritual healing, the manifestation of spirits, and processes of liberation, purification, and funeral transition. These linguistic formulations point to a conception of existence in which life and death are not conceived as separate spheres, but rather as interconnected dimensions mediated by sacred entities that intervene in response to human suffering. The ritual language documented by Ribas does not merely describes cultural practices; it also actualizes a shared experience of initiation, protection, and redemption, enabling the reader to engage with the spiritual logic that underpins Kimbundu cosmology. The proverbs compiled by Óscar Bento Ribas in the literary work Stories (Missosso), reveal an ethical repertoire that reflects the knowledge accumulated by the community over generations. These proverbs embody values such as loyalty, prudence, resilience, and shrewdness, while also offering critiques of false appearances and reflections on the natural cycles of life.

During the course of this research, certain limitations were observed regarding access to Óscar Bento Ribas's works, as most of them are not readily available in bookstores and relevant archives and documents are dispersed. Furthermore, given that the author frequently employs Kimbundu and other local expressions, translating and interpreting these terms can be challenging, particularly for researchers who lack proficiency in the language or do not have access to adequate linguistic resources.

Engaging with Óscar Bento Ribas´s works is essential for new generations to understand and preserve Angolan cultural heritage. His writings, including Spell (Uanga) and Stories (Missosso), integrate oral traditions, local customs, and colonial influences, highlighting collective memory and cultural identity. By studying the proverbs, riddles, and ritual narratives, readers gain insight into Angolan worldview, ethics, and spirituality. Despite challenges of access and linguistic complexity, Rivas's texts remain vital for the transmission and valorization of Angolan cultural knowledge.

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