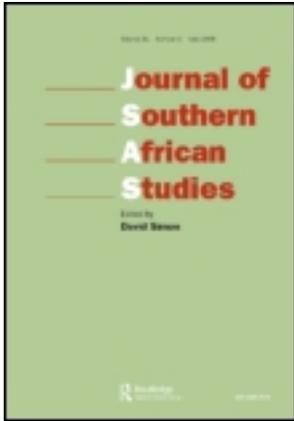


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State Discourse on Internal Security and the Politics of Punishment in Post-Independence Mozambique (1975–1983)

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This article explores state discourse on domestic security threats and the way the Mozambican party-state sought to counter them in the decade after independence. It analyses the ways in which government forces dealt with ideological enemies, crime and social disorder. It is argued that Frelimo's quest for hegemony and its obsessive aim of building a state-nation under the project of 'socialist revolution' led to harsh intolerance of all that was considered a hindrance to these objectives. As obstacles to the project arose from the outset, the party-state developed a political analysis of security that did not distinguish internal from external security threats. The result was the institutionalisation of a politics of punishment as a state instrument of power and social control aiming to repress, deter and educate party-state opponents and all individuals outside the realm of socialist and revolutionary principles defined by the party-state. The article demonstrates that much of this politics of punishment represented to considerable sections of Mozambican society a return to the 'old regime' insofar as the post-independence state reproduced some colonial mechanisms of punishment and social control.

Introduction

The short period of Mozambique's post-independence socialist experience¹ led by Frelimo (the Mozambican Liberation Front, at that time a new government authority following liberation from the Portuguese in 1975) comprises a range of social and political processes that have not been fully addressed academically, but that are still alive in the collective and individual memories of Mozambicans. The harshness of a state as popular as it was violent is one of those neglected topics.

Some attempts to explain the harshness of the post-independence state in Mozambique are based on the claim that the country was faced with external aggression, first from Rhodesia

*I am indebted to Professors João Paulo Borges Coelho and David Hedges for their academic guidance and assistance. Professor David Hedges thoroughly edited and discussed with me fundamental aspects of the language, which is foreign to me. I am grateful to Zenobia Jeffries for her friendship and patience in correcting the language of first drafts of this article. A special thank you to Arild Ulset, Jorge Njal, and Dr Victor Igreja, whose invaluable comments gave shape to this article.

1 The question of whether Mozambique was a socialist/socialist oriented country or not between 1975 and 1987 has raised a wide but inconclusive debate among scholars of contemporary Mozambique. For different claims, see, among others, M. Cahen, 'Check on Socialism. What Check? What Socialism?', *Review of African Political Economy*, 57 (1993), pp. 46–59, and J. Saul, 'Eduardo Mondlane and the Rise and Fall of Mozambican Socialism', *Review of African Political Economy*, 104/5 (2005), pp. 309–15.

(from 1976 to 1979), and then from South Africa (during the whole of the 1980s).² Notwithstanding the significance of the threat represented by Rhodesian and South African minority regimes (as shown below), this article questions conventional accounts by suggesting that post-colonial state violence and its politics of punishment were linked to the way in which Mozambique attained its independence and the victorious and revolutionary ideology of Frelimo at that time. More important for understanding the state's harshness was Frelimo's quest for hegemony and for legitimacy after the struggle for liberation and the way it envisaged building the state and the nation in independent Mozambique. Suspicion and intimidation of enemies/traitors, as well as an emphasis on ideology, morality, violence and punishment, constituted core ingredients of state-building in Mozambique under a 'revolutionary liberation front', in ways similar to regimes elsewhere in Africa, Latin America and South Asia.³ Unsurprisingly, state violence in post-independence Mozambique was directed against an enemy/traitor of the revolution and of the 'people', in whose name the state claimed to speak.

Tobias Kelly and Sharika Thiranagama argue that, in the course of state-building, regimes need the figure of the enemy/traitor to expand their authority and to establish the line between what is politically and morally acceptable and what is not. Thus, 'treason is at the heart of the process by which modern states are made ... Accusations of treason have ... historically played a central role in the attempt to maintain social and political authority'.⁴ According to these authors, all modern states were created under the spectre of treason: 'the identification and elimination of traitors help to make claims to power tangible'. Interestingly, the figure of the traitor is not the 'other', the stranger or foreigner, but 'potentially one of us', the enemy within.⁵

In Mozambique, this was done through an exhaustive exercise that involved defining an enemy who was embodied and institutionalised in the cartoon figure of Xiconhoca. As Lars Buur convincingly argues, the figure of Xiconhoca was produced to represent the internal enemy in its multiple forms and in a range of circumstances.⁶ As the enforcement of the revolution and the aim of establishing a new cosmological order for the new society was challenged and faced structural obstacles from the outset, the party-state developed a discourse of suspicion and conspiracy. Responsibility for the difficulties faced by Mozambique could not be attributed to the party and its leadership. It must necessarily be the work of an external aggressor (imperialism) supported by internal forces. 'Traitors', 'internal agents', 'lackeys of imperialism', the 'reactionary and anti-revolutionary', the 'compromised', 'armed gangs', 'vagrants' – to list but a few of the labels – were all names of the enemy within. According to the ruling party, armed bandits, economic sabotage, social disorder, cultural obscurantism, and religious fanaticism, were all manifestations of an internal enemy that was against the revolution and determined to bring about its failure. The party-state needed to identify on a daily basis these manifestations of the enemy and present them to the people in order to legitimise its claims to power and authority. The figure of Xiconhoca served this purpose well as it 'encapsulated everyday immorality where illicit transactions were

2 See A. Isaacman and B. Isaacman, *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution: 1900–1982* (Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1983); B. Munslow, *Mozambique: The Revolution and its Origins* (London, Longman, 1983), J. Saul (ed.), *A Difficult Road: The Transition to Socialism in Mozambique* (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1985); and J. Hanlon, *Mozambique: Revolution under Fire* (London, Zed Books, 1984). For a critical review of these books, see J. Penvenne, 'A *Luta Continua*: New Literature on Mozambique', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 18, 1 (1985), pp. 109–38, and A. de Bragança and J. Depelchin, 'Da Idealização da Frelimo à Compreensão da História de Moçambique', *Estudos Moçambicanos*, 5/6 (1986), pp. 29–52.

3 See various contributors in S. Thiranagama and T. Kelly (eds), *Traitors: Suspicion, Intimacy, and the Ethics of State-Building* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

4 T. Kelly and S. Thiranagama, 'Introduction: Spectres of Treason', in Thiranagama and Kelly (eds), *Traitors*, p. 3.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

6 L. Buur, 'Xiconhoca: Mozambique's Ubiquitous Post-Independence Traitor', in Thiranagama and Kelly (eds), *Traitors*, pp. 24–47.

flourishing, where “all [the] undisciplined, the corrupt, the bandits, assassins, thieves, diversionists, regionalists, racists, etc.” became apparent.⁷

This analysis of Mozambique’s post-independence challenges by the new regime resulted in a rigid politics of punishment as institutional mechanisms of state violence and social control reproduced colonial methods of punishment in different ways. Mass detentions and arrests, displacement and imprisonment in camps of re-education and of production in remote areas of the country, corporal punishment and public executions by firing squad were some of the main mechanisms of state violence and punishment against the ‘enemies’ of the ‘popular state’ and of the ‘revolution’.

This article is based on an analysis of secondary literature and press articles, mainly from the daily *Notícias* and the weekly *Tempo*. *Tempo* was one of the most effervescent publications of the pro-Frelimo press during the ‘socialist’ experience in Mozambique. Its support for Frelimo policies was not due only to the nationalisation and statism of the press, but also because its journalists were themselves ‘progressives’ even before national independence. This makes *Tempo* an important source for Frelimo discourses and policies.⁸

The Transition to Independence and the Radicalisation of Frelimo

One of the basic problems of the history of Frelimo comes not only from the victorious form in which this history has been approached, but above all from the way its knowledge has been presented as unquestionable.⁹

The particular context in which Frelimo ‘negotiated’ the independence of Mozambique after the April 1974 coup in Lisbon,¹⁰ both domestically and regionally, was a determinant in the radicalisation (one may say exclusivism)¹¹ of the nationalist leadership. The neo-colonial manoeuvres of Lisbon under Spínola, according to which Mozambique would achieve its autonomy within the Portuguese sphere after a referendum and general elections to be contested by Frelimo and several other political parties created in the aftermath of the coup,¹² challenged Frelimo’s quest for political hegemony. The attempted counter-coup by settlers in Lourenço Marques (now Maputo) on 7 September 1974,¹³ in reaction to the signing of the Lusaka Agreements that recognised Frelimo as the ‘sole and legitimate representative of the

7 Buur, ‘Xiconhoca’, p. 40. For a detailed description of the Xiconhoca image, see H. Ossemame, ‘*Xiconhoca – O Inimigo’ e o Processo de Criação do Homem Novo* (Licenciatura dissertation, Maputo, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, 2003).

8 For the history of *Tempo* and its role in the Mozambican revolution see E. Machiana, *A Revista ‘Tempo’ e a Revolução Moçambicana: Da Mobilização Popular ao Problema da Crítica na Informação* (Maputo, Promédia, 2002).

9 De Bragança and Depelchin, ‘Da Idealização da Frelimo’, p. 33.

10 The *coup d’état* in Lisbon in 1974 put an end to the Portuguese colonial-fascist regime and opened a new era in the metropolis and in so-called Portuguese Africa. Talks were initiated between the new Lisbon administration and nationalist movements, leading to the transfer of power and subsequent independence of Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola. Mozambique proclaimed its independence on 25 June 1975, after a year of transitional government, headed by Joaquim Chissano as Prime Minister since 20 September 1974.

11 C. Darch and D. Hedges, ‘“Não Temos a Possibilidade de Herdar Nada de Portugal”: As Raízes do Exclusivismo e Vanguardismo Político em Moçambique, 1969–1977’, in G.V. Boas (ed.), *Territórios da Língua Portuguesa. Culturas, Sociedades, Políticas. Anais do IV Congresso Luso-Africano-Brasileiro de Ciências Sociais, Rio de Janeiro, 1 a 5 de Setembro de 1996* (Rio de Janeiro, UFRJ-IFICS, 1998), pp. 135–49.

12 A. de Bragança, ‘Independência sem Descolonização: A Transição do Poder em Moçambique, 1974–1975. Notas sobre os seus Antecedentes’, *Estudos Moçambicanos*, 5, 6 (1985), pp. 7–28.

13 In the depths of despair, white extremist groups (the Dragons of Death and the Free Mozambique Movement – wings of the anti-Frelimo settler party FICO) attempted a coup, seizing the radio station and the airport in Lourenço Marques, and appealing to South Africa to send troops to occupy the city and avoid the possibility of Frelimo taking power. A.D. Harvey, ‘Counter-coup in Lourenço Marques: September 1974’, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 39, 3 (2006), pp. 487–98.

people of Mozambique' and the consequent violence in the capital and its suburbs, reinforced Frelimo's fear. Additionally, the threat represented by South Africa and Rhodesia and Frelimo's suspicion of the cities and urban people after long years of struggle in the countryside 'pushed the liberation movement into increasingly militaristic, revolutionary and exclusivist political positions, culminating in a highly *dirigiste* governmental style in the period after independence'.¹⁴

During the transitional government, every political organisation was suppressed inside the country. Some of their leaders were accused of treason and crimes against decolonisation.¹⁵ They were imprisoned and sent to re-education camps. Those who managed to escape fled to live in exile.¹⁶ This attitude condemned other forms of social and political pluralism outside the Frelimo framework. They were seen as manifestations of the enemy and were to be severally repressed. As the party banished political movements and silenced their leaders, urban civil society, which was suspected of challenging the new establishment, was to be controlled through the Democratic Mass Organisations. These were nothing but arms of the party in the form of associations: the youth organisation (OJM); the women's organisation (OMM); the teachers' organisation (ONP); and the journalists' organisation (ONJ).¹⁷ As defined in the 1975 Constitution and thereafter by the Third Congress, the party was the leading organisation of the people, and the state was the instrument for the realisation of the party's policy, and top-down centralist democracy was the core principle to be adopted.¹⁸

Two years after the proclamation of national independence, in February 1977, Frelimo held its Third Congress and officially declared itself a vanguard Marxist-Leninist party. Although Marxism evolved within the nationalist movement during the liberation war and became dominant from 1968–69, this open and clear alignment with the Eastern bloc, at a time when southern Africa was one of the main arenas of the Cold War, was much influenced by the need for aid from COMECON.¹⁹ The Third Congress was a turning-point since it ratified the measures taken since independence and it defined the politico-economic and social strategy envisaging the establishment of a socialist society in Mozambique under the direction of a centralised pyramid structure with President Machel at the top. It also marks the establishment of the party as the dominant organ. From this time on, as Borges Coelho puts it, the red membership party card would be the test of admission for being Mozambican.²⁰ In other words, one had to 'belong' to and support Frelimo to be Mozambican.

Of particular note here is the meaning of Frelimo's ideology. It did not mean only that the struggle for independence was viewed in terms of class struggle. It also meant that the world vision and its interpretation by Mozambican people ought to be guided by Marxism-Leninism.²¹ The latter was much more than a guiding line of the revolutionary vanguard.

14 Darch and Hedges, 'Não Temos a Possibilidade de Herdar Nada de Portugal', p. 146.

15 These crimes were punishable under decree-laws 8/74 and 11/74. See J.C. Trindade, 'Rupturas e Continuidades nos Processos Políticos e Jurídicos', in B. de Sousa Santos and J.C. Trindade (org.), *Conflito e Transformação Social: Uma Paisagem das Justiças em Moçambique* (Porto, Afrontamento, 2003), p. 102.

16 J.M. Cabrita, *Mozambique. The Tortuous Road to Democracy* (New York, Palgrave, 2000), p. 81.

17 See B. Egerö, *Moçambique: Os Primeiros Dez Anos de Construção da Democracia* (Maputo, Arquivo Histórico de Moçambique, 1992).

18 FRELIMO, *O Partido e as Classes Trabalhadoras Moçambicanas na Edificação da Democracia Popular: Relatório do Comité Central ao Terceiro Congresso* (Maputo, 1977), pp. 95 and 112.

19 J.G. Cravinho, *Modernizing Mozambique: Frelimo Ideology and the Frelimo State* (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Oxford, 1995).

20 J.P. Borges Coelho, 'Um Itinerário Histórico da Moçambicanidade', in F. Rosas and M.F. Rollo (coord.), *Portugal na Viragem do Século. Língua Portuguesa: A Herança Comum* (Lisboa, Pavilhão de Portugal – Expo' 98/Assitio and Alvim, 1998), pp. 87–126.

21 For the evolution of Frelimo's ideology see, among others, S. Kruks, 'From Nationalism to Marxism: The Ideological History of FRELIMO: 1962–1977', in I.L. Markowitz (ed.), *Studies in Power and Class in Africa* (1987), pp. 237–56.

It included, above all, the tendency to what Achille Mbembe terms the theologian-state, that is, 'a state which is preoccupied not only with practices concerning the distribution of power and influence, social relations, economical arrangements and political processes. It is also [a state] which aspires explicitly at defining for social agents the way they have to see themselves, interpret themselves and interpret the world'.²² Thus, in Mbembe's terminology, Frelimo, which acted as a proto-state during much of the struggle period and which would act as one after independence, was a theologian-state in search of hegemony. Frelimo always stated plainly that the struggle against colonialism was not designed merely to achieve independence, but to substitute colonial society with a new society, a socialist society where there would be no exploitation of man by man, a society free from the illnesses and viciousness of the bourgeoisie. More than a simple modification in the politico-economic system, Frelimo aimed at changing the cosmological order of society by profound transformations in social behaviour, through 'a permanent battle against the manner of living and thinking, against the values and tastes of the old society[,] ... a fight for the continuous transformation of men and society against the ideas of the old society'.²³ The antithesis of Xiconhoca, the New Man, was to recreate a nation in the image of the Frelimo leadership.²⁴

Another aspect of the radicalisation of Frelimo was its continual militarisation. If, on the one hand, the military was considered as the most dynamic and conscious sector of the party, on the other, its leaders 'from Samora Machel down began their career as military commanders'.²⁵ According to Borges Coelho and Macaringue, this close relationship between the party and the military was, partly, 'to ensure that politics remained closely linked to the command post', but also to guarantee that Frelimo could continue to provide political cadres to the state. Illustrative is the fact that the military structures remained under Frelimo's authority and 'serving in the army became the highest guarantee of political trust'.²⁶ However, this relationship was not free from friction, as underground opposition to President Machel within the army arose at the height of the economic and military crisis in the mid-1980s.²⁷ Even so, Frelimo remained a militarised organisation (like several other sections of Mozambican society). This militarisation, along with a strong commitment to Marxism, would play a significant role in the state conception of security and the definition of the enemy.

Frelimo and the Security Issue: Defining the Enemy

The national independence of Mozambique was greeted with much enthusiasm, yet it was a time of great tension. Triumphant and popular after a decade of victorious war against the colonial regime, Frelimo assumed that Mozambique's independence would not be complete if the rest of southern Africa was still under colonial rule. The new nation began supporting

22 A. Mbembe, *Afriques Indociles: Christianisme, Pouvoir et État en Société Post-coloniale* (Paris, Karthala, 1988), p. 128, cited in E. Morier-Genoud, 'Of God and Caesar: The Relations between Christian Churches and the State in Post-colonial Mozambique, 1974–1981', *Le Fait Missionnaire*, 3 (September 1996), p. 47.

23 FRELIMO, *O Partido e as Classes*, p. 94.

24 See P. Virtanen, 'Defining the "Other": Democracy in Mozambique within a Historical Perspective', *African and Asian Studies*, 2, 3 (2003), p. 247.

25 J. Alexander, 'The Local State in Post-war Mozambique: Political Practice and Ideas about Authority', *Africa*, 67, 1 (1997), p. 3.

26 J.P. Borges Coelho and P. Macaringue, 'The Role of Mozambique's Armed Forces in a Changing Security Context', in P. Batchelor, K. Kingma and G. Lamb (eds), *Demilitarisation and Peace-building in Southern Africa: The Role of the Military in State Formation and Nation-building*, Vol. III (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2004), pp. 38–9.

27 See D.A. Robinson, *Curse on the Land: A History of the Mozambican Civil War* (Ph.D. thesis, The University of Western Australia, School of Humanities, 2006); and D.A. Robinson, 'A Case of Assassination? President Samora Machel and the Plane Crash at Mbuizi', *Postamble*, 2, 2 (2006), pp. 45–64.

the nationalist movements of South Africa (ANC) and Zimbabwe (ZANU). At the same time, it assumed a more practical engagement in the struggle against the Smith regime by closing frontiers and denying sea access to Rhodesia in 1976, in fulfilment of the UN's sanctions.²⁸ This position created a hostile environment between Mozambique and the minority regimes, such that Frelimo expected aggression from these countries, 'not only the possibility of a military intervention,²⁹ but also the infiltration of double agents within [the party-state] structures – the so called internal enemy'.³⁰

Thus, Frelimo viewed national independence as a transitional phase from one struggle to another. In effect, this was the same war, the same enemy. '*A luta continua*' ('The struggle continues') was more than a slogan. It meant that the battle against Portuguese colonialism had been won, but the same and permanent enemy (capitalist-imperialism) now represented by racist South Africa and Rhodesia, would use new and more subtle tactics to discredit socialism and destroy the People's revolution in Mozambique and so reinstate the oppression and exploitation of man by man. Such tactics included economic sabotage, direct military aggression and propaganda against the 'correct line' and the guiding leaders of the 'people's cause'. Frelimo believed that the remnants and successors of the colonial bourgeoisie, those who aspired to replace the settlers, then described as 'petit bourgeoisie' or 'aspirants to the bourgeoisie', would be used as agents of the enemy and be infiltrated into the party-state apparatuses and organised into reactionary groups of gangsters and criminals. As President Machel claimed in one of his speeches:

They are a minority of reactionaries, of enemy agents who have management and executive tasks. We have allowed enemy agents to hold key positions. This is the present state of affairs and we must search out its roots, identify its causes, discover and penalize those to blame. It is no accident that the problems arise in all sectors, in all provinces. It is no accident that they appear as a chain of interconnected problems. They are not isolated matters, passing difficulties, petty irregularities. They are the outcome of a vast action, an action with precise aims: against the revolutionary process; against people's power; against our economic independence; against the building of socialism in Mozambique ... It is deliberate, organized, coordinated action directed from abroad.³¹

The security policy defined by Frelimo was deeply influenced by what Morier-Genoud calls Marxist conspiracy theory, a theory that 'sees an imperialist plot behind everything and everybody'³² or an 'imperialist siege' as Adam puts it.³³ Triumphant and popular, Frelimo claimed its power and its objective of building a socialist nation could only be threatened by external forces.³⁴ Internal forces could only act as agents under the orders of their 'boss' in Rhodesia, South Africa and the far West.³⁵ It was in the light of this reading that the national

28 J.P. Borges Coelho, 'As Duas Guerras de Moçambique', in S. Pantoja (org.), *Entre Áfricas e Brasís* (Brasília, Marco Zero, 2001), p. 84.

29 The invasion of Angola by South African troops in August 1975 was illustrative of what the apartheid regime was able to do. Only with the support of Cuban forces could the MPLA expel the invaders in March the following year. D. O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The Apartheid State and the Politics of the National Party* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1996), p. 222.

30 Borges Coelho and Macaringue, 'The Role of Mozambique's Armed Forces', p. 38.

31 S. Machel, 'We Are Declaring War on the Enemy Within', in B. Munslow (ed.), *Samora Machel: An African Revolutionary. Selected Speeches and Writings* (London, Zed Books, 1985), p. 92.

32 Morier-Genoud, 'Of God and Caesar', p. 41.

33 Y. Adam, *Escapar aos Dentes do Crocodilo e Cair na Boca do Leopardo: Trajectória de Moçambique Pós-colonial (1975–1990)* (Maputo, Promédia, 2006), p. 67.

34 G. Cawthra and M. Chachiua, 'Internal Security in Mozambique and South Africa', in P. Batchelor and K. Kingma (eds), *Demilitarisation and Peace-building in Southern Africa: National and Regional Experiences* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2004), p. 120.

35 See discourses in S. Machel, 'We Are Declaring War on the Enemy Within'; 'Prepara-se Nova Agressão Contra a R.P.M.: Comunicado do Serviço Nacional de Segurança Popular', *Tempo*, 1 July 1979, p. 2; and 'Romparamos Definitivamente com a Burguesia para Consolidar o Poder Popular. Documento do Presidente Samora Machel no Comício de 22 de Junho em Maputo', *Tempo*, 8 August 1982, pp. 33–48.

security strategy was conceived, and the result was the homogenisation, standardisation and militarisation of external and internal security components, both seen as one and external – a deliberate, organised and coordinated action directed by imperialism against the ‘people’s state’. This analysis meant that Rhodesian, South African and then Renamo’s aggression and domestic acts of crime (for example, armed robbery), disorder (smuggling, for example), political opposition to the party line and orientations, as well as the paralysing of factory production, were all seen as having external origins, as being part of the imperialist plot against Mozambique. As Cawthra and Chachiua point out,

Given this confusion between political and criminal security issues, ... internal and external security functions could not be distinguished from one another [and] the distinction between internal and external, criminal and political security factors were collapsed to the point that they were seen as the same thing. This led to a unified, politicised [one may add ideological] and militarised concept of internal security.³⁶

When Rhodesia began military operations inside Mozambique in 1976, Frelimo warnings on this new phase of the struggle were more than metaphorical. Although a modern and professional national army was to be formed rapidly to face the situation,³⁷ paramilitary groups of militias were also created and the populations of bordering areas with Rhodesia were mobilised to build underground shelters. But the war was not the only front of the battle. As the economic strategy (which would lead to economic independence and the establishment of socialism) was becoming clearly defined and enthusiastically implemented, new fronts in the struggle were opened. Poor economic results and the consequent generalised crisis were viewed as resulting from organised action against the Mozambican revolution and its objective of establishing socialism. The economy was considered the principal target of enemy action, either through military attacks on economic infrastructure such as railroads and bridges, or through sabotage by infiltrated agents who destroyed factory equipment and raw materials and crippled production, who stole goods destined for the people and created agitation and discontent among the workers, and who through conscious misinterpretation of party orientations prepared the conditions for the pillage of state goods and unrestrained speculation. Thus, the party was urged to analyse the state of affairs, study the enemy’s manoeuvres and provide a base for the masses to understand the situation and to know the enemy’s tactics. In July 1977, the Council of Ministers produced a document entitled ‘*Como age o inimigo?*’ (‘How does the enemy act?’). The document was to be studied by everyone in all work places and residential areas, since the main weapon against the enemy was the people’s ‘Unity’ and ‘Vigilance’. One of the central statements about the situation, published in *Tempo*, was as follows:

When Frelimo came to power, expectations of capitalism implanted in our country were frustrated, and forced to change tactics it launched an economic war aiming at stirring up economic and social chaos ... After the proclamation of national independence and the immediate measures of nationalisation, ... capitalism intensified its aggressiveness and adopted practices of internal destabilisation ... In this context it is imperative to make an analysis and a concerted reflection on the situation in our country and of the methods the enemy is putting into practice. Such analysis shows that there is a truly concerted action against our power and our revolutionary conquests ... The principal cause of our difficulties are the deliberate actions, direct or indirect, against our economy, by the external enemy and its agents among us ... These actions, conducted by international capitalism, are carried out in concert with the still powerful

36 Cawthra and Chachiua, ‘Internal Security in Mozambique and South Africa’, pp. 121–2.

37 ‘To ensure political trust, the new army would be formed on the basis of the 10,000-strong guerrilla force that had fought the liberation war’, as decided in 1975. But new developments proved this ambition to be unrealistic and efforts had to be made to get support from friendly countries (particularly the Soviet Union) to build the new army. Borges Coelho and Macaringue, ‘The Role of Mozambique’s Armed Forces’, p. 39.

capitalist sector that exists in our country ... The situation that we face derives from international imperialism and it is framed in its global strategy against world progressive countries ... The aggression from the illegal and racist Smith regime is part of this global action of imperialism to destabilise our power ... According to its new methodology, imperialism is combining aggression, subversion, economic sabotage and general disorganisation.³⁸

In Morier-Genoud's terms, this official statement makes clear that the party-state approach to the politico-economic situation of Mozambique was deeply informed by a Marxist conspiracy theory,³⁹ as well as a high level of homogenisation of internal and external security factors. Any internal resistance to party orientations or any other means of social deviation from the principles of socialism and of the 'New Man' were labelled as acts of subversion and manifestations of the enemy directed from abroad. This means that a Renamo guerrilla (also called *bandido armado* or armed bandit) and a thief, or a smuggler (from the biggest speculator to the little girl on the street selling peanuts above the official price), or a railway machinist who eventually might have caused an accident, or a beer factory worker who might have taken some boxes of this scarce liquid to sell to neighbours, or even a negligent civil servant, were all physical agents of the permanent enemy and as such they were the peoples' enemies. It was belief as well as practice that they ought to be identified and severely punished according to their crimes. In a much attended rally, in June 1982 in Maputo, President Machel pointed to the enemy's agents as being spies; money dealers; wreckers of factories, enterprises, stores, cooperatives, and public transport; the negligent and the idle; dishonest merchants; smugglers; rumour-mongers; agitators and intriguers; traitors of the fatherland; thieves; kidnappers; and armed bandits. They were considered to be the remnants and successors of the corrupt colonial bourgeoisie, aspiring to replace their already gone 'masters' and 'bosses'.⁴⁰ Frelimo claimed these internal enemies belonged mostly to the so-called 'compromised' group (those who had voluntarily compromised themselves under the colonial regime by supporting it in various ways)⁴¹ and to the so-called 'puppet' group (those who belonged to other nationalist movements or political organisations). The internal enemy was believed to have infiltrated all the state and party apparatuses, including the army, factories, enterprises and centres of production, the Mass Democratic Organisations, the residential areas and their structures (the Dynamising Groups or DGs),⁴² and social institutions like churches.

As President Machel explained in the rally,

Their fundamental target internally is the state apparatus, the structures designed to ensure implementation of the Third Congress decisions. Their mission is to disorganise our party and our people's state. Their mission is to establish: indiscipline; liberalism; anarchy; corruption; tribalism; regionalism; and racism. Their mission is to encourage: inefficiency and lack of enthusiasm for solving problems; incompetence; negligence; systematic deviation from guidelines; contempt for the people; insensitivity to the people's problems; parasitism; and bureaucracy.⁴³

38 'Como Age o Inimigo? Análise Política da Situação Económica e Social do País em Comunicado do Conselho de Ministros', *Tempo*, 24 July 1977, pp. 58–64. For further references to this document, see P. Meyns, 'Liberation Ideology and National Development Strategy in Mozambique', *Review of African Political Economy*, 22 (1981), pp. 42–64.

39 Morier-Genoud, 'Of God and Caesar'.

40 See 'Romparamos Definitivamente com a Burguesia', *Tempo*, 8 August 1982.

41 Around 100,000 Mozambicans had participated voluntarily in organisations that supported the fascist-colonial regime in the administration; in the security structures (the paramilitary organisation for civil Defence OPVDC and the repressive political police PIDE/DGS informers); in the army (especially the groups of commandos created in the context of Africanisation of colonial troops from late 1960s and early 1970s: the GEs, GEPs, Flechas, as well as the Godmothers of War and militias). J. Hanlon, *Mozambique: The Revolution under Fire* (London, Zed Books, 1984), p. 171.

42 DGs were party committees created by Frelimo in residential and working places. During the transition to independence they performed multiple political and administrative functions. C. Collins, 'Mozambique: Dynamising the People', *Journal of Opinion*, 8, 1 (1978), pp. 12–16.

43 Machel, 'We Are Declaring War on the Enemy Within', p. 93.

And he added, pointing out their crimes:

Other anomalies constitute crimes: theft is a crime; sabotage is a crime; negligence is a crime; lying and giving false information that leads to wrong solutions is a crime. They must be punished. The people responsible for letting rice, maize, milk, batteries, beans, cloth and cashew nuts, intended for the population, lie rotting in the warehouse are criminals. We call that crime negligence. It is the action of the enemy. It must be punished. The worker who damages machinery through carelessness commits a crime against our economy. He must be punished. The driver who smashes up a lorry through bad driving or speeding commits a crime against our economy. He must be punished. Crime is not merely stealing or murdering. The machine, the lorry, the tractor, the generator, the welding torch and the saw were bought with the money produced by the people. They represent sweat and sacrifice from the people. They are essential tools in the production battle. Destroying these tools through negligence or carelessness is a crime against the economy. A crime against the economy is a crime against the people's interests. We have laws to penalise these crimes. We are going to apply them. We have SNASP, we have the FPLM, we have the police force, the revolutionary military tribunal and the people's tribunals and they are going to act.⁴⁴

Some aspects of social behaviour were also considered part of enemy tactics – cultural, social and ideological subversions – and so they were to be eliminated. These included alcoholism, prostitution, polygamy and religious fanaticism. By defining the enemy, the Frelimo leadership was mapping the extent of state power and, at the same time, establishing the moral and political boundaries of its citizens. The following section describes how these 'crimes' were punished.

'The enemy is the same and deserves the same treatment': The Politics of Punishment

The party-state's concern about security was based on the assumption that Mozambique was under imperialist siege and, therefore, imperialist agents were destabilising the country through military aggression (by armed bandits) and economic sabotage and social disorder (by infiltrated agents). Since internal and external security functions could not be distinguished from one another, national security strategy was designed to defend independence and the socialist revolution against ideological enemies from within and from abroad. This resulted in a militarised and politicised security policy – the military being the core strategists. While efforts would be made to create a new national army under the Ministry of Defence to face external military aggression, the Ministry of the Interior would be responsible for creating the police corps and coordinating the popular militias. A central role in the struggle against ideological internal enemies was given to the national intelligence service, *Serviço Nacional de Segurança Popular* (SNASP), created by the decree-law 21/75 of 11 October 1975. SNASP was a party organ responsible directly to the President. It did not answer to the state. Headed by Jacinto Veloso, SNASP was given powers 'to order and undertake inquiries, conduct searches and arrests it judged convenient; proceed to necessary requisitions, instruct processes and detain persons, determining their fate, namely to send them to competent police authorities, to tribunals or to re-education camps'.⁴⁵

Both SNASP and the Ministry of the Interior recruited their cadres from the party and the army. If the Ministry counted on several units of paramilitary servicemen as auxiliaries – the popular militias – SNASP relied on large numbers of informants organised in People's Vigilance Groups (GVP) established in working places and residential areas, in a process initiated during the transition to independence and formalised in April 1978. The objective of

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁴⁵ Trindade, 'Rupturas e Continuidades', p. 106.

GVPs was to neutralise enemy actions, defend vital points of the economic productive sector, and detect the infiltrated, the wreckers, the scandalmongers, the lazy and all those aiming to undermine the economy and the state apparatus.⁴⁶ In July 1978, SNASP estimated that in the province of Maputo only, there were about 456 GVPs involving around 17,000 citizens. This number would rise to an estimated 300,000 citizens participating in vigilance groups in the whole country in October 1980.⁴⁷

The combination of the politicisation and militarisation of internal security policies with the ideological definition of security threats led to a harsh politics of punishment for those considered ideological enemies. Such politics reproduced in many aspects colonial methods of social control and criminal punishment. Arbitrary mass arrests, rigid sentences for criminals and ‘traitors’ (like the death penalty and re-education) and restriction of social mobility were some of the means the party-state leadership used to protect itself and its power. The excessive centralisation of decision-making was part of the Frelimo leadership’s strategy to safeguard its authority. But, combined with the weaknesses of the state’s institutions, it resulted in other typical colonial methods of solving economic and social problems, which consisted of coercive peasant settlement policies, mass detentions of urban citizens and banishment. Both colonial and postcolonial regimes considered banishment and coercive work in plantations or on public works as one of the main mechanisms of punishment, and northern Mozambique as the main destination for ‘vagrants’. For example, in 1947, rail and harbour workers of Lourenço Marques went on strike. Fourteen men considered ‘instigators’ were condemned to banishment in Niassa for two years, and the other 61 workers were condemned to ‘correctional work’ for 60 days. The same fate was faced by quarry workers of Goba (in Maputo) in 1954. Thirty-five workers were sentenced to forced labour in northern Mozambique and the 21 ‘ringleaders’ were banished to São Tomé for up to 15 years.⁴⁸ Frelimo replicated this practice of sending people to rural areas for forced labour. Whether this was done for security or economic reasons (as was the case for the colonial regime), or even for moral reasons, is open to discussion. A range of reasons need to be considered.

Frelimo’s quest for hegemony and its Marxist theologism led to the establishment of a re-education system that aimed at purifying and freeing the ‘compromised’ and those who had not yet assimilated the values of the new society. During the transition and soon after independence, the party-state launched campaigns against the ‘traitors of the people’s cause’, those belonging to the so-called ‘puppet organisations’, the ‘reactionaries’, and ‘those who inherited the viciousness of colonialism’, particularly prostitution, alcoholism, and vagrancy, but also including religious fanaticism. Consequently, according to Cabrita, on the night of 30 October 1975 and the following day, around 3,000 people were arrested in five provincial capitals in a joint operation between SNASP and the Ministry of Interior.⁴⁹ These people were sent to re-education camps created in different parts of the country, mainly in the Northern Province of Niassa under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior and of SNASP. Citizens accused of political, economic and social crimes were sent to these camps, in many cases without judicial process. As Cabrita reports, ‘the judiciary ... had no say

46 ‘Vigilância Popular Detecta Roubos e Subornos’, *Tempo*, 23 July 1978, pp. 23–32.

47 Statistics are always problematic and deserve cautious treatment, especially the statistics of this revolutionary period, where mobilisation and high numbers, rather than results, were the most important aspects. However, these numbers, real or not, are indicative of the level of the militarisation of society by involving large sections of the population in state security programmes. See ‘Grupos de Vigilância Integram Milhares de Pessoas’, *Tempo*, 13 August 1978, p. 9.

48 See D. Hedges and A. Chilundo, ‘A Contestação da Situação Colonial, 1945–1961’, in D. Hedges (coord.), *História de Moçambique Volume 2: Moçambique no Auge do Colonialismo, 1930–1961* (Maputo, Livraria Universitária, 1999), pp. 215–19.

49 Cabrita, *Mozambique: The Tortuous Road*, p. 93.

either in the arrest or in the dispatch of people to the camps, nor in the actual re-education of prisoners ... The judiciary had no say as to how long re-education would last, and the government had no precise idea about it'.⁵⁰ As abuses and misunderstandings by soldiers, police officers and militias were common, innocent people were caught in raids, put in army trucks and sent to camps. According to Cabrita, a lack of identity documents at the time of a raid was enough to be arrested. Even couples leaving the cinema or restaurants were arrested.⁵¹ Thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses were arrested in October 1975, accused of religious fanaticism, of having collaborated with PIDE/DGS and of maintaining links with the CIA, as well as refusing to swear allegiance to the national flag and say 'Viva Frelimo'. The Jehovah's Witnesses official bulletin, *Awake!*, estimates that 7,000 believers were imprisoned. Cabrita explains that 'a house-to-house hunt was launched to find and arrest men, women and children. Men were arrested at their places of work without being able to contact their families. In many cases ... the arrests were accompanied by brutal beatings'.⁵² The Jehovah's Witnesses were sent to re-education camps in Milange (in the central province of Zambézia) and Niassa.⁵³

The camps were viewed as laboratories in which the 'Old Man' was to be transformed into the 'New Man'. Entering as the people's enemy he would come out as an example of the New Man after a process of 'purification'.⁵⁴ Very little has been written about this doleful episode in Mozambique's recent history. Cabrita gives a short account of one of the estimated 23 camps:

Those who did not perish in the camps came out either physically and psychologically damaged, or loathing Frelimo more than when they were sent in. The first inmates of the camps bore the brunt of the re-education system in that they were the ones who had to create minimum living conditions. They were literally dumped in thick bush areas and then forced to build the camps' infrastructures from scratch. Such was the situation at M'sawize [in Niassa], a camp earmarked for alleged prostitutes, although members of the Jehovah's Witnesses sect could be counted among the inmates. M'sawize started off with just over 500 inmates, including children. They had to fell trees and clear the bush to build a trail linking the camp to a former Frelimo guerrilla Central Base in the province. The inmates also built the camp's installations and opened farms.⁵⁵

Re-education was not the only way of 'purifying' the 'compromised'. In November 1978, the party initiated a process of auto-critique in which each 'compromised' individual was to display his biography and photograph in a public place, including his residential area and workplace, so that the people could exercise vigilance over him.⁵⁶ This was intended to liberate mentally the 'compromised' from his troublesome colonial past. The 'purification' process was consolidated in June 1982, in the famous 'Meeting with the compromised' directed by President Machel in Maputo. Machel characterised the meeting as 'revolutionary justice', and in sessions lasting a week the 'compromised' had publicly to recount their

50 *Ibid.*, p. 69.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 93.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 122.

53 The state violence against the Jehovah's Witnesses was far from being an isolated case. It was a by-product of the competition between the state (particularly its Marxist ideology) and religious faith, as Morier-Genoud argues. Tensions between Frelimo and religion existed during the liberation struggle and continued to grow after independence, to the disadvantage of religion. Almost all the churches faced the state's pressure, as soon after independence many churches were closed and their properties nationalised. 'In some missions, the fathers were literally thrown out of their churches and the latter turned into a military quarter after its "closure"'. Morier-Genoud, 'Of God and Caesar', p. 53.

54 J.P. Borges Coelho, 'Da violência Colonial Ordenada à Ordem Pós-colonial Violenta: Sobre um Legado das Guerras Coloniais nas Ex-colónias Portuguesas', *Lusotopie* (2003), p. 191.

55 Cabrita, *Mozambique: The Tortuous Road*, p. 96.

56 Hanlon, *Mozambique: The Revolution under Fire*, p. 171.

actions as collaborators of the colonial regime. Three of them were imprisoned immediately after reporting their feats as PIDE/DGS agents.⁵⁷

As Borges Coelho argues, both the re-education and auto-critique ‘purification’ processes produced a considerable number of individuals who feared the new order and fled to neighbouring countries.⁵⁸ Others escaped from the camps, and eventually joined the MNR (the initial acronym of Renamo) in Rhodesia and South Africa. Many of them would be involved in the most harrowing acts of violence in a long and destructive civil war. Frelimo neither acknowledged Renamo as a political movement nor as an autonomous organ. During much of the war the rebels had no history, no face: they were ‘armed bandits’.⁵⁹ No dialogue could be made with bandits. Like the members of ‘puppet organisations’, the bandits were traitors and as such deserved severe punishment.

To fulfil its goals, in 1979 the party-state passed law 2/79 of 1 March, the *Lei dos Crimes contra a Segurança do Povo e do Estado Popular* (Law for Crimes against the Security of the People and of the Popular State), which included the death penalty by firing-squad. This law, and particularly the death penalty, was meant to fill a void in the defence of the Mozambican revolution for, as it was claimed, ‘a revolution incapable of defending itself, of repressing and punishing its enemies, of discouraging their actions, is a revolution incapable of surviving’.⁶⁰ As the Minister of Justice Teodato Hunguana asserted in 1980, the death penalty was a ‘working class instrument of power against its class enemy’, a revolutionary instrument through which the people, the majority, organise violence against the organised violence of the minority.⁶¹ The law was directed at crimes by imperialist agents against the state and its people, such as attacks on the territorial integrity of Mozambique, the lives of party and state leaders, or economic, social and political stability. According to their gravity, the crimes were classified as hateful and barbarous crimes (death penalty); heavy crimes, but with the possibility of re-educating the criminal (eight to 30 years of prison) and light crimes (two to eight years of prison). Until 1984, captured Renamo fighters, or individuals accused of belonging to or supporting the ‘bandits’, were judged to have committed hateful and high treason crimes. Most of them were sentenced to death and executed by firing-squad.

To judge the crimes against the ‘people and the popular state’, the Revolutionary Military Court (*Tribunal Militar Rrevolucionário* or TMR) was created by decree law 3/79 of 29 March 1979. This was an exclusive militarised court that had no contact with the civil judiciary system (the Popular Courts). According to Trindade, the TMR ‘was constituted by five magistrates appointed by the National Ministry of Defence. It always consisted of senior military professionals, without any judicial training. Its sessions were conducted in private, although the law established the principle of openness and from the respective sentences there was no appeal’.⁶² SNASP was the only organ responsible for preparing the prosecution of crimes against the ‘people and the popular state’. Most of the sentences, particularly those related to execution, were reported in the press, including small criminal biographies and photos of convicts. The great majority of the executed were accused of armed banditry or of having links with the ‘bandits’. Those who had been imprisoned during the transition to independence on accusations of treason, namely Uria Simango, Lazaro Nkavandame, Joana

57 ‘Vocês Ganharam uma Pátria’, *Tempo*, 13 June 1982, pp. 6–9. Although dangerous, the process of ‘integration’ of former colonial soldiers in Mozambique was relatively fortunate if compared to that of Guinea-Bissau, where several African *commandos* were arrested and summarily executed after independence. See J.P. Borges Coelho, ‘African Troops in the Portuguese Colonial Army, 1961–1974: Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique’, *Portuguese Studies Review*, 10, 1 (2002), p. 149.

58 Borges Coelho, ‘Da Violência Colonial Ordenada’, p. 191.

59 Borges Coelho, ‘Um Itinerário Histórico da Moçambicanidade’.

60 ‘Para Compreender a Lei dos Crimes Contra o Povo e do Estado (1)’, *Tempo*, 18 March 1979, pp. 18–22.

61 ‘O que é o Crime? A Posição do Nosso País Perante esta Questão’, *Tempo*, 19 October 1980, pp. 11–14.

62 Trindade, ‘Rupturas e Continuidades’, p. 111.

Simeão, Paulo Gumane and others, were condemned under the same law and executed in Niassa. There could be no complacency toward the enemy. As President Machel assured his audience in the 1982 rally,

We are going to destroy the enemy. The people are determined. They are the main strength. We have weapons, and we shall use them unhesitatingly. We shall not fight with toffees. We shall not fight with sugar-coated bullets or blanks. Let us use the same bullets with which we defeated Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique. . . . The enemy is the same! Black, yellow or white, the enemy is the enemy and deserves the same treatment. And in this case it will be bayonets.⁶³

If the death penalty was meant to deter so-called armed banditry, it failed in its objective as the war advanced and spread to the whole country by 1982. But the party-state did not change its approach. No dialogue was to be had with the lackeys of imperialism. When the cities, particularly Maputo, begun to be threatened, the government distributed weapons to militias and citizens for the purposes of protecting their residential areas, the residential areas of diplomats and *cooperantes* (foreign aid workers) and state-owned companies and buildings. In one of his rallies, President Machel announced in June 1982 that a curfew would be established in Maputo and the migratory flow from countryside to cities would be stopped. The control of *guias de marcha* (transit passes) would be reinforced.⁶⁴ Continuing the distribution of weapons to the people, two years later, he would add: 'do not capture them, kill the armed bandits'.⁶⁵

The war was not the only threat to the stability of the cities where the state was based. New threats emerged, especially in Maputo. While the war reached almost all the provinces in 1982, food shortages, the lack of basic goods and long queues in shops and bus stops characterised life in the capital. The combination of war, natural disasters and outbreaks of hunger resulted in a great rural exodus. The capital could not absorb the influx. There were no jobs, no housing, no services, and little food. It was in this context that the black market and smuggling flourished, and juvenile delinquency and criminality such as armed assaults also grew. However, the party-state discourse on crime was unshakable. Asked about the rise of criminality in Maputo, particularly armed assaults, the Minister of Security⁶⁶ Jacinto Veloso answered:

Some of those actions are being promoted by the enemy himself. We approach this issue from this point of view . . . It is evident that there are crimes resulting from domestic conditions of development but the enemy is attentive to this situation and he can study and organise a group to artificially stimulate crimes which do not result from the dynamics of development. Actually, those individuals in South Africa who plan terrorist actions against us may well have a section devoted to increasing crime in Maputo.⁶⁷

Although there was an acknowledgement of the role of internal problems in causing social disorder, a conspiratorial explanation was emphasised. Armed assaults and smuggling were viewed as deliberate actions of the enemy to sabotage the national economy. Frelimo's Central Committee Secretary and Politburo member Major-General Marcelino dos Santos defined the smugglers as '*bandidos não armados*' (unarmed bandits), meaning that they did not differ from the 'armed bandits': both were imperialist agents and sought to destabilise the country.⁶⁸ Between December 1981 and January 1982, the Ministry of Interior launched a

63 Machel, 'We Are Declaring War on the Enemy Within', p. 94.

64 'Maputo Imposes Pass Laws to Halt Rural Influx', *The Guardian*, 15 June 1982. If travelling from one residential area or province to another, one had to carry a *guia de marcha* issued by the party committee to be presented to the head of the destination district/locality. See Cabrita, *Mozambique: The Tortuous Road*, p. 87.

65 'População de Manhiça e Marracuene vai Receber Armas. Anunciou Presidente Samora Machel em Comício Popular', *Tempo*, 30 December 1984, pp. 2–3.

66 In 1980 SNASP became a department of the newly created Ministry of Security.

67 'Segurança: Do povo, para o Povo, com o Povo', *Tempo*, 30 May 1982, pp. 14–21.

68 'Candongueiro é Bandido Não Armado. Marcelino dos Santos Reuniu com Trabalhadores da INVESTRO', *Tempo*, 7 April 1985, pp. 3–4.

campaign against smuggling and more than 550 people were arrested. Most of them were sent to re-education camps and then, after 15 days or 24 months, depending on the penalty, they were sent to centres of production in the green areas around Maputo. About the campaign, the Ministry of Internal Commerce stated: 'the fight against smuggling is part of the class struggle we contend with in our country; smuggling is not dissociated with counter-revolution'.⁶⁹ Consequently, in 1983 alterations were made to law 2/79 through a new amendment (law 1/83): smuggling and armed assaults would be subject to the death penalty. President Machel justified this move in the following way: 'not only those who kill our children go to Revolutionary Military Court; the smugglers are also bandits, they are extensions of armed bandits and that is why they go to the TMR'.⁷⁰

For crimes where the death penalty was not applicable, in addition to imprisonment, a colonial method of punishment was reintroduced – *chicotada* or *palmatória* (flogging, through the *Lei da chicotada* [law of flogging], number 5/83 of 31 March 1983). During the colonial period, corporal punishment through *chicote* or *palmatória* was frequently used to control and discipline African workers and to create an environment of terror to deter any agitation that could lead to work stoppages.⁷¹ President Machel recalled the use of *palmatória* in a rally in Chibuto (Gaza Province) in February 1983, saying that the Portuguese knew how to use their power to maintain order. 'Violence is necessary in the exercise of power', he argued, and in dealing with smugglers and bandits, 'we have to use our power to punish with severity'.⁷²

The public execution of Goolam Nabi in Maputo for smuggling prawns and appliances remains the most popularised example of severe punishment of 'people's enemies'. One can read the following in a communiqué of the TMR released in April 1983:

Goolam Nabi was condemned to the death penalty, while his accomplice, Zacarias Chitará was condemned to 12 years of prison and 45 lashes. Other culprits condemned to the death penalty are José Manderero, 'for derailing a goods train', Themisson Filipe Macuacua and António Mbombi for having killed Constantin Tsonack; Julio Salomão Tauzene for 'crimes of belonging to the leadership of a clandestine organisation and José Zicuima Muchanga for, among others, 'armed rebellion and terrorism'. Amongst prison sentences applied to eleven other culprits, the lesser was that of two years to Ezequiel Zavanhane Sithoe, ex-driver of OJM for 'promoting rumours by negligence', a penalty to which was added ten lashes. As to the accomplices of Manderero in the discharging of sugar bags stolen from the train, João Isaías Penincela and Salomão Raul were sentenced to six years [of] prison and 45 to 30 lashes respectively. Involved in the disturbances in the Faculty of Education in 1982, the accused Delfino Estevão Ambriza, Cassamo Sulemane, Neves Alberto Macuacua, Luis Fijamo, Saíde Mamade and Jerónimo Zandamela were condemned to eight years of prison and 45 lashes each.⁷³

The struggle against smuggling was aimed not only against those selling goods unavailable in the legal market, but also those who purchased smuggled products. For instance, Aissa Juma was condemned to six months in Maputo Civil Prison for buying smuggled milk: 'it is because I have a one-year-old baby', she justified her actions.⁷⁴ Arbitrary floggings and arrests of thousands of citizens who had no alternative other than smuggling to earn a living in a time of general crisis continued for several years, as smuggling continued to be a solution for local problems.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the cities remained under pressure, as the rural exodus

69 'Candonga: A Raiva da "Grande Família"', *Tempo*, 31 January 1982, pp. 14–17.

70 'Rompamos Definitivamente com a Burguesia', *Tempo*, 8 August 1982.

71 D. Hedges and A. Rocha, 'Moçambique durante o Auge do Colonialismo Português, 1945–1961: A Economia e a Estrutura Social', in Hedges (coord.), *História de Moçambique*, pp. 129–96.

72 'Povo é Construtor da Paz', *Tempo*, 27 February 1983, pp. 14–23.

73 'TMR: Candongueiro e Bandidos Condenados à Morte', *Tempo*, 10 April 1983, pp. 5–6.

74 'O Dia-a-Dia numa Cadeia de Mulheres', *Tempo*, 16 March 1986, pp. 17–23.

75 Compare to M. Niger-Thomas, 'Woman and the Arts of Smuggling', *African Studies Review*, 44, 2 (2001), pp. 43–70.

continued to grow sharply. From around 250,000 inhabitants in 1975, the population of Maputo grew up to almost a million people in 1983.⁷⁶ Unable to find a solution to the problem, the party-state decided in the party's IV Congress held in April 1983 to launch a 'clean up' programme, *Operação Produção* (Operation Production).

The programme aimed to send to rural areas (particularly to the relatively unpopulated province of Niassa) those who were classed as unemployed, vagrants, or prostitutes in the cities. The legislation also referred to 'delinquency, parasitism, and marginality'. The objective was to transform such people 'by means of productive work into useful citizens and successful workers who fulfil their civic duties in a responsible and socially acceptable way'.⁷⁷ According to the directive, 'the army, police and militia groups [were] to carry out house-to-house investigations, evicting the unemployed and those who do not pay their rent, those who produce nothing but continue to consume scarce resources, and sending them to the rural areas to produce food'.⁷⁸ The programme was implemented in May/June 1983 and it came to a halt in May 1988.

After a fifteen-day voluntary phase, where the unemployed and 'vagrants' were supposed to subscribe voluntarily and choose where they wanted to be sent, a second and lasting compulsory phase was initiated on 15 July 1983. Citizens failing to show documents proving their employment, including residence and personal identification papers, were immediately arrested and sent to assembly points installed in various neighbourhoods of Maputo from where they would be evacuated to rural areas. As in the 1940s (the height of colonial repression), unemployment was a crime in Mozambique, and in Maputo 'everybody walked with fear' once again.⁷⁹ According to Penvenne, a series of laws was instituted in colonial Mozambique (particularly in Lourenço Marques) to sanction labour offences and urban regulation, such as leading or participating in a strike, not declaring the status of employment (since unemployment was a crime), not declaring casual work or self-employment, not reporting to the authorities after arriving in the city or leaving the city without authorisation, staying in the city till late (violating the curfew, 'vagrancy') or not carrying working cards or of identification. The penalties for these offences ranged from flogging (*palmatória/chicotada*) to several months of forced work (*Xibalo*) or several years of displacement to remote areas of Mozambique (especially Niassa) and deportation to São Tomé e Príncipe.⁸⁰ In 1942, colonial enterprises faced great shortages of workers due to the intensification of forced crop production (cotton and rice). To settle the problem, the authorities determined that every person should prove to the administration that he/she earned money from employment or from selling crops. Each person should carry a notebook where this information should be printed. Those failing to meet this rule were considered 'vagrants' and could be arrested and recruited for forced work in farms and public works, where they had food as the only payment or a very low income.⁸¹ As Penvenne argues of the colonial period, the result of this legislation was that at the end almost all workers were criminals and few escaped its harsh effects.⁸² The situation was not so different in independent Mozambique. Everyone was a vagrant and a criminal until he could prove convincingly that he was employed in the city and therefore could be a meritorious citizen. In Maputo alone, it is estimated that at the end of

76 'Cidade de Maputo Tem Gente a Mais: Afluxo de Campo e Desemprego Sobrecarregam Infra-estruturas', *Notícias*, 2 June 1983.

77 Trindade, 'Rupturas e Continuidades', p. 111.

78 Robinson, *Curse on the Land*, p. 235.

79 See J. Penvenne, 'Aqui Todos Andavam com Medo: O Sistema de Trabalho em Moçambique e os Trabalhadores de Lourenço Marques, 1945–1962', in J. Penvenne, *Trabalhadores de Lourenço Marques (1870–1974)* (Maputo, Arquivo Histórico de Moçambique, Estudos 9, 1993), pp. 155–204.

80 *Ibid.*, p. 168.

81 Hedges and Rocha, 'Moçambique durante o Auge do Colonialismo Português', pp. 95–6; 140.

82 *Ibid.*, p. 162.

Operação Produção, more than 50,000 people had been forcibly evacuated to production camps in rural areas.⁸³

Abuses and aberrant violations characterised the process, as even those who could not work or those who were working but could not produce any documents were caught and evacuated. Militias and *chefes de quarteirão* (heads of residential units, who played a central role in identifying Xiconhocas in residential areas under their jurisdiction), impelled by personal feelings of revenge, enmity and frustrated love could evacuate their fellow residents, accusing them of being 'unproductive', 'vagrants' or 'prostitutes'. Women were most victimised in this process. Single women, housewives, widows, women whose husbands worked abroad and teenage girls who could not produce any working or school documents were accused of prostitution and subsequently evacuated. The case of Lídia is indicative. She was sent by the *chefe de quarteirão* and his assistant (a militiaman) to an evacuation assembly point. The head of the local court, appointed to supervise the process, asked the *chefe de quarteirão* why she was to be evacuated. 'It was not me who arrested her. It was Sonda, the militiaman', he answered. Called immediately to the court, Sonda said, 'well ... I mean ... it is because this lady has no marriage certificate ... and also because the man she lives with is not the father of her children. Also because in our neighbourhood she does not greet us, she has contempt for us'. Lídia was released. But several other women in a similar situation were not as fortunate.⁸⁴ This arbitrariness forced the party to issue a new directive stating that the OMM had to take responsibility in dealing with cases of prostitution, that girls less than 16 years of age were not supposed to carry work cards while those between 17 and 23 years, since they lived with their parents, should not be evacuated.⁸⁵ The Minister of the Interior himself had to order the release of pregnant women waiting to be evacuated at the Machava assembly point.⁸⁶ But he could not be present at all of the 38 points of evacuation established in Maputo. A female evacuee in Chipembe, Cabo Delgado, told a reporter, 'I did not marry officially, so in my identity card it is still written "single". But I married a long time ago, I have children and everything. I explained this, but they did not consider it'.⁸⁷

Many elderly people who could no longer get a job in the city as well as teenage boys not at school were also evacuated. Even sick people coming out from hospitals and ex-service men were sent to centres of production.⁸⁸ As most evacuees were not given the chance to contact their relatives after being arrested, many had to roam the assembly points looking for their children, parents, husbands, wives, brothers, and grandparents. Often they would only receive news several months later from northern Mozambique. And in a context of civil war, the news could be of any kind.

Conclusion

While Frelimo sought to present itself as the sole and indisputable representative of the people's will, its obsessive aim of building a progressive state-nation and establishing a new social order (the New Man) led the party into a governmental style that combined popular

83 Robinson, *Curse on the Land*, p. 235.

84 'Um Caso Exemplar', *Tempo*, 28 August 1983, pp. 24–5.

85 'Desempregados a Caminho do Futuro', *Tempo*, 21 August 1983, pp. 22–4.

86 'Medidas para Corrigir Erros na "Operação Produção": Postas em Liberdade Mulheres Detidas Irregularmente', *Notícias*, 14 July 1983.

87 'Operação Produção: Uma Missão Histórica', *Tempo*, 14 August 1983, pp. 14–19.

88 During supervisory visits undertaken by brigades of the Operational Commando, several chronic asthmatics, tuberculosis patients, physically deficient and aged people were sent back home from production camps. 'Retirar da Produção Doentes e Idosos que Foram Evacuados: Determina Delegação do Comando Central Operativo em Cabo Delgado', *Notícias*, 27 July 1983.

mobilisation and a fierce politics of punishment directed against those considered to be opponents of Mozambique's revolution. The hostile regional context in which Mozambique achieved national independence and the permanent menace of aggression from South Africa and Rhodesia, as well as the economic and social impact of the collapse of the colonial system played a great role in Frelimo's attitude towards the security of the state and the enforcement of revolutionary principles. The party-state resorted to an ideological discourse on internal security that did not distinguish internal from external threats and that emphasised the need to identify and persecute internal enemies of the revolution. Therefore, all acts and attitudes contrary to the principles of the revolution and the New Man were taken as acts of criminality organised by the enemy. A series of revolutionary instruments of punishment were instituted against the internal enemy of Mozambique's revolution. It was the purpose of this article to present some of those instruments of punishment and to show how some of them resembled colonial mechanisms of repression. However, there remains a need for a more profound examination of the role and purpose of punishment employed by the independent government in Mozambique.

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