Through the generous support of the Scott Kloeck-Jenson fellowship, I was able to undertake 9 weeks of ethnographic pre-dissertation research in Maputo and the Nampula and Quelimane provinces of Mozambique. Going into this fieldwork trip, I had intended for my larger project to examine what sound and music—and more specifically the commodification of music—reveals about changing societal values as Mozambicans have experienced significant political, economic and social transformation after gaining independence from Portugal in 1975. While these large scale changes still underpin the crux of my research interests, my time spent in Mozambique's northern coastal provinces during this trip led me to reshape my project to instead examine women's strategies for social, economic, and political mobility through their participation in dance societies. Tufo, a Sufi celebratory dance of Arab origins, is the most popular performance genre among these societies. The expansive network of tufo groups has expanded throughout the northern and central coastal provinces since the 1980s, and the colorful, coordinated uniforms and dance choreography that are characteristic of tufo performances have become referents of Mozambican beauty, femininity, and tradition in popular imagination. As such, it became apparent during my research that this phenomenon is particularly relevant for examining changing gender norms amidst Mozambique's post-independence transformations.

The first six weeks of my research trip were spent in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique located at the southern tip of the country. Upon arrival I reconnected with the musicians and staff at the Musician's Union (Associação dos Músicos) where there is a free open mic night every Thursday and Friday. These weekly performances are typically busy and provide a good platform for younger, lesser known musicians to practice performing with a live band. Most of the instrumental musicians and vocalists in Mozambique belong to the union, paying a minimal fee each month to take advantage of its offerings. These include instrumental music lessons, practice space, and access to two recording studios set up specifically for live music. The Musician's Union also offers instrumental classes. In addition to attending these weekly concerts, I also spent many evenings attending concerts at several other music venues in central Maputo—Xima, Gil Vicente, Elvis Bar, Nucleo d' Arte, and Dulce Vita. Though Mozambique boasts a breadth of musical talent the limited number of live music venues in the capital and the country more broadly means that many musicians have migrated to regional countries such as South Africa and Angola, and some have found success farther afield in Brazil, Portugal, or Sweden. Of interest to my research was the different styles of music that were being presented at these venues, the pool of performers and bands that were getting regular
work, audience demographics and general receptiveness, and how and what styles and songs were presented as 'Mozambican music'.

Since Maputo is Mozambique's economic driver, the burgeoning music industry is almost exclusively housed there. As a result, every musician with national renown is principally based in Maputo. One of my initial research questions centered on the development of the national music industry and I was able to formally interview seven of Mozambique's best known musicians from the *guarda velha*, or old guard—the older generation of musicians that was particularly active during Mozambique's socialist era. The final musician I interviewed in Maputo was also the first female musician I was able to interview, a testament to the gender disparity in performers among the older generation. In fact, she is commonly recognized as the only female popular musician during the socialist era, and the experiences she recounted stood out in sharp contrast to those that had been relayed to me by the male musicians. This interview sparked my interest in understanding women's experiences as performers throughout the country, and became the impetus for my research inquiry as I traveled outside of Maputo.

During the last three weeks of my trip, I traveled to Zambezia and Quelimane provinces to gain a better understanding of how local music industries operate in the north of the country—a region that is culturally, economically, religiously, and often politically separate from Maputo and its surrounding provinces in the far south. I traveled by bus with a Mozambican friend from Maputo to Quelimane, a distance of over 1,500 km. Using Quelimane as a base, we then took several short trips to many of the larger cities in the region. As I learned, public travel in Mozambique is always accompanied by music—whether it be music videos on a coach bus, music blaring from the radio in the smaller local buses, or someone playing music on their phone. During one particularly lengthy journey, the passengers of the mini-bus even demanded that the driver sing to make up for the broken stereo system. The types of music played on these journeys also varied considerably from the Mozambican and international hits I had grown accustomed to hearing in Maputo. While a few of these hits—often sung in Tsonga-Shangaan, one of the most predominant languages spoken in Maputo—were popular in the north, there were active local music industries in the north producing songs in Makua, the most widely spoken language in the north, as well as considerable influence from Swahili music coming from Tanzania and Kenya.

Nampula, the cultural and economic capital of the north, was our first stop. There I visited the renowned National Ethnographic Museum. I also spoke with several people about their participation, or their relatives' participation, in *tufo*, and collected local music on CDs. From Nampula we went to Ilha de Mocambique, the former Portuguese capital and home to the *tufo* tradition. Oral history contends that *tufo* arrived on the island from Tanzania in 1932, and
Grupo Estrela Vermelha de Ilha de Mocambique is considered to be the oldest group in the country. While in Ilha I met with and interviewed the queen of Estrela Vermelha and toured their club house and performance space. Unfortunately, my stay on Ilha coincided with the end of Ramadan, a time during which tufo groups cease all performances and practices, and so I was not able to see them perform.

However, after Ramadan was over, we visited Pebane, a district capital on the coast situated along the border between Zambezia and Nampula provinces. Pebane is the home to one of Grupo Estrela Vermelha's sister sub-groups, Grupo Estrela Vermelha de Pebane, which means these groups are closely linked within the same network of dance societies by sharing the same name and group colors (red and yellow). In Pebane, I was able to interview the group queen, commission a performance, and dance with the group. This trip was particularly fruitful in that I was able to make arrangements to return to Pebane during my long-term dissertation field work trip, to work with the group and learn tufo through participation as a group member in the future. It was while speaking with group members during these trips to Ilha and Pebane that the connection between mobility and group membership became particularly evident, as dancers fore-fronted the regional travel they were able to do as participants in dance societies as one of the most important benefits, along with heightened local status, and political patronage during official visits or events.

These significant developments in the trajectory of my research, as well as the crucial contacts I was able to make while in the field, would not have been possible without the support of the Scott Kloeck-Jenson Fellowship. The commitment to social justice that is promoted by the fellowship is at the core of the new project I was able to develop while in Mozambique. Competitive dance societies are important sites for understanding the experiences of under-class women amidst moments of profound social, economic, and political change more broadly. Lauded as one of Africa’s frontier economies and boasting one of the world’s largest reserves of natural gas, Mozambique is at the cusp of significant capital accumulation, yet the benefits are being unequally distributed. In the contemporary political moment, characterized by an exclusionary style of governance and growing socio-economic inequalities, poor women living in geographically isolated places are among the most marginalized.

On a more personal note, I was able to visit the park dedicated to the Kloeck-Jensons while in Maputo. The park is situated on a quiet, leafy road that lines the far edge of the University of Eduardo Mondlane campus in Maputo’s Sommerschield neighborhood. Though the playground equipment has been removed from the space, there are still several benches lining the walkway circling the park, and the stone bearing the dedication plaque still reminds visitors and passersby to whom this shady space (and shade is very desirable in Maputo) is dedicated.