

Dear Jill,
 Something nice happened to me last week. I started speaking Portuguese. Not real Portuguese, but lecture-Portuguese. The new academic year has just started, and I could no longer put it off. The first minutes were very hard: the students looking surprised, and slightly baffled, and then suddenly I slipped into a kind of basic lecture-ese, and found I could talk for an hour, ask questions, understand, more or less, the answers.

Lygia Machel, Ministro de Educação, came to the University yesterday to attend the solemn opening of the academic year. The rain was pouring down, we sheltered in a sort of basement, she had a cold (called 'coriza' here!) and got someone to help her with the singing and the slogans, and was terrific. Bright, attacking concrete, concrete, concrete in the FRELIMO way, discussing elitism but never using the word once, with constructive direction for professors (especially cooperantes) students and functionaries alike. She enjoyed the occasion so much, and made us all feel alive, and intensified our interest in the University & what it was

about ² The rain belted down outside, from time to time she scratched around in a purse for a handkerchief, occasionally her headdress slipped back a little, & she paused to straighten it, but otherwise she spoke in a concentrated flow for an hour and a half, rarely looking at her notes, dawning her points home in a lively rapid voice. At the end we sang and cheered, and at her ~~own~~ investigation, contributed our own suggestions for 'vivas'. The rain stopped, the solemn opening was over and we went home, buzzing.

Amongst the bonuses of being here. I've just seen a ship go sailing by, bright lights against the dark sea and sky, the radio is playing a piano concerto by Eliot Carter - every night for about three hours there is a special programme of classical music; there's always some fruit in season - it was mangoes, then pineapples, then avocados, now the citrus season begins.

I wonder sometimes which of the many demomondes of Maputo you inhabited when you were here, what it felt like, who you spent your time with, what it all meant to you at that moment. I never realised how subjective the experience is. I thought that the

reality would be enough ², that all 'left' people
would respond in basically the same way. But no.
I spoke to someone who had also been at the
Graca Machel meeting - I didn't really want an
opinion, just an affirmation a sharing of the
pleasure which I thought everybody present had
felt. Oh, it was interesting, she said. I could
hardly believe it.

A diary for the past few days
Saturday. Classes in the morning - International Law
were creating a new science, adapted to the reality
of southern Africa and revolutionary Mozambique.
There's only one textbook in Portuguese: it has the
inscription: To Marcello Caetano, jurist and friend.
Not one mention of OAU, decolonisation. As I lecture,
rather discuss, new ideas come to me, new
connections.

Lunch at the 'Self' where I meet everybody.
Afterwards, study groups with the ANC students
here (20), then hurry to see Battle for Chile part I -
I can hardly bear it; then hurry to have supper
with a lawyer couple from the GDR and another
from Portugal.

Saturday night, a crashing, glorious thunder-
storm keeps me awake, so that I am up when
the alarm goes off (4.30 a.m.). I join some of

the ANC students in a busload
out to "machamba" as part of the activities to
celebrate the 7th anniversary of the PCP. The rain
continues - we plant some garlic, get soaked,
walk through mud, dry our clothes over the grills
on which our lunch is to be cooked. There is a
football match, a few short speeches, then cultural
activities - our group is asked to sing. We select a
few songs - Isiboneloza Mandela, Bandlela Rosa.
This is the first time I sing with the group. It goes
well - for me it's not a performance, it's politics,
letting people know about the ANC. The response is
good. After lunch, the buses depart. Farmworkers
line the road, giving clenched fist salutes.

Sunday night. Drop in on Ed - Helena. Helena
gives my hair a trim - were all smattering up
a little and, I must say, looking better for it.
'Hippies' are not being encouraged. Schoolchildren
Schoolchildren must learn to internalise discipline
& responsibility. There is no corporal punishment,
children sit on school councils, some are members
of the local assemblies. But they must not think
they are special because they are going to
school. They mustn't become separated from
their parent, who can't read and write.
Helena 'tries out' on me different versions of

of the Account Sheet which the Minister has asked her to prepare as a model for all cooperatives. Its very interesting - she explains to me more the principles of double-entry - but I feel I'm not the person to test the sheet

Monday Criminal law - again, creating a new science, to correspond to a reality way in advance. In the evening, have to leave supper to retrieve documents urgently wanted by a rep. of the ANC Women's Section in preparation for March 8 (tomorrow). Arrive sweaty and flustered at the newly converted Avenida Benavente just in time for the start of a programme to celebrate the foundation of the P.C.P. Says a short speech. The film begins - long, slowly-developing, a Soviet tribute to the resistance in Europe in World War II. At interval I notice a familiar face a few seats away in my row. Looks like Marcelino do Santos, only a bit bigger and more powerfully built. I see Pamela - it is Marcelino. Eventually I go over and introduce myself. It turns out I've overlapped remembers meeting me at an international gathering 20 years ago - and I don't remember meeting him! He is very friendly. I spend the second half of the film trying to remember meet

him. Afterwards, on the way out he gives me a long, warm handshake (my Director is watching - good, it will be easier to get my articles out etc.) and I promise that next time I will remember having met him.

I get home at 1 a.m. see the alarm for 6:30 a.m. and suddenly feel a little strange. Twenty years ago we met - in fact it was more - I was 19, representing the Modern Youth Society of Cape Town all twenty members, at a youth meeting (to prepare a festival) in Peking. Marcelino would have been a little older, representing even fewer members. And now, he is in charge of the economy of his country, helping to see it, and I'm teaching law to a few students in a foreign country. The history of our movements has been so different, and yet it's not all objective - so much of the success of his movement is due to him. Twenty years ago (and more) we met Chuan Lai, just a handshake, but we met him. Tonight I have met Marcelino dos Santos, and feel equally honoured. I check the alarm - I mustn't oversleep, because we have to be on the campus at 7:30, for the solemn opening of the academic year by Graça Machel. Albie.

of walking. This is far ² and away the most
friendly city I've ever been in - the absence of
racial feeling is amazing, miracles. As a South
African I just can't get over it. People greet you, wave
to you. Nobody cares that I am white and from South
Africa - like all others, I'm judged by my contribution.
The other thing I like here is the optimism of people
in England there was a tendency towards cynicism,
people are suspicious of each other, always analyzing
motives, never taking anything at face value. In that
sense, life is much less subtle here. The public
issues are clear - overcoming poverty, disease and
illiteracy, standing up to Smith's raids, and always
always building up the country. There are amazing
mixtures of people in the technical and professional
sectors: U.N. people, Swedes, Britons (about 80), Cuban
Russians, Chinese, Brazilian, Italians, many Portuguese
whites who have stayed on, and a whole new generation
of black, brown & white Mozambicans. This is the year
of planning, trying to get more system in the
economy. A new income tax system has just been
introduced, progressive from 1% to 15%, and there is
extensive public explanation - it's the first tax law
I've really understood. What they're discovering is that
a socialist system requires accountants just as much
as does a capitalist one - in fact in some way
more, since the market ceases to be the main
mechanism of control, and has to be replaced by
a different system of evaluation.

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This is also an amazing place for young people. There is such a shortage of well qualified people that in every sector young people are doing jobs that only old people do elsewhere. For example, I was speaking this morning to Comaça, who is the first law graduate of the University here, have completed her 4th year two weeks ago. She is very bright, poised, with lots of insight. Next month she is going off to the province of Fete to be the chief legal consultant, the top judge and the person responsible for creating a whole new court structure. She is 21. Best of all, she is quite unafraid.

So you can see, I'm in a different universe altogether, and very stimulated.

Many, many thanks for continuing to look after my tax affairs so patiently.

Sincerely,

Albie Sachs.

P.S. For what it's worth, the feeling here is that the 'Internal Accord' in Rhodesia could never work, and will intensify divisions in that country because it proposes totally false solutions - people are eager for peace, but braced for a long, long struggle.

in Maputo, whistling new songs I've been hearing, meeting people all the time. I was carrying a pineapple as I walked home, swinging it in my hand as I whistled, breathing in the evening fragrance of the trees, thinking about what I would tell you. Life is filled with enjoyment and a sense of worth. I meet many attractive people, men and women, and have excellent, easy friendships. I have virtually no private life - my public emotions are so rich and intense that I seem to feel none of that pressure for intense, consolatory relationships that I recall having had in what seems those far-off days in a faraway world. I am closer to home, to my world, to my struggles. I have a strange feeling about Britain - a loyalty and protectiveness towards the movement there, and a sense of amazement that I put up with so much and accepted so much when there. At times, I have terrible pangs about my children, but otherwise for the time being, and at least some time to come, I am glorying in the freedom of being on my own. Bless it is to be alive and to be 43 (I forgot, I had my birthday last week too) is very heaven.

So, with a sense of immense gratitude to Mozambique for what it is doing to me, apologies for the disintegration of my English from time to time, & lots of love, affection & cordially greeting,
 - Alice,

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has given them all a direct feeling for the victories here, as well as a capacity to see problems in a long-term perspective and to accept being just a part of a struggle on many fronts and many levels.

Ann, I'm never going to finish the week. On Friday, Heroes Day, the day on which Eduardo Mondlane was assassinated, I went to a concert in a large rink called 'Sporting' - but I'll tell you about 'popular art' another time - it's very exciting and gives real new perspective on art and aesthetics. In the evening I went with my Portuguese colleague and English friends to the opening film of a converted 'art' cinema - it was 'bantata', a Cuban film said to support the people of Chile. It was a daring film that attempted to use the movements of music and poetry as the basis for its visual sequences, but we all thought it failed, and badly, and in some ways was terrible. This is how people discuss films here: 'The politics were ...' 'The direction was ...' 'The acting ...' 'The colour ...' There is no question about what heads the sequence. I've done other things this week-end: been to the market, swam in the sea, seen another film ('Anker' - beautiful, ... very ... good political line, beautifully told, beautifully acted and photographed) and started writing this letter. I walk for miles