

## Glory be to Chingwe's Hole

Chingwe's Hole, you devoured the Chief's prisoners  
Once, easy villagers decked in leopard colours  
Pounding down their energies and their sight.  
You choked minstrel lovers with wild granadilla  
Once, rolling under burning flamboyant trees.

Do you remember Frog the carver carving Ebony Beauty?  
Do you remember Frog's pin on Ebony Beauty's head  
That brought Ebony to Life? And when the Chief  
Heard of a beauty betrothed to Frog, whose dogs  
Beat up the bushes to claim Ebony for the chief?

Even when Fly alarmed Frog of the impending hounds  
Who cracked Fly's bones? Chingwe's Hole, woodpeckers  
Once poised for vermilion strawberries merely  
Watched fellow squirrels bundled up in sacks  
Alive as your jaws gnawed at their brittle bones.  
Alive as your jaws gnawed at their brittle bones.  
Chingwe's Hole, how dare I praise you knowing whose  
Marrow still flows in murky Namitembo River below you?  
You strangled our details boating your plush dishes,  
Dare I glorify your rope and depth epitomizing horror?



*From: "Of Chameleons and Gods":*

*Poems by Jack Mpange*

*Jack Mapanje (b.1944), is Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Newcastle, he is the author of 4 collections of poetry and the recipient of awards including the Rotterdam Poetry International Award and the African Literature Association (USA) Fonlon-Nichols Award. He studied in England, before returning to Malawi, where he rose to the position of Head of the Department of English, University of Malawi, which he held until his book "Of Chameleons and Gods" was banned and he spent almost four years as a political prisoner in Mikuyu Prison.*