

History repeating? Colonial, socialist and liberal statebuilding in Mozambique

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Abstract

External statebuilders have been notoriously bad at making sense of the historical experiences and trajectories of state-society relations. As such, there is often the working assumption that externally-driven post-conflict statebuilding is substantially changing the dynamics of rule in a polity through the import of liberal ideas. Yet in practice this is often not the case. This chapter looks at three successive attempts at statebuilding in Mozambique and draws out interesting elements of continuity between them in terms of political authority, political economy and public administration practices. These are the colonial *New State* from 1930-1974, the socialist post-independence state from 1975-1989, and the liberal post-conflict restructuring from 1990 onwards. The discussion concludes that internal and external elites’ unwillingness to address or re-structure some fundamental relationships between the state and the population sustains the tensions generated by strategies for political rule and development. This is especially evident where ‘liberal’ statebuilding practices have tended to have distinctively ‘conservative’ effects in terms of state-society relations, replicating rather than transforming power and authority.

External statebuilders have been notoriously bad at making sense of the historical experiences and trajectories of state-society relations. As such, there is often the working assumption that externally-driven post-conflict statebuilding is substantially changing the dynamics of rule in a polity through the import of liberal ideas. Yet, very often, this does not seem to be the case. Recent academic literature on statebuilding has moved towards a more ‘sociological’ analysis of the state based on the classic approaches of Weber and Durkheim to the phenomenon of statehood (see chapter 1, this volume). This important turn flags up the dangers of attempting to import authority and legitimacy in a hurry and without relevant institutions. However, there is also a need to reflect on the historic patterns of establishing rule and authority in particular places. Such an analysis, grounded in an alternative analytic sensibility around the historic objectives of statebuilding in the global South (see Mamdani 1996, Scott 1998), raises deep questions about the idea of “state failure”, the nature and politics of statebuilding, the values and objectives it supports and the tensions that it tries to overcome.

This chapter looks briefly at three successive attempts at statebuilding in Mozambique and draws out interesting elements of continuity between them in terms of political authority, political economy and public administration practices. These are the colonial *New State* from 1930-1974, the socialist post-independence state from 1975-1989, and the liberal post-conflict restructuring from 1990 onwards. Mozambique has counted among one of the major early ‘success stories’ of post-conflict peacebuilding in that it brought formerly warring parties into a generally peaceful and regular electoral cycle, its central government has expanded its provision of public services and it has had high year-on-year economic growth since the end of the war in the early 1990s. Yet it is also the case that the attempted ‘liberal’ statebuilding practices have tended to have distinctively ‘conservative’ effects in terms of state-society relations, often reproducing rather than transforming power and authority. The chapter will focus on three central themes: political authority, political economy and public administration. These are dimensions of statebuilding which overlap and have tended to mutually reinforce one another. The discussion will trace approaches to statebuilding in each period before analysing them together.

Colonial statebuilding: the New State (*Novo Estado*), 1930-74

Portugal had been embarrassed at the Berlin Conference of 1889. Its ambitions to be equal to other European imperial powers in Africa were threatened by its lack of control over the territories to which it laid claim. Powerful African groups fought back, the slave trade was still present and the concession companies were disorganised and unproductive (Vail and White 1980: 200-230). Proposals were made to have the colonies taken over by Britain or Germany, which Portugal resisted. The fascist dictatorship which emerged in 1926, soon developed the project of the New State (*Novo Estado*) to consolidate the chaotic

administration of the First Republic in Portugal, and to consolidate imperial rule abroad. These were articulated in the Colonial Act (1930) and the Organic Charter (1933).¹ These two acts laid the foundation for the first modern 'statebuilding' project across the entire territory of what is now bordered as Mozambique, consolidating it as a single political entity incorporated into Portugal.

The Organic Charter re-designed colonial public administration within Mozambique, emulating strategies of Native Administration elsewhere (see Mamdani 1996). Colonial Companies were disbanded, and passed into the control of the state, which installed state Administrative Posts throughout the country. The territory was marked out into around 100 administrative divisions, which sometimes followed the boundaries of the old concession company territories. The enforcers of the colonial companies – the *cipais* (i.e. sepoys) – were recruited instead by the state directly as native police. Another layer of Native Administration was created via *régulos*; these were 'traditional leaders' whom the state recognised as intermediaries for rural populations, and who raised the Portuguese flag. This was critical in terms of expanding the state's visibility, surveillance practices and economic reach over the population as a whole.

Also codified in the Organic Charter was the *indigenato* system, formalising a racial division between subject 'native' *indígenas* and citizen 'non-natives' in law and the political economy. 'Citizens' could own property, move freely, participate in various public institutions and had no labour obligations. 'Natives' on the other hand were excluded from colonial social and political life, taxed heavily and compelled to offer 'contract' – essentially forced – labour (called *chibalo*) (O'Laughlin 2000). Within this, a category of the 'assimilated' (*assimilados*) was also created. These would be those natives who had sufficiently 'advanced' in their adoption of European culture, religion and language to be treated under the same legal codes. These *assimilados* were crucial in Portugal's attempt to buttress and legitimise its political authority in the colonies as leading a civilising multi-racial lusophone community.

The same Charter established an autarchic imperial economy in which colonies would supply foreign exchange, taxes and raw materials for industrialisation in Portugal, such as cotton, sugar and copra. As discussed by Isaacman (1995), these practices often led to widespread malnutrition amongst the peasantry. Yet for the colonial authority, these were justified as necessary for the 'development' of the colony and imperial system overall. However, *chibalo* and famine accelerated economic migration into the South African mines, where wages were higher and conditions slightly better.

The colonial statebuilding project in Mozambique under the *New State* was thus radical and ambitious – establishing a national centralised bureaucratic authority and

¹ For more details on the reforms, see Newitt (1995), chapters 15 to 17.

decentralised forms of public administration, patterns of agricultural production and cheap labour export, and a civilising, developmentalist rationale for the colonial state. This statebuilding project aimed, largely successfully, to concentrate administrative capacity and power in the hands of a relatively small group of people loyal to the colonial state. This same group also largely controlled the export-oriented political economy. Overall, its aims were to pacify and profit from the peoples and territories within Mozambique through the apparatus of a bureaucratic state, which was visible, centralised and planned. Yet both its methods of rule and distributive outcomes were widely unpopular. The next section will explore the attempt to overturn these in the period after independence.

Socialism and post-independence statebuilding 1975-1989

Independence was hard fought in Mozambique, eventually coming in 1975 following a coup in Lisbon. Decolonisation was both unexpected and rapid, leading to a near collapse of state functions. State power was handed over to the Frelimo² movement that had been fighting an anti-colonial guerrilla war, who had to find ways of building up state functions, authority and capacity from a low baseline. Much of the human capital, in the sense of people with secondary education and administrative experience, had left the country. Although sympathetic *cooperantes* from other countries were sometimes used to fill these positions, they did not always match the vacancies. During the first years following independence, those with any training at all worked in several posts simultaneously. This was especially the case in education and healthcare, which the government was keen to rapidly expand, to develop the country and cement its authority.

In response to this context, and a radical turn in the movement, Frelimo moved in 1977 to establish a socialist one-party state and a series of revolutionary reforms. The aim of the Party was to dismantle colonial power and institute forms of collective modernisation and development. The old racialised divisions of the colonial state were to be replaced by a *Homem Novo* (New Man) ideal of citizenship based on scientific socialism, literacy, equality, and the rejection of superstition (Mosca 1999). Frelimo also set about creating political structures throughout the country to connect with the population. A hierarchical network of Party cells, based on colonial administrative divisions, became the engine for the spread of its influence, which also became highly fused with the structures of local state administration.

In principle, these sought to be inclusive, participatory and democratic in deliberative and decision-making structures. As such, this marked in theory a substantial departure from colonial rule. However in many places, these reproduced and connected with existing

² *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*./Mozambique Liberation Front

forms of social authority (Harrison 2000). Yet elsewhere, these new structures disrupted authority – for example, allowing populations the space to humiliate and marginalise *régulos* who had collaborated more enthusiastically with the colonial state. The party also sought to embed itself deeply into the state bureaucracy, particularly under the charismatic authoritarianism of President Samora Machel. He was convinced that the vestiges of the colonial bureaucracy were reactionary, and sought to undermine them as an independent force (Egerö 1987). Thus the Party was a primary shaper of public administration and political life at both a central and local level, based on a combination of inclusion and hierarchical order.

The state also needed to reconstruct an economic basis for its existence, which it did through an ambitious programme of state intervention in the economy. In terms of physical capital, at independence assets had been stripped, booby-trapped or destroyed to prevent further use. Trading networks and shops closed down. The government's programme of rapid nationalisation of industries and shop networks was a logical reaction to this collapse (Pitcher 2002: 38-9; Hanlon 1984). Simultaneously, the new government attempted to industrialise rapidly and extensively imported heavy machinery from both the West and Eastern bloc countries, although few people knew how to use or maintain it. In terms of the rural economy, the government promoted the development of gigantic state farms and co-operatives which peasants were encouraged – and sometimes compelled – to work at or join, often producing the same crops as under colonialism. In the first few years of independence these measures collectively resulted in appreciable economic growth, although by the early 1980s many had failed through poor design, drought, armed sabotage (as discussed below) or simple overambition. It was also increasingly difficult to import food. Due to Frelimo support for the ANC, Mozambique lost much of the foreign exchange its workers earned in South African mines. Due to the imports and the loss of foreign exchange, Mozambique went quickly from having virtually no foreign debt in 1980 to becoming very heavily indebted by 1984.

Overall, then, the post-independence statebuilding project sought explicitly to be revolutionary and to overturn colonial rule through new ideas for political authority, public administration and the political economy. Yet, despite these radical ambitions, there were often striking continuities with dynamics of hierarchy in social relations. Marshall (1993) argues for example that literacy programmes in factories tended to reinforce structures of authority in management and social class, make onerous, unpaid demands on workers' time and reinforce the status of Portuguese as the language of political participation. As such, literacy programmes – at the heart of the government's vision for a modern, empowered, developed population – often ended up producing or reproducing forms of alienation between the ruling elites and masses. Other elements of the government's new programme such as the creation of communal villages, co-operatives and collective production showed

similar tendencies, often including physical compulsion, creating tensions between state and peasantry (Bowen 2000).

The biggest threat to post-independence statebuilding was however Renamo's deliberate and widespread programme of state destruction.³ It is broadly agreed that the group came about when the Rhodesian security services (and after 1980 the South African security services) extensively funded, trained and supported a group of disgruntled ex-Frelimo to deliberately destabilise the new Frelimo regime (Vines 1995, Manning 2002, Cabrita 2000). At later stages, support was received from right-wing groups within the United States and Europe as part of Cold War anti-communist infiltration.

Renamo deliberately targeted infrastructure such as roads and railway lines, particularly those linking Southern Rhodesia to Mozambique in the Beira corridor and those supplying productive industries, as well as any symbols of state power, including communal villages, health and education posts, and the bureaucratic apparatus (Young 1990). The impact of these attacks was pervasive and substantial, both through damage caused and reduced activity due to fear amongst civilians. Various eyewitness accounts testify strongly to the brutality of the war, which produced displacement of up to four million and caused hundreds of thousands of deaths and mutilations (Magaia 1988, Nordstrom 1997). Yet despite the seemingly senseless character of the atrocities, in places Renamo did come to a *modus vivendi* with populations through tapping resistance to Frelimo's statebuilding programme (Geffray 1990, Hall 1990). In this sense, the outcome of Renamo's violence exactly cohered with its intentions – to destabilise the state and make normal life unviable, and to challenge Frelimo's attempts at 'modernist' social transformation and thus the establishment of its political legitimacy.

The fifteen years after decolonisation thus saw Mozambique's second ambitious statebuilding project in the twentieth century, based in the attempt to push the territory and population along a socialist developmental pathway away from colonialism. To a certain extent there were very important changes and successes, such as a halving of illiteracy, and indeed the fact of political independence. Yet, as will be discussed further below, elements of the statebuilding programme reproduced some of the same antagonistic dynamics and distributions of power that had caused resistance to the colonial order, which Renamo fed off during its sabotage campaign. The next section will explore how the turn to a liberal statebuilding agenda in the 1980s onwards may only have minimally disturbed some of these antagonistic dynamics.

³ *Resistência Nacional Moçambicano* – Mozambican National Resistance.

Liberalisation and post-war statebuilding, 1989-present

Although elements of liberalisation were put in place from the 1980s, it was from the 1990s onwards that a third and largely 'liberal' post-war programme of statebuilding in Mozambique was undertaken, under the close watch of the IFIs and European donors who exerted considerable influence (see Hanlon 1996). The guiding principles for these reforms were economic and political liberalisation, technical assistance, renewed framings for development policy, good governance and capacity building. In design, these principles were intended to remake the relationship between state and citizenry along liberal and democratic lines, and thus reduce violence.

On the political front, the move to multi-party elections and the funding of Renamo as a political party was enough to secure a peace deal, backed by solid financing for the talks and for demobilisation programmes from the UN and Italian Government. The Government of Mozambique had anticipated this by changing the Constitution accordingly in 1989 (Munslow 1990, Hall and Young 1991, Mendes 1994). There were a series of delays in setting up an acceptable National Electoral Commission and process but elections were finally held in 1994. Subsequent parliamentary and presidential elections have been held regularly, if not always smoothly, every five years. Under lobbying from the Mozambican journalist community, the press and broadcast media was also increasingly liberalised (Jone 2005) in the post-war period. Various small and not-so-small scale civil society organisations have also emerged with the help of international sponsorship. As such, the public arena itself is visibly wider and less coercive than under the post-independence regime.

The macroeconomic liberalisation programme that had begun in the 1980s with the IMF, progressively removing state intervention from the economy, also continued in the 1990s. In 1984, the government approved a structural adjustment programme in return for debt rescheduling. Official co-operation with the World Bank and EEC under the Lomé Convention also began. This assistance was conditional on measures such as the removal of prices of production inputs and exchange controls on the currency, but developed into much wider programmes of privatisation, subsidy withdrawal and divestiture in the 1990s. Famously, several industries such as the cashew industry suffered heavy losses of jobs and profits following the withdrawal of state pricing and exposure to competition from subsidised markets elsewhere (see Cramer 1999). This project in particular led to substantial backtracking. Elsewhere however, public spending has been deeply curtailed.

Another round of debt cancellation occurred in 1999 under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, where Mozambique had most of its outstanding debt cancelled in return for adherence to Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) agreed with Western donors, particularly the World Bank. These PRSPs upheld central elements of structural

adjustment but also included an emphasis on Millennium Development Goals indicators such as numbers living on less than \$1 per day and access to public services. These papers continue to form a central part of the negotiating framework for future budget support for the government and thus are an ongoing constraint on state action in the present.

In order to undertake these reforms and restructure state institutions, central and local government also received substantial forms of 'technical assistance', either in terms of donor agency employees seconded from embassies or people contracted as consultants, as part of the 'capacity building' and 'knowledge transfer' agenda. This was often the only option available for ministries, whose capacity to pay civil servant salaries was limited. A few were long-term appointments, but the majority carried out short-term analysis or restructuring projects, often around planning and budget capabilities. Increasingly, there developed 'revolving doors' between ministries, consultancies and donor agencies, as the latter hired talented Mozambican nationals out of ministries. As such, it is fair to say that any improvements in public administration in this period were uneven and often short-lived, subject to a range of competing interests and agendas.

Beyond interventions in the organs of the state, there was a large influx of aid which was administered directly to the population by external groups. These included (mostly European and North American) bilateral aid agencies, multilateral aid agencies and NGOs, carrying out a massive range of humanitarian and developmental missions, often setting up parallel structures to those of the state and in competition with each other. By 1989, the population was heavily reliant on food aid from donors, and by 1994, foreign aid overall counted for 60% of Gross National Income (Batley 2005: 417). In recent years this has substantially reduced, and increasing quantities go directly to central government as part of the statebuilding agenda. However, overall it still constitutes just under half of the government's budget.

The liberal statebuilding project undertaken during and after the war thus, like its predecessors, attempted to radically re-shape state functions and the state-society relationship through an alternative vision of the role of the state in society, which combined liberal ideas about the state-society relationship with a New Public Management (i.e. pro-market and outsourcing) approach to public administration. In areas, such as the push for political freedoms and macroeconomic liberalisation, it has broadly succeeded in its aims. Yet, just as each new regime attempts to define itself against the failures of previous regimes, each statebuilding project has also reproduced or only slightly modified some broad contours of rule in Mozambique. The next section offers some assessment of the various changes and continuities in three dimensions of statehood; political authority, political economy and public administration.

Continuities and changes in statebuilding, 1930-present

i. Political authority

To discuss the sources of political authority in statebuilding projects is to discuss how regimes claim their right to rule and legitimise the choices made on behalf of subjects. It is of significance that in Mozambique across all three statebuilding projects discussed, political authority has been continuously constituted and re-constituted through ideologies of 'development', resting on a diagnostic of Mozambican 'underdevelopment'. It is also of significance that political authority has had to reconstitute itself in response to resistance by trying to liberalise or co-opting dissenting voices.

For the colonial regime, there was a combination of ideas of moral and spiritual development through the Catholic Church, coupled with the 'progressive' political and economic effects of colonialism on backward races. These provided an overall rationale for the colonial state, and justifications for particularly strong exercises of its power in forcing labour towards 'public works'. For Frelimo after independence, the core critique of colonialism was that it had led to underdevelopment and backwardness in Mozambique, thus requiring a very widescale programme of social, political and economic change, to be advised by those sufficiently knowledgeable and educated within the regime. Mahoney (2003) has commented in particular on the similarities between the colonial 'New State' and Frelimo's 'New Man' authoritarian and modernising developmental ideologies. Both regimes used this justification to also exercise tight control over political institutions and the political economy.

In the period since the end of the war, the goal of pursuing 'development' continues to provide political authority with its central justification, both for the state and for donor interventions. This has reinforced and maintained the basic didactic hierarchies established by development, and in particular has facilitated the concentration of political decision making into the hands of development experts and officials.⁴ The integration of Millennium Development Goals and other markers of 'development' into statebuilding is not however a rupture from the basic rationale of the state. Unsurprisingly, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, a primary instrument of liberalisation interventions, are tied to the authority of development actors, as well as required to show 'developmental' outcomes such as reductions in absolute poverty. As with the previous regimes, however, the designation of what is developmentally necessary has effectively closed off political contestation and reinforced the power of state actors vis-à-vis the population. Mkandawire (1999) has called such states 'choiceless democracies'. Moreover, although aspects of ideology such as the necessity of state intervention have apparently changed, others have not. For example,

⁴ See Ferguson (1990) for the most famous account of these dynamics.

contemporary agricultural interventions continue to presume the undifferentiated subsistence character of a smallholder peasantry (Cramer 2006: 261-2, Duffield 2007: chapter 4).

The stability of developmental political authority, enduring as it is, has often had to make liberalising moves to ward off dissenters. For example, the colonial regime was forced in the 1960s to permit various kinds of reform to try to stay in power, such as the nominal abolitions of the *indígena* category and of *chibalo*. Equally, Frelimo was required from the late 1980s to allow forms of political and economic liberalisation to contain the internal (Renamo) and external (donor) forces of opposition. Since the end of the war, the transition from the Chissano to the Guebuza government can also be seen as another such form of retrenchment, following a nearly-lost 1999 Presidential election (Sumich 2007). In substantive terms, however, none of these retrenchments resulted in forms of change within the core personnel of the regime, nor their ability to exercise power through the state.

Indeed, only two small elites have wielded state power since 1930. Yet on the surface these liberalisations seemed to be signs of substantive political change; indeed, the feting of both the regularity of elections and Chissano's 'voluntary' step-down have been seen to be signs of the health of Mozambique's democracy. Overall however, in all cases, we have seen periodic returns to the centralisation of power. Currently, this is based in a reassertion of the Party within institutions of the state and a reinvigoration of Party structures as organisational vehicles.

ii. Political economy

The persisting centrality of the state elite is made clearer when we consider the political economic relationship between the state and large companies in recent years. Reading off critiques of liberal statebuilding, we would expect the enforced liberalisation and privatisation of state enterprises to constitute a radical departure from forms of prior ownership. Pitcher (1996, 2002) has however analysed particular elements which suggest some continuities on the basic ground of co-operation between the state and large enterprises.

The colonial state, as mentioned, sought first to operate through large colonial companies, before taking them over directly as instruments of the state under the New State. This was to secure monopolistic control of production which propped up the state and its export-oriented political economy. The post-independence government's policy was essentially one of continuation with this structure of ownership, in terms of investment coming from the state and profits being returned to the state. Whilst the state itself was much more oriented towards the needs of the population than the colonial regime, there

were nonetheless continuities in the mutually supportive relationship between the state and large enterprise, which operated monopolistically.

Today, the processes of privatisation and liberalisation that have taken place in the post-independence period have largely transformed state monopolies into private monopolies or oligopolies across a range of sectors. Although nominally 'private', almost all large enterprises now must have a fairly direct relationship with the regime via either the state, or via commercial partnership with members of the Frelimo *nomenklatura*. Thus, for example, the President controls large stakes in the 'privatised' public utilities sector, the former President has significant interests in mining, and even the party itself has an investment arm (Hanlon 2009). Investment laws require foreign investors to partner with a national investor, who is usually connected with the Party somehow. This is more obviously true of the so-called 'mega-projects', such as Mozal (Mozambique Aluminium) which are half-owned by foreign investors and half-owned by the state. Monopolistic structures of industry also persist in many markets; although legally permitted, competition between the companies of the state-elite is generally minimal.

As Pitcher argues, this signals that privatisation in Mozambique has not been the wholesale re-orientation of public enterprise towards the private sector, but has contended with and reinforced structures of political power. The recent re-emergence of colonial-era companies such as Sena Sugar Estates – this time co-owned by the state and Mauritian investors, and backed by World Bank guarantees rather than the colonial state – is perhaps a more obvious reminder of such continuities (Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency 2011). These continuities may be particularly obvious to rural populations, some of whom have endured compulsory land evictions under all three regimes to serve large plantation agriculture.

These large estates can also shape opportunities for wage labour in the central provinces where many operate, which often represent generational continuities for workers and their families. Although this is now not *chibalo* nor war labour, and workers are entitled to various minimum wages, these wages are often inadequate and very strongly eroded by inflation. Such generational continuities are also obvious in the ongoing patterns of migrant labour to South Africa from the southern provinces, cash-cropping in the northern provinces, and the structure of Mozambican Indian ownership of businesses across the country.

These forms of continuity – close collaboration between the state elite and large enterprises, geographical patterns of wage labour and income generation, and the role of the Indian merchant community – are indications of the extent to which liberal statebuilding has reproduced the broad structures of the political economy under the colonial and socialist regimes. There are important additives to this, including the influx of development aid,

although often the distribution and effects of that money remain limited to the development industry in the capital city. Overall however, the national political economy remains shaped by a concentration of ownership in small elites and an extraverted and export-oriented approach to rural development and regional traditions of income generation. This continuity strongly interacts with the developmental basis of political authority, which can allow the state to defer responsibility for the lack of change in economic conditions whilst also reinforcing the need for top-down direction.⁵

iii. Public administration

Public administration practices have also shown interesting forms of continuity as well as change. Critical accounts of statebuilding have emphasised that neoliberal policies have served to 'hollow out' the state, making it simply a regulatory agency rather than a substantive distributor and arbiter of political goods (Chandler 2010). Intuitively, the claim seems plausible, and fits with the general story about the character of contemporary statebuilding.

However, the actual practices of public administration seem to have worked in some contrary ways. For example, both the colonial state and socialist state were marked by substantial planning architectures in order to integrate the political reach of the state with the desired economic outcomes concerning production and autarchy. Salazar's Five Year Plan for Mozambique and Machel's Ten Year (later Five Year) Plans for addressing developmental problems were thus a significant feature of their regimes. One would expect that liberalisation would thus reduce the size and scope of national planning architectures as the country was moved away from a planned economy.

Yet, the opposite seems to have happened; planning architectures and processes within Mozambique are now, perhaps more than ever, the central activity of politics and political life, across not just the state but public organisations and agencies. For example, the government continues to present its Five Year Plan (*Plano Quinquenal do Governo*), which is now the apparent basis for the Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty (PARPA), which fulfils PRSP planning requirements. Each sector is also required to develop a Sector – Wide Action Plan (SWAP), with implementing agencies also required to produce strategic plans at the level of the organisation. Local governments, and now even administrative districts have multiple regular planning exercises.

These plans are important because their negotiation is an interface of visibility between government and donors, and perhaps because they represent a concrete output of

⁵ See arguments in Chandler (2006) about statebuilding and political responsibility.

co-operation. Although *what* is planned has to a substantial extent altered, from production targets to development targets, the bureaucratic practice and culture of planning has not diminished *per se*. Indeed, the establishment of a *more* powerful planning ministry in Mozambique – the Ministry for Planning and Development – indicates the centrality of this activity to the state, as well as reflects the increasing desire of the Mozambican state to have as much influence over the outcome of planning processes as possible.⁶

Another policy of liberal administration is ‘decentralised’ governance, which is articulated as countering the dysfunctional, centralised bureaucratic post-colonial state. Yet, as West and Kloeck-Jenson (1999) have showed, these efforts have in places been greeted and treated as, variously, the re-invigoration of the colonial *régulo* system, the re-appointment of Frelimo Party representatives, the re-recognition of Renamo *mambo* representatives, or as the recognition of other traditions of decentralised authority. Some of the former *régulos* who have been involved have requested to have powers over local taxation and labour returned, as well as uniforms, flags and transport with which to project their authority. This indicates that decentralisation practices have been received as resonant with earlier forms of Native Administration and Party organisation. Nor is this necessarily a misperception. For example, in the recent presidential campaigns for example, many complained that decentralised budgets were being diverted towards the projects of people affiliated with the Frelimo Party or their relatives (Langa 2011, Serra 2009). The local distribution of power and goods in this sense functions to ensure the longevity of the regime’s project, as did previous systems.

Third, beyond planning and decentralisation, there are even resonances in the resurrection of the ‘villagisation’ idea via the Millennium Development Villages constructed recently. One in Gaza province, was opened by Jeffrey Sachs, who arrived with 500 mosquito nets, a plough and four yokes (AIM, 2006). In the colonial era, the peasantry were herded into ‘aldeamentos’ (villages) to keep them separated from the rebels. These promised access to water and other infrastructure within the context of counter-insurgency (Jundanian 1974). Frelimo essentially repeated the strategy with the *aldeias commnuais*, which served security functions during the Renamo conflict as well as developmental ones. These are not remembered particularly fondly either. Clearly, in the present day, there is a far lesser threat of widespread violence from either the state or an insurgency, and the population is not physically compelled to remain there. These are important differences. What is interesting however is the continuity in the administrative imagination, which gives rise to

⁶ Interview with senior civil servant, Ministry for Planning and Development, Maputo, August 28th 2009.

the enduring appeal of the model village as a vehicle for progress, development and better administration.⁷

This historical reading of statebuilding practice suggests that there is much in the way of continuity in the state-society relationships established, including in the discourses that govern political authority and legitimise the state, the ownership and orientation of the political economy, and the modalities and personnel in public administration. Clearly, this does not indicate that *nothing* has changed. As noted in this section, important changes include the diminution of widespread physical violence, compulsory free labour and the shift away from economic autarchy, which are important features both of everyday life and in the relationships between state and society. Yet these are not by and large *as* central to forms of rule as some of the elements discussed, which pertain to the issues concerning the claiming, distribution and structuring of political power, wealth and control. The conclusion will reflect on the significance of this for how scholars, practitioners and citizens might approach the issue of statebuilding.

Conclusions: why we must think historically about statebuilding

The history of statebuilding in Mozambique shows that this is not a recent phenomenon driven by novel policy but a repeated phenomenon, with variations, incorporated into structures of global modernity. As the chapter has argued, although different regimes appear to institute radical change, dynamics of political authority, political economy and public administration also continue and substantially repeat previous strategies of rule.

This is crucial to remember on many levels. From the perspective of external practitioners, this puts into perspective the non-novel character of many contemporary interventions, and might even encourage a close examination of previous failures. For example, current donor agricultural policy in Mozambique is based on support for co-operatives with no substantive account of why they previously failed in this context. For scholars, both critical and supportive, this should encourage deeper reflection on the status, effectiveness and logic of contemporary statebuilding, which has often been held up as 'liberal' or 'neoliberal' in character. Looking at the problem historically suggests dynamics of statebuilding are embedded substantially in particular dynamics which long pre-date the last twenty years. For citizens, historical awareness and consciousness of former statebuilding strategies offers a terrain for reflection on the present, as many in Mozambique have already recognised around the issue of state corruption.

⁷ Scott's discussion (1998, chapter 7) of the functions served by villagisation in Tanzania as providing a way of capturing and reading the peasantry influences the analysis here.

Duffield has argued that post-war liberal intervention represents a 'radical developmental agenda of social transformation' (2001: 10-11). However, at least for Mozambique, this is to obscure the very *anti-radical, socially and politically conservative* dimensions of its effects on structures of power, wealth and authority in the country. From a perspective which uses history as a counterpoint, reforms have allowed for an entrenchment of power and modalities of rule, whilst appearing to increase their contestability. In this sense, intervention has provided the background and means for the elite to retrench without being substantially disturbed – indeed with the increased possibility of cementing their position within society more generally.

This historical perspective finally also allows us to see that dissent in Mozambique is not necessarily suppressed for long. There was substantial discontent with the election results of 1999, which triggered opposition demonstrations. The recent social unrest triggered by rises in food (February 2008) and fuel prices (September 2009) in major cities has demonstrated that there is an increasing sense of dissatisfaction with the government. This took it very much by surprise, and the government is trying desperately to respond through appeals to its historic mission and to the value of 'peace' in establishing 'development', thus re-articulating and re-asserting a longstanding rationale for government in Mozambique. Yet, it is unclear how long it will be able to maintain this under the present structures of power and wealth, which have sharpened inequality and centralisation in Mozambique, as in many other places in the world.

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