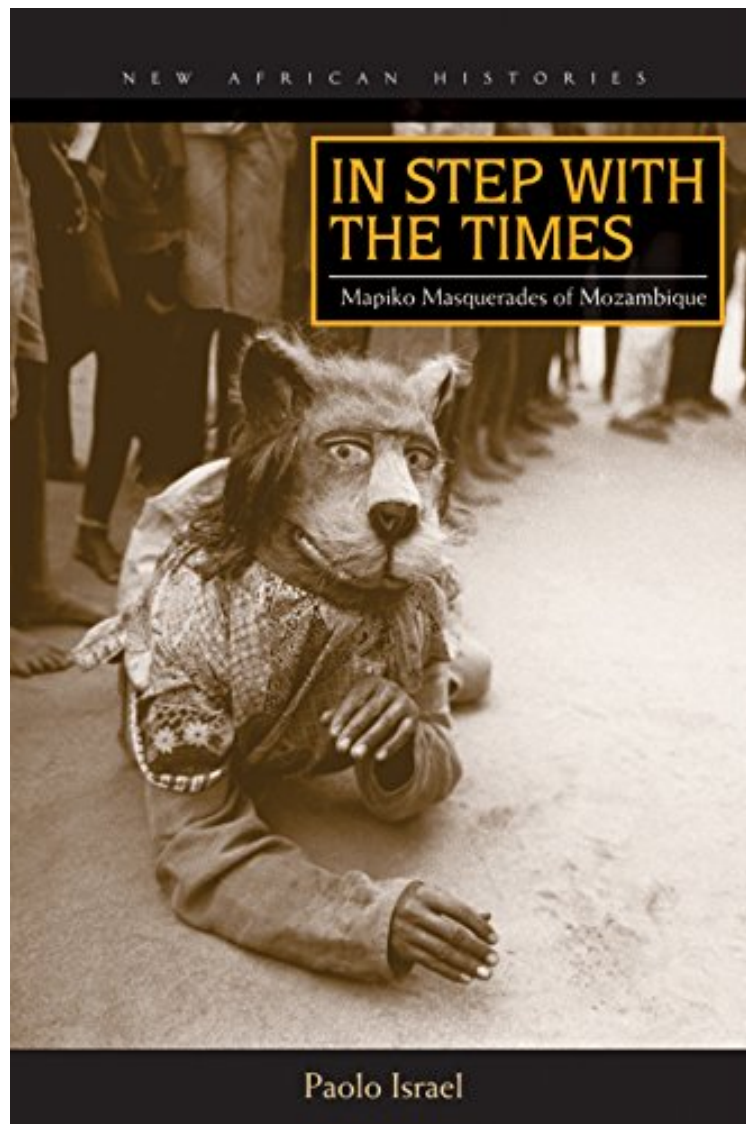


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## In Step with the Times: Mapiko Masquerades of Mozambique (New African Histories)

*Paolo Israel*

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**Paolo Israel : In Step with the Times: Mapiko Masquerades of Mozambique (New African Histories)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In Step with the Times: Mapiko Masquerades of Mozambique (New African Histories):

The helmet-shaped mapiko masks of Mozambique have garnered admiration from African art scholars and collectors alike, due to their striking aesthetics and their grotesque allure. This book restores to mapiko its historic and artistic context, charting in detail the transformations of this masquerading tradition throughout the twentieth century. Based on field research spanning seven years, this study shows how mapiko has undergone continuous reinvention by visionary individuals, has diversified into genres with broad generational appeal, and has enacted historical events and political engagements. This dense history of creativity and change has been sustained by a culture of competition deeply ingrained within the logic of ritual itself. The desire to outshine rivals on the dance ground drives performers to search for the new, the astonishing, and the topical. It is this spirit of rivalry and one-upmanship that keeps mapiko attuned to the times that it traverses. *In Step with the Times* is illustrated with vibrant photographs of mapiko masks and performances. It marks the most radical attempt to date to historicize an African performative tradition.

“Countless authors have written about Mapiko, invariably contributing to its mythologization. But none have accomplished what Paolo Israel has, namely to produce a cultural history of Mapiko—including its plastic elements (the masks worn by Mapiko dancers) as well as its performative elements (dance, drumming, and lyrics). For this alone, Dr. Israel’s work is worth reading.” — Harry West, professor of anthropology, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and author of *Kupilikula: Governance and the Invisible Realm in Mozambique*