A Dream Undone
Mozambique: A Dream Undone
The Political Economy of Democracy, 1975-84

Bertil Egerö

Nordiska afrikainstitutet, Uppsala 1990
This book is published with support from SAREC (Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries)

Cover photo: A Gunnartz

ISBN 91-7106-262-9

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Printed in Sweden by Motala Grafiska
Motala 1990
It is important to avoid two common tendencies: on the one hand, to overestimate the 'socialist' nature of such societies and view 'full' socialism as merely a future extrapolation of current realities; on the other hand, to minimise the difficulties involved in realising socialist goals in current Third World conditions and engage in critiques which are empty because unrealistic.

(Gordon White 1983)
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Preface to the Second Edition

As the decade of the 1980s came to a close, the inherent contradictions of the South African apartheid state had reached a level which had forced a seemingly irresistible move towards its rapid dismantling and replacement with a democratic state. At the other end of the political spectrum, the much younger socialist states in Eastern Europe could no longer control their inherent tensions, and the strength of the opposition in those last days of the decade bore evidence of the fallacy of the kind of democracy that had been allowed to exist under the aegis of the de facto one-party state.

Mozambique's post-independence history is intimately linked to these two traumatic experiences.

Apartheid South Africa, through its fanatic genocidal pursuance of a policy of destruction of the whole social fabric of Mozambique, horrific at the limits of human imagination, has relegated the Frelimo project of creating a new society, based on solidarity and not exploitation, to the memories in the minds of those for whom the first years of independence was the experience of their life.

Eastern Europe has, with all its historical disparity with Mozambique, including the process of its transition to institutionalised socialism, exerted an essential influence on the formation and behaviour of the state that was to guide Mozambique to socialism.

The debate about the fate of Mozambique, the "apparent paradox of widespread and extreme misery after ten years of development in the name of Popular Power" as I saw it when this book was written, has too often centered on the relative weight of external efforts to kill the Mozambican Dream, as compared to the internal problems linked to the policies of the Frelimo government, and by implication to those of its advisors.

In reality, the two are intimately related to the point of being distinguishable only in the abstract.

The unique character of the Frelimo project as it unfolded in the many years of rural struggle against the colonial power, was carried over into the early period of state- and nation-building. It proved uniquely successful in the mobilisation of collective strength to rescue the country from anarchy and start building the nation on the ashes of the old.

And the new government needed models, needed advice on how to proceed with the state aspect of the nation. This could not have come from the old colonial power, nor from those European metropoles so successful in maintaining neocolonialist relations of domination other ex-colonies. It came, primarily, from that part of Europe which had no heritage of colonial
domination, and which professed as its aim the creation through socialism of egalitarian societies.

The impact of Eastern European guidance would not have been there in such strength had Portugal been able to support a Mozambican nationalism built on access to education and participation among the colonised in Mozambique. It would have been different, had its colonial economy not been so deeply penetrated by South Africa, thereby leaving the new government with no option but to seek a radical reduction of this dependence in order to give real meaning to the newly won political independence.

The errors and fallacies of the Frelimo state would have looked very different in their effects, and most likely in their rectification, had its work not been undermined by a successful strategy of economic, political and military destabilisation by its western enemies, first among them South Africa.

A major obscuring factor in the analysis of Mozambique after independence is that of MNR, or Renamo. Created by Rhodesian security officers in the early 1970s and taken over by SADF at the time of Zimbabwe's independence, it is an entirely external construction with no historical roots in Mozambican society. Its methods of recruitment and its exclusive emphasis on terror and destruction, underline the character of MNR as an instrument in the service of external interests.

Only fragmented evidence is available on the build-up of this organisation, its internal life and motivations. The extreme methods used against new recruits, described by, among others, Minter (1989) and Roesch (1990), cast grave doubt over any proposal that it may enjoy anything reminiscent of popular support inside the country. However, the swift spread of MNR over Mozambique in the early 1980s has raised the question of the relation between this phenomenon and the ways peasant life in Mozambique has been affected by the transition from colonial to Frelimo power.

Democracy, the basic theme of this book, is certainly a central aspect of this process. Research work done by the Centre of African Studies in Maputo, and more recently also by Hermele (1988) and others, has added to the evidence of a general disregard by government for the interests of the peasants, in the context of a strategy of investment in the state as the prime actor on all levels. That the peasants lacked a voice strong enough to influence the process is fully evident. The democratic institutions created did hold out a promise for participation, whose non-fulfillment may just have added to the frustration the peasants felt from a government policy contrary to their interests.

Research has also thrown more light on central aspects of the Frelimo policies. The class-character of its project led to the rejection of any collaboration not only with local chiefs, some of whom may have taken anti-colonial positions in the past, but also with small-holders, artisans, traders or middle peasants. The peasants, expecting that land once forcefully taken
Preface to the Second Edition

by the colonialists would be returned, found that it was to be reserved for state farm use. Such experiences may have been more readily accepted had the economy compensated them in better prices and improved conditions of living.

The late 1980s have witnessed a step-by-step dismantling of the socialist project in favour of a strategy of national survival. Forced to liberalise the economy and institutions in favour of private interests, Mozambique maintains a principled position in favour of an egalitarian society. This makes it all the more important to strengthen the country's resources for research in support of resistance to those forces pulling her away from that road.

Despite the efforts in particular of the Centre of African Studies, much of the important research on development in Mozambique, and virtually all of the international debate, is still today carried out by participants who are themselves aliens to the Mozambican society. In addition, research and debate is communicated in languages foreign to most Mozambicans. It indeed falls upon the resource-rich world of research and debate to rectify this and give Mozambique not only access to this mass of knowledge but also the means to participate in its interpretation.

The writing of this book, now in its second edition, was not an easy task. It bears saying that its focus on the internal dynamics of Frelimo politics may have led to an apparent downplaying of the effects of the war on the functioning of the state. Primarily, this was an effect of the difficulties experienced at the same time in stating this relation in more concrete terms. A more serious problem, beyond my resources to resolve, was the need for an analysis of the class content of post-independence politics. Hanlon (1984) had already made an admirable effort to contribute to the debate on the class struggle and the role of private capital. His account however is made problematic by the lack of systematic data required to substantiate interesting observations on the complexity of the relationship between "the state and commercial groups,... two distinct parts of the internal or aspirant bourgeoisie" (op. cit. p. 196).

Wuyts (1989), in his review of this book, returns to the role of private trade as mediator between the state and the peasantry. In a situation of war and economic crisis, "the parallel market... becomes an overriding force and its dynamic undermines the cohesiveness of any strategy of popular broad-based mobilisation" (op. cit. p. 287). As witnessed by, among others, Roesch (1988), the undermining process goes two ways: through the accentuated differentiation of the peasantry itself, which certainly acts against any popular mobilisation; and through alliances between representatives of market and state, on local levels as well as central. These important issues do not, however, reduce the importance of probing into the actual content of the Frelimo strategy of popular mobilisation, when looked at through the priorities and behaviour of the state apparatus.

The new society emerging from 15 years of intense destabilisation is a society of capitalist relations and class differentiation. The role of the state is
changing in the direction of a social-democratic welfare state. The Frelimo Party has, as appears from the important decisions of the Fifth Party Congress in 1989, returned to the strategy of the front of the liberation struggle, uniting all patriots and in the process allowing for the petty-bourgeoisie to contest the political orientation of the Party from within.

Such changes are evidence that the pace of change in Mozambique has in no way slowed down. Rather, as expressed in the 1989 Congress resolutions and the new constitutional proposals presented by President Chissano in the first days of 1990, the continued search for correct adaptations and reforms still very much characterises the party and state. In the light of these changes, it seems early to attempt a revision of this book. In the time that has passed since it was concluded, little research has been done on related issues, such as the changing roles of local and national people's assemblies, the growth of the mass organisations, or the development of employers' and other organisations, in short the institutional development of democracy. And there are other aspects equally in need of study: in January 1990 a major strike wave passed over some cities of Mozambique, expressing the collective reactions of urban workers to worsening living conditions under the impact of Mozambique's economic rehabilitation programme PRE. Such actions, initiated outside the sphere or influence of the state and party, show the growth of centres of power with a potential to demand space for a more multifaceted set of actors on the political arena.

The constitutional amendments presented by President Chissano in early 1990 are a radical departure from the past, in that they imply a separation of the state from the party. A close reading gives the impression that the amendments as presented provide for the option of a future multi-party state. With the class differentiation that has been set in motion by the parallel market and reinforced by the current economic reforms, such a development may over time prove the best way to consolidate democracy and strengthen the progressive forces through class-based political participation.

A change away from the one-party state, with the challenge it presents for the Frelimo Party itself, will also be justified by the changes now unfolding in the subregion. With the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa, a forceful restoration of temporarily suppressed economic relations between South Africa and its neighbours is on the agenda. Through SADCC and PTA, the region is prepared for a capitalist development. The political concomitant of this development will be future alliances across the borders, strengthening the workers of the region. For Mozambique today, this may be the may towards a long-term revival of its revolution of socialist transformation.

Harare in February 1990

Bertil Egero
References


Preface

The story began, for my part, twenty years ago in the Dar es Salaam suburb of Kurasini. Not far from my then residence was the Mozambique Institute, a primary school and students' residence run by FRELIMO. Informal contacts with the Institute staff soon led over to more regular visits to the FRELIMO office on Nkrumah Street, to learn more about FRELIMO and inform the growing interest back home about the struggle for a free Mozambique.

My four years in Dar es Salaam, 1967-71, were also crucial years in the life of the Front. Internal contradictions grew. Suddenly the Institute was made the scene of open conflict between the students and FRELIMO. It was closed down, and most of the students left the country. FRELIMO was heading towards a serious crisis which, in early 1969, culminated in the assassination of its first president, Eduardo Mondlane, through the connivance of members of the then leadership.

There followed a period of uncertainty, until the split between vice-president Uria Simango and the new leadership of Samora Machel and Marcelino dos Santos was brought out into the open. Fortunately, it did not take long before the Nyerere government decided to give its support to the new leadership. From there on, the struggle in Mozambique irresistibly spread southwards, up to the day of final surrender by the colonial power.

In November 1978, I finally arrived in Maputo to work as a cooperante in the new National Plan Commission. The task was to participate in the preparations for the first population census of independent Mozambique, set for 1980. The census was a challenge indeed; an organisation had to be created which allowed every household in that vast country to be visited and interviewed in the course of a nation-wide operation lasting no more than one or two weeks. This meant that the government had to seek support from the party, the mass organisations, even the private sector. In terms of nation-building, it was a great event.

To create a state out of the chaos left by the Portuguese was in itself no easy feat. To introduce democratic forms of participation and decision-making into this state and society, where there had never been any before, would it not for a very long time remain unattainable, a dream? Yet this was the goal set by the FRELIMO leadership, the guiding light for the party as much as the government. Its realisation was carried out with a determination
whose significance may have escaped those who never had the opportunity to witness the process at first hand - and some of the others as well.

To the history of Mozambique in its first decade of independence belongs the unique manifestation of international solidarity through the thousands of *cooperantes* from all parts of the world who came to Mozambique to participate in the construction of the new society. They witnessed, they learnt and they told their people back home what they had seen. They were not always believed. Nor could they always prove the generality of their experiences, working as they were in a small niche of society and relying on their friends and some written material for an understanding of where the society was moving.

Thanks to the generosity of the party and the government, I was given unusual opportunities to document this development. Party and government publications were made available, interviews and visits were granted. Through the good services of the Ministry of Information, I spent a period in 1981 in the District of Angoche on the northern coast, studying how the directives from Maputo were received and applied in the local government, in factories and in communal villages. Through the mediation of the Party Secretariat, arrangements were made for Lars Rudebeck, University of Uppsala, and myself to collaborate with the Centre for African Studies, University of Maputo, in field work in the former liberated areas of Mueda. The work was done at the end of 1983, six months after the important Fourth Congress of Frelimo, where I had the honour of representing the Swedish solidarity movement.

The Swedish government agency SAREC has supported the project with a research grant. In Sweden, moral and intellectual support was given by my colleagues in the AKUT research group, in particular by its member Lars Rudebeck. Numerous discussions have been held with friends such as Iain Christie, Joseph Hanlon, John Saul and Jens Erik Torp, not to forget the many *cooperantes* who have added their respective contributions to the overall picture.

In Maputo, the main source of critique and inspiration was provided by the Centre for African Studies, in particular its late director Aquino de Bragança and its History Workshop led by Yussuf Adam. The documentation centre and publications of the Centre were invaluable sources of data and understanding. To the systematic knowledge provided by the Centre has been added the accounts of hundreds of people in all walks of Mozambican society, from the *canico* areas of Maputo and Beira to the new town of Unango in Niassa Province, from the Maputo central offices to the factory workers in Angoche and communal village leaders in Cabo Delgado.

One person may be chosen to represent the many FRELIMO comrades whose support has made this work possible: Eduardo Gimo, the simple
tailor from Govuro District, whose dangerous underground work in the colonial years was carried over into the difficult tasks as district administrator in Vilanculos. I was fortunate to meet and work with him during the census pilot work in the district in 1979, and have since then learnt about his totally unselfish and dangerous efforts amidst extensive banditry to bring support to the victims of drought and famine. It is people like Eduardo Gimo whose relentless struggles in the spirit of FRELIMO make the country survive the seemingly unbearable hardships of the present days.

I dedicate this book to Bernardo Nampatima and Cosme Mbogwe from the village of Nandimba, and all other peasants from the war zones of the north whom we talked to during our fieldwork. When they decided to join their FRELIMO comrades, they transformed themselves from "the wretched of the earth" into agents of their own fate. Today they find themselves anew in utter dependence, deprived even of the basic necessities of life. Said Cosme Mbogwe simply: "We knew what we were fighting for. Will our children live to reap the fruits of that struggle?"

Stockholm in March 1987
Bertil Egero
Mozambique, general features

When Mozambique became independent, in 1975, it was one of the poorest and most backward countries in the world. The scattered peasants lived off land cultivated with the simplest of tools, the hoe. Forced cultivation of cash crops and slave-like labour recruitment had left their heavy mark on the adult population. Skilled black workers, to the extent that they existed, had learnt their trades outside of their own country, in Southern Rhodesia or South Africa. They lived in the southern, perhaps also the central, parts of the country, but not in the north.

Still, it was in the north that the struggle started, the war that would lead to the downfall of a European dictatorship backed by the economic and military powers of the West. How was that possible? Where did the illiterate peasants get the strength and coordination necessary to bring a modern army into defeat?

It is true that Mozambique was not alone. Similar struggles were conducted in Angola and Guinea-Bissau. Still, the peasant units never possessed anything like the technology of the colonial armies, the reconnaissance, the transport. They carried the war on their backs. They did not have the Vietnamese bicycles. They moved on foot hundreds and hundreds of miles, carrying agricultural products one way and military equipment the other. Easy prey for airborne troops, they just continued.

The leaders of Frelimo maintain that the key to the success of the guerrilla war was leadership and participation. When the distinction between military and civil, between soldier and peasant, had been removed and the unity of all facets of the struggle had been established, then the struggle was no longer Frelimo’s, it was everybody’s. A new term was coined to carry the meaning of the new qualitative change to all segments of the population, as forcefully as possible. It was Poder Popular, Popular Power.

The confidence that this term expresses between the leadership and the people, was carried over into the new state of Mozambique. Robbed of any means to keep society going through the tens of thousands of Portuguese who simply absconded from the country, the Frelimo government encouraged local initiatives, local organisation. The threatening chaos never materialised. Elementary social functions were maintained, and immense efforts were made to avoid a standstill in factories and ports. The enthusi-
asm was overwhelming, and everyone seemed convinced that with time they would conquer any obstacle, become the masters of their country and their future.

The purpose of this book is to explore the manifestations of the profound socio-political experiences from the liberation struggle into the new state and society of Mozambique, from Independence onwards. Their imprint on the ideological framework of reconstruction and change. The reflection on institutions for leadership, mobilisation and participation, as on the emerging system of rules for the division of power and participation. The actual unfolding of conflicts and contradictions in society, through and outside of the political institutions created in the name of Popular Power.

The aim of the study, however, goes beyond description and clarification. It is necessary to try and probe, deep into the historical process, the apparent paradox of widespread and extreme misery after ten years of development in the name of Popular Power. Some critics find an explanation in what they see as a persistent neglect of peasant needs by the government, which over time undermined the smallholders’ economies and made the peasants increasingly vulnerable to droughts and terrorist attacks. Certainly the problem, as we will try to show, is more complicated than so. Still it seems to be a fact that the different political institutions which were created to give the people a voice and a participation, have not served to bring sufficient attention to the plight of the peasants.

At least, the voice of the peasants has not been strong enough to compete with the other voices demanding attention. This indicates a fundamental change in the relationship between the leadership and the people.

At the centre of this study is the basic contradiction between an economic strategy of modernisation and industrialisation, and a political strategy of popular mobilisation and democracy. The one has its roots in the colonial economy and the overriding importance of reducing an extreme external dependence. The other is equally firmly rooted in the mobilisation which gave the Mozambican people the strength to achieve their independence and which was an essential condition for the defence of their rights in an independent Mozambique.

It is therefore necessary to expose the economic and social structure of the colony of Mozambique at the time of Independence. From this basis, the study explores the gradual process of establishment of a strategy of economic development which in itself would have very definite impacts on the division of power in society. This strategy was derived from a general perspective of socialist transition through modernisation resembling those adopted by the more advanced socialist states of the world. Such a choice, in such a poor country, is indeed reflective of the universal enthusiasm in Mozambique around Independence and the conviction of the leaders that real
leaps in development were possible, given the broad participation at which the Party was aiming.

To understand this, we have to go back and trace the political processes of the armed struggle. The contradictions which emerged during this period and their solution, the subsequent consolidation of the leadership and the rapid advances in the armed struggle, led not only to an unusual continuity in the leadership after Independence but, above all, to a solid confidence in its ability to seek and find the right solutions. Among these were the different organisations set up to mobilise the people, from the grass roots 'dynamising groups' of the first years to the party cells, the elected popular assemblies and the emerging trade union organisations. The birth and life of these organisations is part of the study. Through different case studies, my own and those of others, their official mandates are compared to the actual conditions and constraints which hamper their development. Numerous efforts by the leaders to come to grips with their problems and redirect development are documented.

This is a work of reconstruction and interpretation, based on many different sources: original texts and documents, political discourses by the Frelimo leadership, personal interviews at all levels of society, research and writings by other students of Mozambique. One systematic piece of field work was done in the course of the work; a penetration of the whole process as seen from the perspective of the peasants in a few villages on the Mueda plateau - the heartland of the armed struggle of Frelimo and thereby the cradle of the Mozambique revolution. This perspective was essential, indeed indispensable, for an understanding of what development meant for those furthest down in the hierarchy.

If the Mueda peasants could cure some of the 'Maputo bias' of the writer, they could only in part remove the kind of blinkers which grow from a long and close involvement with Frelimo and Mozambique. Cuba provided a means to create distance and historical perspective. Popular Power is a key political concept in Cuba as much as in Mozambique. But it is a concept with a different content, growing from a very different process of radicalisation of society. While my interpretation of Cuba's political history is left to an appendix of the volume, its reflections on the analysis of Mozambique is the last piece added to the work.
2. The Armed Struggle: Where Socialist Ideology was Born

- The minimum ideological framework when Frelimo was formed in 1962? Just to be against the colonial oppression and for national independence. Nothing else.  
  (Marcelino dos Santos 1973)¹

- ... what type of social structure, what type of organisation we would have, no-one knew. ... Now, however, there is a qualitative transformation in thinking which has emerged during the past six years which permits me to conclude that at present Frelimo is much more socialist, revolutionary and progressive than ever and that the line, the tendency, is now more and more in the direction of socialism of the Marxist-Leninist variety. Why? Because the conditions of life in Mozambique, the type of enemy which we have, does not give us any other alternative ...
  (Eduardo Mondlane 1969)²

The ideology of Frelimo, like its class base or material progress, can never be pinned down as a fact. It has to be studied as a process, a struggle between tendencies and an accumulation of changes in people's minds as well as in real social organisation. There are, to be true, certain historical events which are a kind of stock-taking of the past and an identification of the main lines to pursue. They are the party congresses, four in all until today and significant events in an unfolding class struggle within and through the struggle for political and economic liberation.

The creation of Frelimo was attended by three categories of people, representing different ideological conceptions of its purpose. One consisted of the exile members and leaders of three organisations existing since a few years back, whose exile had separated them from the realities of Mozambique and whose main sources of influence might have been the nationalist movements of neighbouring countries. The importance of their leadership was contested by a second generation of Mozambicans, coming directly from clandestine work in the country only to see the gap between the realities there and the dominant trends of leadership of the organisations.

The third category consisted of urbanised Mozambicans who had managed, through education and contacts, to leave the colony for studies abroad. Among these were Eduardo Mondlane, whose work in the UN brought him into contact with nationalist movements and ideas all over Africa, and Marcelino dos Santos whose European contacts put him in touch
The struggle of Frelimo has its roots in organised resistance which prevented effective Portuguese occupation of the territory well into the present century.
Under its first president, Eduardo Mondlane, Frelimo developed a socio-political organisation in the liberated areas in the north. Mondlane was assassinated with a letter bomb in February 1969.

Pictures from a mural in Maputo (Photos: Author)
with the international socialist movements. dos Santos had close links with emerging nationalist movements in other Portuguese colonies, forged through his post as secretary-general of their coordinating organisation CONCP.

Although the leadership of Frelimo came to be dominated by the last two categories, the new front rested on a fragile unity. Indeed, during its first year it showed clear signs of instability and risked falling apart. Differing over the objectives of the struggle added to conflicting opinions about the methods to be used. Although preparations for armed struggle started early, these differences contributed to an insufficient mobilisation of and information to the peasants who, voluntarily or not, would find themselves in the front line of the struggle.

The Frelimo leadership later admitted to these problems, in a review of the first ten years of its work:

- As leaders among the people, we placed those who had done the mobilisation work during the preparatory phase. But in fact those people had no political formation and had limited themselves to mobilising the people according to the model of neighbouring countries.

The immediate and important consequence of insufficiencies in mobilisation was that the requirements of a drawn-out military struggle were not always taken into account, nor even fully understood, by those preparing the struggle inside Mozambique. In Mueda in 1960, peasants had been made to walk up to the Portuguese administrator and demand their land back and political independence. The result was a massacre allegedly leading to the death of over 600 people. But even in Niassa when the struggle had started, peasant production went down as many believed that independence would come very soon.

The immediate effect of the armed struggle when it started in September 1964 after basically a year and a half of preparations, was heavy retaliation on the part of the colonial forces. Peasants had to leave their homesteads to move out of reach of military repression. Many went as far as Tanzania or Malawi, while others remained in the interior of the provinces. Inevitably, shortage of basic necessities and even widespread hunger resulted, hitting the military units of Frelimo as much as the peasantry.

Although not much has been said about this problem, its importance should not be underestimated. Basic material needs for survival, required radical and joint efforts if the war should not collapse. Guerrilla activities had been started simultaneously in the four provinces of Niassa, Cabo Delgado, Tete and Zambezia, but was soon discontinued in the two latter. Hunger and suffering was a problem in Niassa in particular, which had to
be resolved if Frelirno was not to risk finding itself in active struggle only in some limited areas of Cabo Delgado.

The start: Ignorance and hunger

In October 1966, the Central Committee met to discuss these problems. Frelimo was organised into a Defence Department, DD, responsible for war organisation, and a Department of Internal Organisation, DOI, responsible for political, administrative and economic organisation. DOI and DD were initially completely separated, as "the military wing was not intended to have a political role of any kind". By 1966, training in the Frelimo camps of Kongwa and Nachingwea had developed to include both political and military elements, and a growing emphasis was laid on production. In Niassa, the shared suffering of soldiers and civilians had forced them to join efforts. This in itself changed the nature of the struggle.

The Central Committee attacked the problems at their base - the separation of military from socio-political or 'civil' struggle. "There is a conflict of competence between the DOI and the DD", linked to the conception among militants, that "there are two types of members of Frelirno: the militaries and the civilians, with the first being the superior." Whatever its historical roots, this conception had to go and be replaced by a general understanding that the struggle was one only, a general national struggle where everyone would be called upon to perform any duty, be it military or not. To bridge the existing organisational division between DOI and DD, the Central Committee decided to create a 'politico-military committee', whose task it was to coordinate their work.

The material hardships in the training camps and in the war areas required sacrifices by the soldiers which could only be borne through a politically based understanding and motivation for the struggle. Political education became an objective necessity which eroded the organisational separation. It did, however, at the same time threaten a more reformist conception of the war as a struggle for political independence but with social relations of production intact. Military units which were politicised and working directly with the people could no longer be trusted to be a loyal instrument of a civil leadership directing development in its own favour.

The position of radical members of the Frelimo leadership on the question of production reflected its political impact: "If we seem to place undue importance to the area of production it is because we believe that this activity, productive labour, has the best educational value for our militants in the revolution... The fact that everyone, without exception, works in the fields - the president, the vice president, military cadres and other Frelimo leaders at
all levels - has helped to create good communications and good relations among the revolutionary Mozambican people, regardless of their particular area of training and responsibility."^{10}

Initially, the class base of the Frelimo leadership was very mixed. All the three categories mentioned above were represented. The leaders of the earlier nationalist organisations found themselves increasingly at odds with the other two. As reported, they formed "a secret inner caucus of Frelimo, appropriately called the 'Elders Committee',"^{11} headed by the vice-president Uria Simango and the provincial secretary (highest civil authority of Frelimo) of Cabo Delgado, Lázaro Nkavandame. Nkavandame had, after a period of work in Tanganyika, in the 1950s transformed his experiences of the Tanganyikan cooperative movement into a successful cooperative cotton production in Cabo Delgado. The Portuguese tried various means to prevent the development of African cooperative production, which added to the political significance of his work and brought Nkavandame into the centre of nationalist aspirations. By 1962, all the leaders of his rice cooperative became founding members of Frelimo.

Nkavandame's skills extended from organisation to commercialisation.^{12} In Cabo Delgado, he became the head of all commercial activities under Frelimo. Exports from the liberated areas to Tanzania soon reached several hundred tons, and a series of supply centres, later called lojas do povo (people's shops) were created to serve the peasants with imported goods. However, "Nkavandame was able to use his experience from the former cooperatives to transform them almost immediately into a de facto private commercial network. ...in fact, they provided a profit for his group and constituted one of the main reasons why this group was so insistent upon the distinction between military matters on the one hand and political and economic matters on the other."^{13}

The Nkavandame group did not accept the resolutions of the 1966 Central Committee. The split between the DOI and the DD deepened. The peasants, who were well aware of the poor exchange they received through the lojas do povo, tended increasingly to support the guerrillas. The DOI delegation from Cabo Delgado refused to attend the Second Frelimo Congress, significantly held inside the liberated areas. Proceeding without this delegation, the Congress reaffirmed and consolidated the position already taken by the Central Committee, a clear victory for the politico-military leadership. An open conflict was unavoidable.

The details of this conflict have been presented and debated in many different contexts. In January 1969, Nkavandame was suspended from all his functions in Frelimo. One month later, president Eduardo Mondlane was killed by a letterbomb known to have passed through the hands of Nkavandame's associates in the organisation. The "debate between the two
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lines" intensified. Simango was prevented from assuming the function of president and resorted to public criticism of Frelimo. Within a year, the allies of Nkavandame and Simango had all defected or been expelled. The new leadership that emerged is the one still today in charge of state and party in Mozambique.

There were many secondary contradictions exposed by the unfolding of the struggle, not least in the sector of education. But the main contradiction was on the level of war and production, material survival and control over the results of production. These were the issues which united soldiers and peasants, and set them off against the emerging petty-capitalists reproducing colonial relations of production and trade in the liberated areas.

The armed struggle was started within the framework of a front uniting all the different categories prepared to work for national independence. To these belonged Nkavandame, Simango and their collaborators. It is highly probable that, without the inclusion of all these, Frelimo would never have reached much beyond its predecessors. At the same time, any successes in the war effort would inevitably bring into the open the different interests, the class conflicts inherent in the front structure. The outcome of these depended in the first instance on the existence within the leadership of a group whose notion of power included the majority, the peasants, rather than being a power over the majority, and who early realised that without the support of the people there would be no soldiers, no food producers for the soldiers, no carriers of war material.

Secondly, the outcome depended on the creation of channels of communication, of means of linking the problems of the majority to the actions of the leadership. These were in the early period provided mainly by the military structure, whose political consciousness in general was more radical than that of the 'chairmen' and their subordinates in the civilian structure. The process we have described above therefore provided the conditions for and led to a profound implantation of the ideology of democracy in the liberation front.

There are few more detailed studies of the actual structures of Popular Power in the liberated areas, their organisation and functioning. According to Barry Munslow, in the early stages of the war it was the military who, having opened up a new war zone, took care of the initial organisation of peasants fleeing from colonial military retaliation.

- Later, power would be handed over to a person responsible for organising the civilian population, known as the chairman. ...In many cases the /traditional/ chief became the chairman and ruled without a committee, having only an assistant. Effectively, this meant that in the earliest liberated zones the colonial power had been removed only to be replaced by the old traditional authorities. The tasks of the chairmen included the distribution of clothing arriving from the exterior, organising food contributions for the combatants and setting up the village militias.14
The chairmen 'committees' were elected bodies representing all those living in a locality. When sufficient locality committees had been set up in an area, their members were to elect a district committee. However, as pointed out by Munslow, the pace at which all the links between the base and the central leadership were set up could vary considerably. "In eastern Niassa, for example, the proper functioning of structures from base to district level began only in 1968."¹⁵

Parallel to this, the growing tensions between the DOI and the DD, or between chairmen and military, and the increasing tendency for chairmen to settle in Tanzania as the war intensified, impeded the proper development of popular structures. It was only with the Second Frelimo Congress in 1968 and the subsequent open split with the Nkavandame group, that the system was radically transformed and most of the chairmen replaced. The new military organisation of the military units, the FPLM,¹⁶ shows how in fact a complete integration of military and civil areas of activity was aimed at (Fig.2.1):

Fig. 2.1 Provincial command structure of Frelimo after re-organisation, according to Munslow (1983)
The provincial command, structured as in Fig. 2.1, was subordinated to a central 'politico-military coordinating committee'. According to Munslow, the political commissariat of the provincial structure "took over the old functions of the DOI. Its responsibilities were political mobilisation among both the people and the army and the work of national reconstruction in the liberated zones." Further, "Although a person could move from being a political commissar to become a chief of operations, as their training was essentially the same, more important, all cadres had to mobilise the people and be politically conscious of why they were fighting. All had to participate in the armed struggle, as this was the only way to end colonial rule…"17

Reforms and advances

The Second Congress itself was an expression of the strength of the new perspective unfolding within Frelimo. Delegates were present from every province in the country, even those in the extreme south. The delegates had been elected openly or clandestinely, through the Frelimo network in the area. "Thus this Congress was far more democratic than the first and came far closer to being a fully representative national body. The decisions made by it were in keeping with its composition; they signified a move towards a more democratic structure and a shift of political influence towards the party inside Mozambique."18

There is no doubt that the Congress both reflected, and in its turn influenced, the prevailing trends among the majority of the people. Conditions were created for their representatives to talk, the non-attendance of the Nkavandame delegation from Cabo Delgado facilitating their work. The new Central Committee elected by the Congress had roughly twice the old number of members, and nearly all new members were from the interior of Mozambique. This reinforcement of the links between the central leadership and the base was a crucial requirement for its ability to guide the front through the ensuing open crisis between "the two lines".

It is no exaggeration to say, that the ideological conflict within Frelimo had repercussions on all aspects of struggle and work. In education, all the problems with elitism and privilege were forced into the open through the open clash between students and leaders of the movement, catalysed by another member of the reformist line, Mateus Gwenjere. A restructuring of the educational system became necessary:

- After dismal experience with the first products of a quasi-liberated secondary school system at the Mozambique Institute in Dares Salaam, the new school at Bagamoyo (in Tanzania) has provided an entirely different (and extremely impressive) model, as fundamentally work- and military-oriented as it is academic, with a selection and promotion
system stressing both political and more formal criteria. The Bagamoyo school is in any case merely the further extension of a progressive primary school system which is mushrooming in the liberated areas.  

The primary health care system expanded rapidly in the liberated areas, and, a few years after the Second Congress, new lojas do povo were created there. "These distribution centers were one of the fruits of the effort to transform production and contrasted sharply with the shops belonging to the 'New Exploiters' of Nkavandame's time." The Centre of African Studies at the Mondlane university in Maputo relates these reforms to a de facto organisation of a planned economy in the liberated areas, serving the needs of the peasantry and directed to the objective of advancing the armed struggle.

The distribution system entailed deliveries to the soldiers and exports to Tanzania - towards the end of the war over 1,500 tons were exported from Cabo Delgado alone - from family plots often widely dispersed to avoid aerial bombing. Most of the products came from individual peasant farms, with a slowly growing cooperative sector and various forms of collective military production contributing to the total amounts produced.

The Nkavandame experience had brought into focus the question of social relations of production. In continued debates within Frelimo on the ideology and politics of the struggle, the concept of economic democracy gained ground as an objective of the struggle. In the context of a front organisation still representing divergent interests, any goals going beyond that of national independence would have to be founded in the development of the movement itself before being held out as objectives of the front as a whole. It was therefore a significant event, when the Frelimo organ Mozambique Revolution in 1972 stated, that the struggle aimed at creating a society freed from the exploitation of man by man. There was a growing awareness of the class nature of the struggle, of the implications of the need to 'serve the interests of the masses', an understanding that this meant not only control of surplus extraction and distribution, but also new forms of production:

- Our work of mobilising and organising the masses to transform individual and family production into collective production consolidates the process of economic democracy. Indeed, by doing this we prevent the individual and family producers from degenerating into exploitative ownership giving rise to classes of new exploiters. At the same time, we give material form to the just principles that all the wealth of our country and our efforts belong to the community, serve the community and are intended to advance and improve the living standards and welfare of the people.

The political awareness and analysis behind this position were of course limited to a small number of militants within Frelimo. The development of the struggle also led to gradual transformations in the nature of its leader-
ship. Parallel to the increasing emphasis on collective methods of work, criticism of leaders and democratic processes, a vanguard began to form within the front. This process was in 1971 described by President Samora Machel as a conscious change of leadership: "The seventh year /of war/ was the point of departure for the conscious evolution of the nature of our organisation, its evolution towards becoming a vanguard party of the working masses of our country, a vanguard party with a vanguard ideology."22

The first party committees within Frelimo were formed in 1973, and in early 1974 the party school opened with Marxism-Leninism on the programme of study.23 Thus well before Frelimo came into power as state leadership, the main political lines of development had been formed and based on what was an undisputably successful struggle against Portuguese, Rhodesian, South African and NATO military resources.

The weight of the war year experiences was such as to give the Frelimo vanguard a sense of invincibility in their pursuance of the struggle. The correct solution, the strategy which is based in the popular interest, will win whoever the enemy. This strength of leadership was certainly needed to surmount the almost impossible conditions laid on the new government by Independence. At the same time, it might have been a factor behind contradictory elements in the political process after Independence, in particular the tendency towards excessive centralisation of decisions. Such 'deviations' have indeed provoked reactions and corrective measures within the leadership itself, in a way which shows the profound impact that war experiences continue to have on the political process long after Independence.

From Front to State Power - conditions and strategies

The development of the anticolonial war forced Frelimo to undertake an increasingly complex number of roles. To the war front was soon added an administrative front. In the liberated areas, the dissolution of the colonial state in all its aspects went hand in hand with the growth of a new social and economic order, a new legal system, a new state structure. This may be called the state of Frelimo, or its state form.24

The rapid development of the struggle during the 1970's, its spread southwards, meant that consolidation of state power in this sense never got as far there as in the north. The main areas of colonial state power, the big cities and the coast, remained untouched by the process which had changed the north. Thus, when the war came to an end in 1974, a new situation emerged whose conditions in effect showed very little resemblance to those of the protracted peasant war which had formed Frelimo into its present ideology and organisation.
Map 2.1 The liberation struggle 1964-1974
The Armed Struggle: Where Socialist Ideology was Born

The structure of the colonial economy and the conditions of liberation made the creation of a strong state apparatus an inevitable part of national independence. The main issue was rather which form of state development was to be attempted, an issue which was continuously on the agenda over the years to come. This problem was directly related to the question of what alliances were necessary to guarantees the survival of the new state in the midst of a growing regional conflict.

The collapse of Portuguese colonial power had led to a total, and poorly anticipated, change of relationships in the whole region of Southern Africa. South Africa saw its historical perspective of a "Southern Africa Common Market", with an extension right up to present-day Zaire, threatened to remain forever a paper project. During the latter part of the 1970's, South African strategy gradually changed away from the Vorster model of 'detente' relations with the front line states, to a more offensive strategy in particular against Angola and Mozambique, which combined elements of direct aggression, subversion, economic sabotage and general desorganisation.

The strategy was very openly aimed at the weakest and at the same time most important part of post-independence reconstruction in Mozambique - economic recovery to serve the poor masses. Failing this, the massive support that Frelimo was enjoying would inevitably erode. Even without any destabilisation, the restructuring of the economy that had to be started and the alliances required to build an efficient state apparatus, would mean that significant improvements in the living conditions of the poor could only be a medium or long term goal. Who, then, would provide Frelimo with the human and material resources to carry out its programme of change? What was, in fact, its social base at the time of Independence?

The peasantry as a whole was poorly equipped to provide the base for the cadres of this revolution. It was largely illiterate, with poor knowledge of Portuguese. It was split through labour migration in the south, forced extraction of labour further north, and in large areas forced cash crop cultivation in isolated homesteads with simple means of production. Only the northernmost parts of the country had been more profoundly transformed by the war, and then by Independence lost most of its best cadres who were sent for important tasks to other parts of the country.

Freed from racist subjugation and direct colonial exploitation, most peasants came to suffer material losses from Independence. The exchange on different levels which tied the peasant economy to the colonial, was reduced or interrupted. The embryonic class differentiation which existed among the peasants was through government actions prevented from developing in the wake of disappearing colonial farmers. In broad terms therefore, the popularity of Frelimo rested on the removal of force and physical repression,
plus the rapid introduction of health and education in the rural areas. In a longer perspective, material improvements would be necessary in order for the regime to maintain the support of the peasant majority.

The workers again, had not as a class been involved in the war. The clandestine Frelimo work among them had never developed into open struggle, partly due to the efficiency of Portuguese repression, partly because of factors such as lack of organisation and high turnover among the workers themselves. When the war ended, large numbers of workers were still basically ignorant of the ideological and material advancement of the struggle.

Again, Frelimo started at a disadvantage. Large salary increases 'accepted' by colonial managements before they abandoned the firms (and the country) had to be rectified, reinstating the old system of wide wage differentials. Disruptions in production affected existing bonus systems. On the other hand, it was now possible to offer the workers stable employment conditions, certain advancements (to fill the gaps left by disappearing Portuguese) and the right, indeed necessity of collective participation in management. Organisation of the workers and their integration in the political process were to become critical issues for the revolution.

The drain of Portuguese colonos had started already in the first years of the 1970s. By Independence, more than half had left and a year later only an estimated 5 - 10,000 were left of the original 160,000. The pressure of the war had not only created an exodus of colonos but also brought a policy of relaxation of the conditions for Mozambican including access to education and to slightly better jobs than before. The assimilado category of Mozambicans who through education, possessions and 'civilisation' had become accepted as 'Portuguese', in all likelihood increased considerably during the last years of colonial rule.

It was these middle level strata of state functionaries, management staff, teachers, business people, members of the service professions and the like who inevitably came to hold a key position in Mozambique after Independence. Restricted in their perspectives by a fascist government's isolationist policies, unacquainted with the tradition of independent thinking and scientific analysis, carriers of authoritarian and racist norms and values and - for obvious reasons - cut off from the nationalist struggle in the north, these were still the strata on which Frelimo had to rely to keep the state, the economy and the services operational. There is no doubt that many among these were genuinely opposed to Portuguese colonialism; they came to be the new cadres of the revolution in- and outside of the party. There was also a substantial number of "jumpers on the bandwagon", those who had managed to advance under the colonial government and looked for ways to continue under Frelimo.
To maintain a minimum confidence and cooperativeness of these middle strata, sufficient to make them give a positive contribution to the revolution, has been one obvious aim of Frelimo's policies since Independence. The result has been an apparent ambiguity in political developments, attracting a variety of responses over the years. In contrast, Frelimo has from the outset entered into open and direct conflict with the bourgeoisie. Its policies of nationalisation and extensive state control over the economy effectively alienated members of this class and made them either abandon their investments early or try to exploit state financial support while running them down. Few examples exist of cooperation and maintenance of production.

Frelimo's judgement of the situation soon after Independence was, that the policies had succeeded; the bourgeoisie no longer constituted a problem and a threat within the country. But it would continue to work from its outside bases, to rebuild its power through the allies it could find, the 'aspiring bourgeoisie' which was found in the state and the economy. This again points at the crucial role of Frelimo's relationship to this stratum for the developments in the country.

While during the armed struggle economic relations of production and exchange did play an important role in the ideological radicalisation, the structural context was relatively simple and clearcut. In the post-liberation period, the party-state had before it a far more complex web of interrelations, international as well as internal, through which to develop a strategy for social and economic transformation. At the base of colonial society was force; the relaxation of repression in the last few years had shown directly in for instance a decline in peasant cultivation of cotton. To recapture the producers for a new type of economic relationship would require means other than force, based on a social transformation of living conditions from which could emerge changing forms of production and exchange.

Thus, in the crucial early phase of national recuperation after Independence, the peasantry could not be expected to play a role similar to the one they played during the nationalist struggle. Nor was the working class there to assume the role given it by classical Marxism as the motor of the revolution. Frelimo had to rely on the state, the embodiment of its class enemy, to create the material conditions for advancement. The concrete conclusion drawn was that, therefore, power had to be concentrated above the state, to direct the development of the state. The vanguard party was deemed necessary.

The creation of a vanguard party was not done at the exclusion of democratic institutions. On the contrary, the party was from the outset balanced by emerging popular assemblies, workers' councils and mass organisations. What was left essentially unresolved, was the question of the relationship between democratic processes of participation and decision, and the power
of the party. This was all the more important, as the state apparatus threaten-
eted to become an autonomous centre of power in society.

Contradictions generate development, and contradictory elements have
certainly not been absent in the political processes in Mozambique. The
tensions between vanguard leadership and democratic participation is a core
theme behind some of these contradictions, themselves at the centre of
political developments:

One, the trend towards concentration of power and decision to the party
leadership, on local as well as central levels. It coincides with a lack of
distinction between party and state, through the individuals holding im-
portant positions in both as well as in the actual contents of work. In
consequence, the controlling if not even the guiding role of the party has
tended to remain weak and indistinct. In the same vein, holders of state
functions have received, by 'reflection' or political decision, a status similar
to that of the vanguard of the party.27

Two, within this perspective of division of power, the mass organisations
as well as the institutions for representative democracy, the people's assem-
bles, experience problems which in practice limit their possibilities to fulfill
the mandates given. With restricted autonomy and limited means to tackle
problems posed by their members, they are nevertheless called upon to
mobilise support for the implementation and control of party/state decisions.

Three, it deserves reflection as to whether the conception of "the Party"
was sufficiently shifted away from that of "the Front". There are certainly
reasons to claim, that Frelimo during the armed struggle not only knew how
to operate among the people as a fish in water, but even "...was the kind of
fish which transformed the water it swam in."28 After Independence, the
water was less fluid, less amenable to change. The question poses itself, if
conditions - internal and external - were there for such a rapid and radical
transformation as was envisaged in Frelimo's strategy. Or, to paraphrase
Bettelheim, not only were external conditions adverse to such a change, but
it is possible that "history itself was not potentially pregnant with these
changes."29

The very fact that the motor force of working class organisation is not
there, poses a real dilemma to the - inevitable - choice of alliance with
middle strata through the state. To bear fruit, this alliance requires concen-
tration of executive power, hierachical subordination, a certain amount of
privileges, restrictions in open debate etc., all of which need to be counter-
balanced by political forces from below. Working-class organisations which
have no historical roots, created under the leadership of the new party and
state, are by the very conditions of their own creation unlikely to reach the
strength and autonomy required to fulfill this function.
Any discussion of political advances and setbacks after Independence will lose in significance if it does not base itself in the extreme conditions created by international destabilisation, political as well as economic. Present-day socialist revolutions certainly, as Halliday points out, "take place overwhelmingly in the realm of necessity...". In the case of Mozambique this, if anything, is an understatement of fact. At the same time, the picture has not been uniformly bad since Independence. A few positive conditions existed in the early period, against which the deterioration to come was even more significant. The relevance of this pattern of development will be part of the analysis in subsequent chapters.
3. Popular Power, Democracy and Socialist Tradition

The one good thing about *Poder Popular* or People's Power as it is often called in English, is that it is a comparatively new term, born out of a tradition other than the European. It is a term which still lends itself to different interpretations, to imaginative thinking. On first appearance, it sits remarkably well with the conditions of struggle of non-industrialised nations. 'People' is the mass of people, the unchallenged majority of poor peasants and semi-proletarianised workers. For power to be shared by all these, it must be truly collective or democratic in character.

Conceivable, then, when we talk about liberation movements in clandestine and guerrilla struggle against a state power. But what, when the point of departure is the state power itself? Power by the masses, against whom or what? Or power by the popular government, *for* the masses? The many questions and their implications are in themselves proof that the situation is radically different. *'Poder Popular'* in the context of state power needs to be investigated, both theoretically and in the concrete context of exercise of power in the name of the majority.

This is also the reason why in the context of this study the somewhat commonly used translation 'people's power' is avoided in favour of the more diffuse term 'popular power'.

Popular Power - the issue of division of power

The term 'Popular Power' appeared at about the same time in the struggles against Portuguese colonialism in Africa, and in Cuba. In the early 1970s, the Cuban leadership started preparations for the introduction of a new form of local government called Popular Power. It was a reform introduced from above, at a given point in time and with fairly specific objectives. Its focus was the organs created for local democratic participation in government, and the methods of work guiding the activities of these organs.

In the struggles of Frelimo, like those of MPLA and PAIGC, the term had a much more diffuse connotation. On the one hand, it was used to denote democracy, as an objective or principle of the struggle.
other, it referred to emerging forms of politico-administrative organisation in
the liberated areas, including (democratic) methods for decision-making,
election of office-holders etc. This diffuse character has not changed with
Independence; Popular Power remains as an overall guiding concept at the
same time as a series of institutions for popular participation.

Popular Power and democracy
The ambiguity or diffuseness of the term Popular Power resembles that of a
related term, democracy. Democracy is often equated with the existence of
democratic institutions such as parliamentarism or party structures, over-
shadowing the importance of the more general principles or 'democratic
rights' whose defence those institutions are intended to serve. Today, such
democratic rights are often regarded as fundamental, principal rights irre-
respective of their utility or value for society as a whole or for particular
groups in society. Historically, this is a recent perspective. Political rights,
rights of association, trade union rights and freedom of speech are all vic-
tories scored by groups in society struggling to change existing power rela-
tionships. Simultaneous with, and in part conditioning these struggles, were
the social developments which made possible a broader exercise of the
democratic rights.

Popular Power has as a distinct characteristic the creation of conditions for
all to participate in and influence the development of society. The concept -
and the politics - has developed against a socio-historic background of
extreme inequality, with a large part of the population unable to read and
write, labour exploited under various degrees of physical force, a high
turnover on the labour market and an absence of labour organisation. Any
leadership basing itself on the mass of the population, whether in conditions
of nationalist struggle or as a national government, is in these circumstances
faced with the necessity of creating the basic societal conditions for such
mass support to be articulated.

The emphasis which liberation movements turned state powers give to
health, education, information and organisation therefore bears a direct
relationship to the policy of Popular Power. In comparison to the European
history of democratic development, the innovating force comes to a greater
extent from above, in the long-term interests of the majority. It is a transi-
tional process with a high degree of built-in instability, derived from the
contradictory nature of a centralised elite leadership acting as spearhead for
extended majority rights.

Popular Power and class struggle
- There is nothing we can implement without the involvement of the population. It is
  not we who should make the wonders, it is the People who will make them. As long
as the People was kept down, we could not go forward. Every task requires the mobilisation of the People, requires the organisation of the People...

President Samora Machel gives in this speech from 1976\(^4\) a clear expression of the dilemma of the vanguard leadership, lacking the means of institutionalised force and, in the long run, dependent for its survival as a progressive vanguard on an active class-based support of the majority whose interests it claims to defend. If we accept the concept of working class power as referring to the sociological domination of the working class over the means of production and the labour process, with majority influence through political democracy,\(^5\) then the central and urgent task of the leadership is to create such conditions so that this domination of the majority over the minority becomes a political reality.

When nationalist resistance takes the form of extended, rural-based armed struggles, the growth of a collective orientation is facilitated by the relative closeness of leadership to the population, and by the intimate connection between armed struggle, production and social development. Under the nation-state, top-bottom links are much more difficult to maintain. Political and administrative contacts are maintained through hierarchical structures, upheld by groups with different class backgrounds and commitments. The state is not only responsible for the organisation of production, but also the body responsible for the implementation of decisions about democratic development.

It is this ambiguous character of the process of democratisation, carried out by a basically indifferent or hostile state under minimum pressure from below and with a host of other more immediately urgent problems on its hand, which makes democratic progress highly dependent on the skilful guidance of a central leadership.

**Popular Power and the organisation of the economy**

Any state interested in control and redistribution of wealth, needs to substitute planning and regulation for the forces of the market. The political significance of this process is paramount: The transformation itself leads to interruptions in the economy which require sacrifice and solidarity. Moral incentives are needed to replace, at least temporarily, material rewards. But these, as well as non-market mechanisms in general, can only remain effective where the workers have access to institutions which involve them in the whole process of production.\(^6\)

There are two potentially dangerous problems in increased state involvement in the economy. The first, experienced by most if not all new socialist countries, is that the state bureaucracy proves unable to subsume the many functions formerly upheld by intermediators in the market process. The 'socialist market' network is mal-functioning. The other, related problem is
A voter voices her views during elections to a local people's assembly 1980. (Photo: AIM/Afrikabild)

A political meeting with railway staff, Maputo. (Photo: A Gunnartz)
the trend towards centralisation which inevitably goes with growing state responsibility in planning and control. Both of these problems may be successfully tackled with local organisations capable of maintaining active pressures in defence of their material and social needs.

Local organisation is indeed important. Some writers go as far as to identify Popular or People's Power with the social relations of power in the village or neighbourhood. The value of such definitions is that they support, at least by implication, a policy of autonomy to local communities, guided and controlled only by reference to a generalised interest:

- The basic principle of people's power is that every community should organise itself, analyse its own problems and possibilities, then find and implement the appropriate solutions ... /given that/ the good of that community depends on its contribution to the welfare of the country as a whole.7

The weakness of such a definition is, that it leaves out the interdependence between political processes in the community and on higher levels. Indeed, local progress as well as retrogression is largely dependent on the material support or exploitation to which the community is exposed by superior centres of power.

Without underrating the importance of a focus on the local community and its political organisation, we would like to present a definition which subsumes that level under a more general focus on the exercise of power on all levels, and its relation to the 'referendum' of the working classes. It was proposed during a period of field work in Mozambique (see below ch. 8) and served well in its emphasis on the ideology of Popular Power to remind that power in all societies is exercised for the majority, by a minority whose authority to use this power is not uncontested under any political system:

- Popular Power is power exercised in straight connection with the working people, receiving its legitimacy from the fact of satisfying the basic and concrete needs of the people.8

Under parliamentary systems, the legitimacy of power is at least in principle challenged through open referenda. In other systems, it might take other forms, depending on the organisational and other outlets available. It does not have to take open, verbal forms - peasants may well respond in increased or reduced production, in the labour power they offer to other sectors or the children they send to school. Like in the period of guemilla struggle when peasants carried the burdens of war on their heads, their confidence in the national government can be read in material terms.
Socialist development and democracy

The history of the socialist movement has grown in richness and variety through the nationalist struggles carried to victory in the last three decades. Based predominantly on alliances between middle strata and the peasantry, the nationalist movements have carried over into revolutionary socialist movements bent on bypassing capitalism. "Turning Marx on his head", writes Gordon White, "rather than being an historical successor to capitalism, socialism has become an historical substitute." This historical context, in all its local varieties, has not only provoked a lengthy discussion about the 'non-capitalist' or other nature of these transformations, but also contributed to raising anew and with force the issue of the relationship between democracy and socialist development.

In the Portuguese colonies, including Mozambique, the conditions of protracted peasant-based wars themselves posed the choice between ideological radicalisation and failure to achieve independence. In Cuba, the struggle was carried out without any direct role given to (or taken by) the working class organisation, despite its relative maturity and strength. In the second decade after the victory over Batista, the Castro regime initiated a process of democratisation of Cuban society, resulting in constitutional changes and local organs of Popular Power as well as in a different and more autonomous role for the trade unions in relation to party and state.

Following 'The Cuban path in Arabia', Yemen's National Liberation Front NLF waited ten years after Independence before creating, through elections, a system of local representative bodies with "limited financial and administrative powers...". And, as in Cuba, this process coincided with the formation and/or reinforcement of the party, leaving open the question of the potential democratic power of the new popular organs.

The Nicaraguan revolution created its own path, linked to a more advanced level of organisation in society than in the other countries. The FSLN, created in 1962, had closed down its military activities after a period of less successful application of the Cuban foco-strategy of limited armed actions. The new start in 1974 was marked by the formation of an open front against Somoza composed of no less than seven political movements and two trade unions. The struggle developed through armed actions combined with massive broad popular resistance organised through existing organisations and new local committees in all areas.

The high levels of organised popular resistance, which at times made the FSLN the leader of a movement it could not entirely control, gave the new government of Nicaragua the character of front leadership of the country. The existence in the state council of representatives of eight political parties,
five trade unions and six employers' organisations bears witness to its very peculiar character of leadership.

It is part of the picture of Nicaraguan society that there are about half a dozen different trade unions with different political orientations, that there is full freedom of religious organisation, that mass media are not monopolised and that workers' production councils in many industries exert control over management and production. The fact that only Somoza's property was nationalised means that a large pan of the old ruling class retains its economic power, which makes it a powerful political enemy as well. Henri Weber summarises the dilemma of the regime, a few years before general elections were held: "This explains why the FSLN is so anxious to exercise close control over the apparatuses of political power (army, administration, mass organisations), and why it distrusts democratic procedures as susceptible to bourgeois manipulation".12

Thus, with all its cultural and organisational differences from, for instance, the Portuguese-speaking states in Africa, Nicaragua shares the fundamental problems of linking a democratic development to the necessity of full state power in the transition to revolutionary socialism.

Leadership, the party and the state

- The state apparatus is the principal site of a bureaucratic petty-bourgeoisie created by colonial-capitalism during its last years of existence, which today is the principal depository of its values, conceptions, habits, methods of work, of its ideology and therefore its practice. This same state apparatus is the fundamental instrument for the application of the Party political line in all social domains; it is, thus, the central instrument for the construction of socialism in our country. (Frelimo 1980)13

The contradictory nature of the state in socialist transition is evident. In the economic sphere, to create the material conditions for a socialist transition means, in fact, to improve the competitiveness of national production on the international market, i.e. to continue to act within the realm of a capitalist market. The demands this creates for economic planning have to be continuously reconciled with the function of the state as the instrument of the worker-peasant alliance with its divergent class interests.

The strategy of the state in underdeveloped countries therefore poses formidable problems. A powerful state is needed to create the conditions for change. Its control and direction are key elements in the defence of a socialist path; yet in countries with a weak working class and dispersed peasantry, no long- or even medium term solutions to this problem appear to have been found.
In Guinea-Bissau, elections for a system of popular assemblies took place before independence, in 1972. New elections were held in 1976. According to electoral legislation, party candidates should not exceed one third of those elected. A clear distinction was thus made between the party and elected representative institutions, which in Cabral's vision "would ensure that the road towards socialism did not become an exercise in party dictatorship."\(^{14}\)

Cabral's model of the future state of Guinea-Bissau - he died in 1973, before the end of the war - was one where the vanguard party, although supreme in society, was still through its government accountable to the people's elected institutions. This could well be seen as contradictory, but then only in a different way from the more common model of total party supremacy in a system of democratically elected bodies. The theoretical notion of the party as the embodiment of the working class rests on a series of assumptions which are far from fulfilled in most countries attempting a socialist transition. That is, in practice the party is run by a vanguard which is neither worker nor peasant, exercising political power for, rather than by, the workers and peasants. Ideological and political development of the party is therefore to a high degree dependent on the central leadership, and problems of control and direction are no less difficult there, given its (usually constitutionally given) character of vanguard.

The difficulties are not new. The concept of dictatorship of the proletariat, the Leninist origin of the model of revolutionary democracy, certainly did undergo a thorough revision during the first years of revolutionary practice of the new Soviet state. If in the early phases leadership was seen as exercised directly by the proletariat, the vanguard of the revolution, this concept soon gave way to the one of the communist party itself as the vanguard, and as the direct central leadership of the state. Through gradual change in the relations between party, state, soviets and trade unions, what initially had the character of majority rule - dictatorship of the proletariat - soon became the rule of the minority, the one-party state. "As a consequence of the revolution, the party is no longer a subordinated power subject to discrimination, but the dominating and superior source of power in the new society. Through the conquest of and amalgamation with the state, the party becomes the real power centre of society".\(^{15}\) The question of power, originally discussed in terms of control and leadership 'from below', from the working class, changed into the question of power exercised from above, by the party leadership.

This interpretation, controversial or not, of developments during the early post-revolution period in the Bolshevik party, implicitly points at the principal problem of exercise of power by any class submitted to oppression and poorly equipped with the means to defend its interests in a politico-administrative setting. Equally, it points to the vulnerability of the vanguard leader-
ship in the face of strong counterrevolutionary forces and unable to count on a well organised working class.

It is the state, the government, which, guided by the Party, should create the conditions for a democratisation of power. The state organs in which through nationalisation and legal provisions a great deal of power is concentrated, are assumed to prepare for the sharing of this power through forms of direct participation of the majority of the population. This is a highly contradictory process, whose unfolding is directly related to the balance of class forces and economic conditions for the revolution.

Preconditions for democratic participation at the time of liberation might vary. Generally, in societies subjected to colonisation, traditions and experience are lacking in all or most of society. Studying Niassa, the northernmost part of Mozambique where the anti-colonial struggle started in 1964, Peter Sketchley finds that Popular Power was created from no base at all:

- Given what I have said about traditional African society and the superimposition of the brutal incursion of colonialism, we can see immediately that there were absolutely no role models for concepts like democracy, consultation or participation.16

By the time Frelimo came into state power, still only a minority of the people was directly involved in the struggle, and of these only some had more than a superficial contact with that new society which emerged in its contours in the liberated areas. Work had to be started from scratch.

Revolutionary democracy demands, first of all, the creation of organs of the state and organisations of workers and peasants which effectively permit control over the state apparatus. The PAIGC assemblies, the Cuban Popular Power organs of local government, the electoral process leading up to their creation and their institutionalised means of work, are the new centres of political participation and control which must be made to work. The same holds for workers’ councils or trade unions, and other organisations which would allow the masses to participate in the solution of their problems.

The lack of tradition in democratic participation is not overcome simply through the creation of an institutional frame-work. In a predominantly illiterate society, education and literacy work is necessary in order to give the basis through which new concepts can be communicated and elected persons made to perform their democratic functions. The development of education is the responsibility of the state, as is the creation of institutions for the exercise of democracy. The state is not necessarily competent for this, nor - through its officeholders - motivated to make democracy work. In the West, this was achieved only as a gradual process of working class struggle.

In the new states, lacking a democratic tradition, the transformation of the state and the democratisation of society are parallel processes, brought
about by the new constellation of forces. This leads to the question, whether in fact the state can be relied on to be the main agent of change unless its inherent tendencies are checked early on by the countervailing force of a minimally conscious and organised class of workers and/or prime producers, i.e. peasants.

 Planning, economic development and participation

A basic problem of state-directed development under capitalism is the limited control over parameters in state planning, given the exigencies of the capitalist market. Democratic control of the state in these conditions suffers from the same basic problem of being directed towards a state apparatus with only limited power over the dynamics of change.

In socialist transition, centralised state control and direction is intended to replace (or control) market functions and distribute resources in accordance with the interests of the majority. It is indeed a contradictionary process in relation to its own aims, the creation of socialist society. The problems are formidable: How to find substitutes for the old state forms of exploitation through oppression or coercion, in the ever-present need to discipline the labour force and maintain production and efficiency? How to find substitutes for market regulations of supply in relation to needs, substitutes which satisfy the exigencies of economic growth while also providing for the needs of the poor majority?

The former issue is at the heart of the long debate over moral or non-material versus material incentives in labour relations. It could not be reduced to a matter of ethics or ideology alone; the question of worker motivation is raised at its sharpest in transitional situations of economic disruptions and material scarcity, which demand austerity with all resources. Despite the apparent and generally growing political power of the state during the transition, the problem of maintaining worker motivation and support may well become crucial, as seen from the worker withdrawal of their labour power through "passive vetos" or simple abstention from salaried work - as is often the case in the agricultural sector. Organisation of the working class, through which they get a share of political control or power of participation, are necessary to tackle absenteeism and other problems in the labour process.17

Worker participation is relevant also for the second issue, the substitution of planning for market. The bureaucratic solution inevitably has its own problems, though different from those of a more freely functioning market. The degree to which disruptions and inefficiency can be avoided is, in part, a political question of information and control mechanisms external to the
bureaucracy, i.e. provided by the workers. In practice, such solutions only
give partial remedies to inefficiency and waste. Generally, initial experi-
mentation with more pure forms of socialist organisation in the Third World
tends to give way for either management-directed forms of leadership or a
certain reestablishment of market relations, or both.

Gordon White attempts an interesting identification of the stages of
revolutionary socialist development in current cases of socialist transition.
Drawing on a series of country-studies, he proposes the existence of three
key phases, the first being a direct continuation in the party/state of "a
revolutionary era of fierce politico-military struggle ...".18 In this period,
revolutionary voluntarism dominates in a simultaneous process of state-
building and mass mobilisation, with rapid social and institutional trans-
formation. Market functions are increasingly circumscribed by control and
regulation. "In this context, the methodological heritage of the revolutionary
period is appropriate ..."

The growth of state power is equal to a gradual transfer of power to other
strata than the militants of the earlier struggle. Educated urban strata with a
different ideological conception turn the attention to the issue of rapid
economic development. Internal consolidation goes together with stabilisa-
tion of external relations. "The revolution is being institutionalised" in the
era of bureaucratic voluntarism, the second stage of socialist development.

Over time, increased social differentiation and demands for increased
consumption combine with the replacement in the positions of power of the
old guard with leaders defending new 'modern' views on social organisa-
tion and policies. Growing diversion and complexity forces institutional
adaptations, demands are made for the reestablishment of market functions
and for "greater political pluralism and cultural diversity...". This is,
according to White, the period of reformism and market socialism.

Although presented as an ideal-type abstraction, the pattern outlined is
equally a summary of trends in present-day socialist transition societies.
Perhaps the most interesting aspect is the rejection implicit in this pattern of
the 'Stalinist' road of increasing party/state power, consolidation of new
ruling strata within a plan economy where the market is banned and demo-
cratic processes reduced as means of political influence. The historical
determinants of unavoidable economic and structural interaction with the
capitalist economies, of social counterparts to modernisation and techno-
logical advancements, appear to combine to reduce the society of party/state
'dictatorship' to an historical exception. On the one case, North Korea,
White sees it as one "which has postponed rather than avoided these critical
contradictions - when the dam breaks, the flood may be devastating."19

The White three-phase model sits quite well with Mozambique in its first
decade of independence, and there are reasons to return to it later on in the
study. However, in itself the model says little about the fate of Popular Power, as institutions and as political processes, in the reformist path of the model. This is indeed a field of further study and reflexion. Collective influence takes many different forms, and it is not always clear which is more 'democratic' than the other. In transitional societies where the imprint of democracy is still new and superficial, apparent first of all in the existence of an institutional frame-work, the passing through the different stages may not mean very much in terms of collective democratic participation. Where democracy had deeper historical roots, temporarily suppressed in the period preceding the revolution, the early phases of the transition might have offered fertile ground for the growth of 'interest organisations' or similar means of articulating class interest.

The historical experience of Mozambique over its first decade of transition will serve to throw further light over these questions.
4. No Easy Transition from Extreme Colonisation

Frelimo's protracted anti-colonial struggle had created the potential for a thorough transformation of a society whose very nature of extreme oppression and inequality had given the struggle its unconditional character. There was no doubt that white monopoly of economic power would be attacked, and that serious efforts would be made to erase the racist foundation of social relations.

If the change of state power in Mozambique has meant a break with the past in all socio-political aspects, the basic trend of economic policy has been that of continuity and reinforcement. The last decade or so of colonial rule had witnessed a rapid economic modernisation within a context of deepening regional interaction and dependency. In the Portuguese community, demands were made for economic and political autonomy from Lisbon. Frelimo's victory carried this struggle over into the nationalist context, which gave a very different connotation to the links not only with Portugal but also with the regional power South Africa.

International economic dependency was a strategic problem for the new government, and its answer was to continue the road of modernisation, through a reinforcement of the power of the state. In this, the Mozambique revolution followed a similar path to that of other Third World revolutionary transformations.¹

The Colony: Underdevelopment between Lisbon and Pretoria

Mozambique is a country replete with resources. Its large tracts of agriculturally fertile land are traversed by rivers more frequent than in most parts of Africa. Many minerals await exploration. The sea is full of fish and prawns, and the location of Mozambique makes it the only or most important port for close to half a dozen other countries. By Independence, as late as 1975, only the beginnings had been made for a fuller exploitation of the resources. There was, to give just one example, still not an all-weather road
network ready, connecting the capital and industrial centre of Lourenço Marques with the northern parts of the country.

The background to this situation is perhaps best described as the dilemma of colonialism through a poor and underdeveloped economy - the Portuguese. When the weak Portuguese governments of the first decades of this Century where replaced by the Salazar government with its policy of the Novo Estado, colonial economic policy became increasingly guided by the need for recuperation of the Portuguese economy itself. Surplus from production was largely transferred to Portugal and only minimal amounts were allowed to be reinvested. The stagnant character of the colonial economies left colonial administration with no other alternative but to continue its labour exploitation through open physical force.

In Portugal, recuperation remained slow, as most of the revenue went to save its chronic balance of payment deficit. It was only in 1942 that the state was in a position not to renew the concession of the last of the big colonial companies, the French and British controlled Mozambique Company. This company, which controlled a large part of central Mozambique, according to the then Governor of Manica and Sofala "...did nothing to develop the potential wealth of this entire region (of central Mozambique), preferring to plunder it and alienate the natives." Thus, only in the post-war era did the colonial administration in Mozambique begin to exercise direct control over the whole territory.

The new times are reflected not least in the immigration figures. Up to the 1940's, the 'White' - essentially Portuguese - community was still fairly small, consisting mainly of officials, military staff and the like. With the end of the war, migration rates started climbing, and stayed high through most of the 1960's. Equally important was the character of the immigrants. They were "...immigrants from Portugal, not officials on duty; they brought their families and possessions and settled either as artisans in the towns and growing suburbs, or in small farms and peasant colonatos in the Limpopo basin. Their style of life and expectations, while definably Portuguese, contrasted sharply with the seigneurial outlook of the ranchers, or tea and sugar planters of Zambezia, or the large farmers, many of German and South African origin, clustered around Manica and Vila Pery near the Rhodesian border." According to census statistics, the number of whites trebled in the twenty years from 1950 to 1970, where a climax of 163,000 was reached. If we add the numbers of other 'non-African' categories - called 'indiacs', 'yellow' and 'mixed' - the relatively privileged and professionally equipped community had by 1970 grown to nearly 240,000 (Table 4.1). Immigration reflected the status of the colonial power herself; many of the Portuguese were poor, driven out by rural poverty or lack of employment. "When the
No Easy Transition from Extreme Colonisation

ships arrived from Portugal, no one was allowed to leave before dark. Only late in the evenings did they board the trains for Gaza and Limpopo, rugged and barefoot and still representatives of the colonial master. In Limpopo, it was not unusual that the Black servant had to help his master read the paper or write his letters."^4

Unlike most other colonies, the colonisers in Mozambique spread over the whole hierarchy of professions, competing with the Blacks for jobs in transport, small business, artisan sectors and farming. This fostered racism and led to "a tacit system of job reservations"^5 at lower levels of management, price policies and extension services favouring the non-African farmers. The trade unions allowed to exist under the Salazar regime were kept under close government control and directed towards maintaining White privilege and supremacy.^6

Table 4.1. 'Non-African' and 'African' population in Mozambique according to colonial censuses ('000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total non-Africans</th>
<th>Africans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>3 996.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>5 085.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>98.2</td>
<td>5 749.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>148.0</td>
<td>6 603.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>163.0</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>239.5</td>
<td>8 168.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Nunes, 1974; Direcção Nacional de Estatística (personal communication 1984).

The colonial government was never given enough autonomy to be able to direct developments in the interests of the colony or even of its settler population. The Salazar dictatorship extended to all the colonies, keeping them under the direct control of his Overseas Ministry. All legislation was done in Lisbon, all economic planning and other decisions affecting the economy was the monopoly of the metropole. The labour code of chibalo or forced labour, and the imposition of forced cultivation of cotton - later also rice - emanated from Lisbon, as part of a policy designed to keep investments in the colony at a minimum while maintaining a high level of extraction of raw materials through preferential trade agreements.

The demands of the Portuguese economy not only prevented a self-sustained growth in the colonies. In the case of Mozambique it led to a gradual deepening of its dependence on South Africa and Rhodesia. Thus, an agreement signed at the turn of the century with WENELA, the South
African mine worker recruitment organisation, regulated the returns on supply of labour in the form of secured transit volumes through Lourenço Marques, and payment of half (later 60%) of the workers' salaries in pure gold at a fixed nominal value. This gold exchange provided the Lisbon government with immense incomes. Therefore, despite growing protests from farmers, planters and officials in Mozambique, the Salazar government renewed the agreement throughout the colonial period, maintaining the colonial economy in a state of chronic labour shortage. In contrast to the relative liberalisation seen in other African colonies, in Mozambique internal labour recruitment up to and through the 1960's depended heavily on chibalo or forced labour extraction.

The main Lisbon method of draining the colonies of their surplus was through compulsory trade within the so-called escudo zone. James Mittelman describes its functioning as follows:

- Another striking feature of import and export transactions is Mozambique's recurring negative balance of trade within the escudo zone. For all /selected/ years given in Table /covering 1961-73/, Mozambique imported more from both Portugal and the other Portuguese colonies than it exported to them. Except for a few products, Portuguese goods and those from its colonies entered Mozambique duty free; all other countries faced a tariff, Prevalent practices of undervaluing exports and overvaluing imports caused Mozambique to suffer severe foreign-exchange losses. In 1974, for example, Mozambican sugar sold at an average price that was less than half of the international price. ... Similarly, firms operating in Mozambique bought imported used machinery at discount, then registered it at the value of new equipment.7

Thus the colony's balance of payments in the escudo zone remained negative throughout, losses which were alleviated only through the 'invisible' revenues from transit trade and migrant labour (Table 4.2).

Forced trading within the escudo zone was not the only way to control the colonial economy. In fact, financially it was by and large directed from Lisbon:

- ... the country had no financial institutions of its own, no stock exchange, and its entrepreneurs depended on the arbitrary decisions of the Banco Nacional Ultramarino for loans of more than 90 days. Tied down as they were by the system of interterritorial payments with its lengthy backlogs, reaching 15 months in 1971, they watched the repatriation by Portuguese companies of 2,000 million escudos a year, a sum almost equal to the total costs to Portugal of the Mozambique administration. When the Mozambique Chamber of Commerce put up 60 million escudos in 1963 to found a local bank, they were refused permission ... 8

The backward and dependent nature of the colonial economy reflected on developments even in the 'modern' sector of production. Vail & White in
After Independence, art and culture has begun to flourish all over the country. In this wood-cut, José Tangawizi from Nandimba village in Mueda exposes colonial exploitation. Note the local sipai or policeman to the left, with his palmatória raised - a common means of colonial punishment.
Table 4.2 Balance of Payments, Mozambique, 1965-73 (million escudos)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>In escudo zone*</th>
<th>Outside escudo zone</th>
<th>General Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Whereof 'invisibles'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>-1 458</td>
<td>+1 240</td>
<td>+2 410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>-1 406</td>
<td>+1 007</td>
<td>+2 534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>-1 314</td>
<td>+981</td>
<td>+2 850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>-1 240</td>
<td>+922</td>
<td>+3 155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>-1 343</td>
<td>+64</td>
<td>+2 963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>-1 662</td>
<td>+92</td>
<td>+3 535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>-1 038</td>
<td>+598</td>
<td>+3 646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>-1 071</td>
<td>+1 243</td>
<td>+3 960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>-292</td>
<td>+75</td>
<td>+3 561</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


"Portugal and her colonies their study of Zambezia indicate the enormous difficulties of the Frelimo administration in 1975, preaching self-help to people used to "the manifold activities of an interventionist state that subjected almost every aspect of their life to bureaucratic control." Even the companies depended for their development on the "protection of the state", including its supply of cheap chibalo labour. Consequently there was little incentive to improve the condition of the workers.

Until the situation began to change in the 1960's, little improvement occurred in either productivity or production of the big Zambezi plantations. The coconut plantations maintained constant volumes of copra production despite the profits available in a period of rapidly rising world market prices. Boror Company had relied on its cattle for the fertilisation of the palm trees. Only in 1966 were artificial fertilisers put to use, and, "to the company's surprise", yields went up by 90 percent. The same year, experiments were started with a hybrid type of dwarf palm tree, expected to give more and better quality coconut, more easy to harvest than the 25 meter high grande mozambicana. By 1976 it was clear that the experiment was phenomenally successful. Similar trees had for many years been grown in Madagascar and had in fact been recommended for use in the colonies already in the 19th century.

Apparently, rapid economic growth would come in Mozambique if only some of the obstacles put in its way by Lisbon were removed. The onset of the liberation struggles in the African colonies provided the impetus. By 1961, the protectionist policy was replaced by an open door policy to
foreign investments and trade, intended to provide Portugal with a buffer against nationalist demands. Chibalo was officially abandoned, and forced cultivation of cotton and rice was abolished. A modernisation process was introduced, with varying effects. Agricultural companies had to raise salaries, improve housing and provide better food in competitive marketing for labour. Slowly, mechanisation and rationalisation were introduced.

In the peasant sector, the increase in cotton production was halted. Though there are reasons to believe that the practice of force continued in other forms right through the 1960's, the tendency was to drop cotton everywhere except where it was reasonably profitable. Instead, other types of cultivation spread. Cashew trees were grown all along the coast, and cashew production doubled in the 1960's. Almost US$ 25 million was invested in processing industry, bringing to an end the system of export for processing abroad, notably in India. By Independence, over one fifth of all workers in the processing industry in Mozambique were found in the twelve units operating along the coast.

Industrial development was fast. From 1960 to 1970, production in the manufacturing sector grew by 11% a year and investments increased by over 13%. In machinery construction, transport and metallurgy, investments increased by almost 20% a year. The total number of manufacturing industries in operation increased from less than 1,200 to over 1,900 in 1970 (see Fig. 4.1). Statistics from the last year of publication, 1973, reveal that the value of production in manufacturing industries - 15.6 billion escudos - put Mozambique among the top eight most industrialised countries in Africa.

This production, of which around two thirds were destined for domestic consumption, demanded energy and infrastructure. While Cahora Bassa, the giant dam construction on the Zambezi River, was finished only after Independence, local electricity production tripled during the 1960's. Tarred roads had an extension of 1,100 km in 1960, 2,900 km ten years later. The construction sector had a similar development; in the period 1963-71 the number of buildings constructed more than tripled to almost 1,600 a year. The Manhattan-like profile of unfinished skyscrapers must have been a breathtaking view for the Frelimo leadership returning to the capital city of Mozambique after one or two decades of absence...

To this picture needs to be added the long term investment projects which were underway and which, if realised according to plan, promised to tilt the economy over in the direction of self-sustained growth. In the south, the Limpopo River Scheme which started some years after World War II was planned to give settlement for around 9,000 medium-size farmers on over 200,000 ha land, of which 35,000 ha would be irrigated. A similar project, much larger in scale, was designed for the rich Zambezi Valley from
Figure 4.1 Annual index of industrial production for Mozambique 1959-70 (base: 1956 = 100).
Tete down to the coast, once the huge Cahora Bassa Dam was there to regulate the river. The power plant, with a calculated potential of 3,600,000 Kw, would become the fourth largest in the world, a capacity far beyond the needs of Mozambique itself.\textsuperscript{16} A major part of the energy was planned for export to South Africa, yielding good incomes on top of those provided by migrant labour and transit trade.

Plans for Cahora Bassa included the diversion of electricity to Tete and Chimoio (including the central parts of Mozambique), and to the northern parts of Nampula and Nacala. This way, energy would be available for the exploitation of known resources of coal, iron and many other minerals.

The settler community, including those who decided to stay and join the new regime after Independence, had great expectations on the potential for growth, wealth and well-being for the inhabitants of Mozambique, given that the drain of resources to Portugal could be halted. And, of course, given that good relations were maintained with South Africa, which in 1973 reached the rank of single most important source of imports to Mozambique.

The events of the last few years of colonial rule appear chaotic and contradictory. On the one hand, Marcello Caetano, taking over after the death of Salazar in 1969, advocated a series of reforms for the colony which, together with greatly increased military efforts, were expected to remove the Frelimo threat for ever. A 10\% annual growth in GNP was reported for the years 1971-73.\textsuperscript{17} On the other hand, military expenditure skyrocketed to 5.5 billion escudos in 1971, without any significant achievements against the advancing Frelimo forces. Repression and insecurity grew, and from 1971 onwards international migration showed a growing negative net - the Portuguese began to leave.\textsuperscript{18}

This was also the beginning of a drain of foreign reserves. The Mozambique government, in a retrospective review of the colonial economy, reports that during the last two years before Independence, foreign reserves slumped by two billion escudos a year. Consequently, "In the closing transfer of balance from the Department of the Banco Nacional Ultramarino to the Bank of Mozambique on the Independence Day of 25 June 1975, foreign exchange and gold reserves made available to the new government totalled 39.7 million escudos, about one million dollar."\textsuperscript{19}

By this time, an estimated half of the Portuguese community had left the country, carrying with them all that could be taken away and destroying the rest. They were to be followed by most of the remainder already in the year after Independence, leaving the new government with an economy extremely dependent on an increasingly hostile neighbour, South Africa, and with only the rudiments of a functioning bureaucracy.

The structure of a fascist/corporatorist state means obstacles to efficient functioning not only in the private sector, but indeed in the state apparatus
The colonial government in Mozambique, compared to most of its non-lusophone counterparts, was an extremely archaic institution, relying in procedures as much as in *lingua oficial* on instruments highly incompatible with modern growth and development. At the center of its relations to the outside world was the *papel azul* ('blue paper'), a letter paper with a given size, colour and lining, which, covered with an appropriate combination of rubberstamps and hard-to-acquire fiscal stamps or seals, was the only permitted means for making requisition or presentation to the government.

Suffering from overemployment, the colonial state bureaucracy developed to near-perfection the usual defences of formality, rigidity and hierarchy. By the time that independent governments in tropical Africa were developing their capacities for information retrieval, analysis and policy planning, exchanging experiences with UN and other international bodies, the colonial Mozambique government remained a backward institution under close supervision from the metropole, adapting its information needs to those dictated from above and essentially unable to make independent analyses or judgements on the data collected.

The internal political pressure for change remained weak. Democratic channels for control and enquiry did not exist in Mozambique. Whatever resemblances of democracy - parties and elections - did exist in the post-war era were simply crushed with the increasing ruthlessness and power centralisation going with the colonial war. As expressed by Middlemas, the liberal forces working for gradual reform and decolonisation according to the British model, lost their political stance in the late 1960's, "unable to operate against rigged ballots, a fraudulent register and legal manipulation of electoral qualifications."20

When in the early 1970's the Portuguese government eventually dared propose some limited democratic reforms, it was all too late. Liberal opposition was scattered, and Frelimo advances had broken whatever links it had had with the majority of the population, the Mozambicans themselves. Except on the individual level, there was no meeting ground left between the white liberals and the nationalist movement.

In anticipation of independence

The coup against the Portuguese government on 25 April 1974 was not a surprise for everyone. Later published evidence makes it very clear, that the preparations for an attack on the dictatorship must have been known far outside the ranks of the MFA leadership. What was unexpected was the speed and, especially, the course of the decolonisation process to follow. In Mozambique, only a little over four months later, the Lusaka Agreement
between Frelimo and the Government of Portugal paved the way for an unconditional transfer of power up to the day of Independence. On 25 June 1975, the Independence of Mozambique was proclaimed under the leadership of Frelimo.

The Armed Forces Movement or MFA was formed during the autumn of 1973. The preparations for the coup coincided with the publication of António de Spinola's book *Portugal e o Futuro*, released in February 1974. Essentially the book was a trial balloon for Portuguese capital wanting to replace unsuccessful colonial wars with economic domination. Under pressure from conservative circles the Caetano government responded by dismissing the author, chief of staff and a popular general among sections of the armed forces.²¹

By this time, the Caetano government in reality had few means to control or hold back developments. Spinola's dismissal on 14 March led to a military uprising two days later. Though abortive, the move was a clear indication of what was to come. When the MFA a month later took power, it was without any bloodshed. Caetano surrendered and handed over all power to general Spinola.

The alliance between Spinola and the MFA was replete with contradictions, felt in all negotiations with nationalist movements of the colonies. To its inevitable dissolution a few months later contributed not least Spinola's neocolonialist policies. Frelimo on its side quickly gained an understanding of the two camps behind the 25 April coup and, through its positions in relation to each, "sought not only to ensure decolonisation on its own terms but also to help nurture the revolution in Portugal."²² Skilful handling of various contacts from the early June talks in Lusaka, led up to the 7 September agreement for unconditional independence. Spinola at first refused to endorse the agreement, and appears to have played a role in the uprisings in Maputo starting at the time the accord was signed. The firm position of Frelimo in relation to this violation of the accord, undoubtedly contributed to the forced resignation of Spinola on 28 September.

The Frelimo leadership handling of this process brought them closer not only to the radical leadership of MFA, but also to those in colonial Mozambique who had wanted or even worked for a negotiated settlement and independence similar to those accorded to the British colonies. To them, the 7 September uprisings of 'Movimento de Moçambique Eivre' were about the worst that could happen. In the voice of one of those close to the scene when the uprising was suddenly announced through an occupied Radio Mozambique: "This signifies, that we are committing suicide. We, the whites ..."²³

Militarily, the case was lost for the Portuguese already with the failure of the Kaulza de Amaga operation 'Gordian Knot', initiated in May 1970 with
the declared aim, to "liquidate Frelimo within a few weeks." A large number of aircraft and vehicles, and up to 40 - 50,000 men, had been mobilized for the offensive. Still, at the end of the year the army command had only to recognize defeat. This defeat was directly reflected in a growing drain of both settlers and financial reserves from Mozambique, which showed not least the lack of a unity within the Portuguese community in Mozambique on the question of the future of the country.

Middlemas distinguishes four major groupings of 'Whites' in this period, using as criterium the community of interest more than their actual organisation. First were 'the larger entrepreneurs and bankers' with reserves in Portugal as well as in Mozambique. Their interest lay mainly in the economic development of Mozambique's enormous resources, if necessary even within the context of majority rule, if only guarantees against nationalisation were achieved. This group was undone by political developments in Portugal as much as in Mozambique; with their Portuguese assets nationalised, they left for third country destinations from where they have actively supported the international destabilisation campaign against Mozambique.

The second grouping consisted of those medium strata which strove for a negotiated solution with Frelimo participation. Their means were the new 'Legislative Assembly' to be created following Caetano's plans for colonial autonomy. Such face-lift reforms were however too late to have any effect; of the potential one million electorate for the 1973 elections, only some 11,000 succeeded. With the MFA coup of 25 April all plans in this direction came to a halt, leading to the dispersion of this grouping as a political force.

While most of those who later decided to remain in Mozambique probably belonged to this second grouping, the last two groupings have through their own actions been the local agents of the rapid exodus which followed the April coup. One was what Middlemas calls 'the Mozambique nationalists', small but potentially powerful. Their most influential member was Jorge Jardim, capitalist and owner of Noticias de Beira, Malawian consul in Mozambique and with access even to the Caetano government. The grouping had been instrumental in creating and developing special black units within the colonial army, a kind of national power base in military terms. During 1973 Jardim started a series of talks around settlement with President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, and indirectly thereby also with Frelimo and the Tanzanian government. A settlement proposal was actually endorsed by Kaunda and Banda, and approved by the South African government. But Jardim never succeeded in bringing the case before Caetano, and when the MFA coup took place, it simply put an end to all efforts of this kind.
Some of the Jardim associates have since come to play a very active role in the creation of armed rebellion against the Frelimo regime, in the name of MNR. They have received various forms of support for this purpose from the fourth grouping, the largest and probably the least coherent. Under the name of Fico - "I stay" - the petty bourgeoisie, skilled White workers, settlers and others voiced their concern and anguish over the falling apart of their society. Some demanded a settlers' UDI similar to that of Rhodesia, others sought a partition of the country with the northern parts going to Frelimo as the best solution for survival. The desperation was a danger in the short run; members of this grouping staged the occupation of Radio Mozambique at the time of the Lusaka accord, not to mention many other less conspicuous but dangerous attacks on the black population. Once defeated by Portuguese troops in collaboration with Frelimo units, they abandoned Mozambique in rapidly increasing numbers, taking with everything that could be carried and destroying most of what was left behind.

Thus, on the side of the colonialists, there was no representation, or organisation, through which the Frelimo leadership could reach out to a broader group for talks about joint interests in post-independence development. Nor were there any counterparts among those Mozambicans who had not been reached by the liberation war. Political parties worth the name did not exist, nor did trade unions for blacks. The colonial strategy against Frelimo had only in 1974 reached the level of Black party formation, as an attempt to provide evidence that Frelimo did not represent the majority of Mozambicans. A plethora of 'parties' appeared during the months up to the September Lusaka agreement. Main mobilising instruments were former defectors from Frelimo, who could count on a certain recognition at least in parts of Mozambique. However, the internal differences between these 'parties', plus the all overshadowing popularity of Frelimo at this time, meant that they had a limited following which, whatever it represented, stood in opposition to Frelimo. In the immediate aftermath of the Lusaka Accord and the Maputo revolt, the parties where outlawed and their leaders arrested.

The strength of Frelimo in the negotiations derived not only from its skilful handling of the contacts with different circles in the new ruling bodies of Portugal. Frelimo's internal response to the coup, inside Mozambique, was equally important for later developments. A Frelimo declaration shortly after the 25 April coup pointed at the obscurity concerning what forces were behind the coup as well as their possible intentions in relation to the colonies. Until this was clarified, Frelimo would continue its struggle for the liberation of Mozambique. This decision was given an even stronger impact by a rapidly growing confusion among the colonial troops. In July, a
new front was opened in Zambezia Province. Frelimo troops were rapidly moving southward.

Since the failure of its joint urban-rural strategy of 1964 - Portuguese secret police had rounded up the Frelimo clandestine network in Lourenço Marques before the armed struggle was launched - Frelimo had only a weak presence in the urban areas. The secret police, PIDE, and the system of informants had not only made clandestine organisation difficult but had kept information about the progress and objectives of the struggle at very low levels. The policy of liberalisation of the last colonial years permitted a limited black advancement within the administration, in the military and in the school system. A limited programme of studies abroad allowed for those who left to get in touch with the liberation movement. Thus, knowledge about the struggle increased, paving the way for broader mobilisation.

Little research has yet been done on this period. According to one account from Maputo, the scattered contacts with Frelimo up to the April coup did nor prevent a general feeling of confusion and bewilderment, of uncertainty as to the actual position of other family members or work mates. Rashid Tamele was one of the students whose clandestine contacts made them better prepared. His group, young people in their teens and used to the social adaptation of 'white' secondary schools, were requested to start mobilising the workers in Matola, an industrial suburb to Maputo. In the factories they met with a widespread ignorance about Frelimo and its aims. Working in a climate of fear of employers' power to sack and to harrass Frelimo sympathisers, the student mobilisers had to search for ways to develop, among the workers, a sense of collective responsibility in relation to work-site and production.

Workers' reaction varied over the country. In Zambezia, where the Frelimo impact was minimal up to the April coup, rural workers demanded from the big companies not only wage increases but also the return of company land. More aggressive actions were directed against shop owners and traders, whose more conspicuous ways of making profits were revenged in the form of shop looting, seizure of goods and killing of cattle. Apart from such events, "there was no substantive attack on the system. Rather more money was squeezed out from the patrões for rather less work, and there the revolution rested" - in this early phase of the transition.30

Again, data does not cover the actual interplay of forces during this period. The Frelimo Central Committee in its report to the Third Party Congress presents a picture, where "Generalised anarchy was fomented in the factories, with strikes, indiscriminate purges and wage demands. Demagogic wage increases were granted without any relation to the company's production. The aim of these manouvres was to confuse the working masses ..."31 The workers' commissions or councils formed during the period were later
denounced by the new government, as being part of the drive towards anarchy and dissolution of authority.

One account of worker's reactions after the 25 April coup, from Texlom textile factory in Matola outside Maputo, recounts how they took advantage of the new situation not to put an end to the system of exploitation as such, but to change the conditions "under which the labour power was sold to the capital." Within two months of the coup, the workers had formed a commission which presented their demands to the management. These had to do with wage increases, an end to racial discrimination and free access to the social installations of the factory. Negotiations with management, however, did not give much result, and in July a one-day strike was organised to put more pressure on management to respond. However, it was not until the formation of Grupos Dinamizadores in Texlom after the installation of the Transitional Government in September, that the problems could be attacked and resolved in a more profound way.\(^{32}\) The report from Texlom concludes:

- Although these first forms of struggle did give real benefits to the Texlom workers, and although there is nothing to indicate that there occurred manifestations of agitation and/or sabotage such as no doubt was the case in other factories during this period, these initial struggles were essentially of an economic nature and spontaneous. Thus, through their very character, these struggles were too limited to contribute to advance the broader interests of workers and peasants.\(^{33}\)

**Coming to terms in Lusaka**

The agreement on independence for Mozambique, signed by the Portuguese Government and Frelimo on 7 September 1974, is the climax of relations on two different levels. One is the explicit level of regulation of relations between the colonial power, i.e. Portugal, and the only national representative of Mozambique, Frelimo. The essentials of the agreement are indeed radical: A progressive transfer of powers to Frelimo (no other part mentioned), with joint responsibility to "eliminate all vestiges of colonialism and to create true harmony", without any compromises on the political and social system to be created by independence; a joint transitional government, with Frelimo holding both the post of prime minister and most of the portfolios; a joint military commission with equal representation and the possibility of direct control over the Frelimo forces by the prime minister.\(^{34}\)

The other level is that of relations to all those in Mozambique affected by but excluded from the formulation of the Lusaka agreement, principally the 'Portuguese' community of whites, indians and other categories. The Jardim group of nationalists had been overtaken by political developments in
the metropole itself. There remained the "Fico" representation of often conservative voices from the less wealthy sections of the Portuguese community. For them, the agreement was the sign of ultimate defeat.

Frelimo had taken various steps to base the agreement in the political support of Mozambicans. In Maputo, the Rashid Tamele group (see above p. 60) participated in preparing the workers for manifestations. A big meeting was called to the giant Machava stadium on 4 September, three days before the signing of the Lusaka agreement. The Portuguese watched "thousands of black flocking at the site, in a concentration larger than anything hitherto seen in Lourenço Marques. The factories were paralysed, the workshops, shops and services closed down. Radio and press gave a wide coverage to the event. On the streets of the city the climate was explosive. The other parties, excluded from the conversations, mobilised for protest manifestations, and there were groups who set off for the stadium in order to 'put things straight' again."

In the next few days, tensions grew. Small events were enough to set off violent movements. On the 6th September, a car passed through the central parts of town, covered in Frelimo's colours and with the Portuguese flag dragging behind in the dirt. This arranged provocation was enough to get the white crowds to attack radio, press and the offices of their own liberal organisations, such as Movimento de Dinamização Democrática and Associação Académica. The ground was prepared for the next phase, the occupation of Radio Mozambique.

Occurring on the evening of the 7 September, the uprising was allowed to continue unimpeded for three days. Similar events occurred in other parts of the country, dividing the population into black and white, separating the two even within groups such as that of Rashid Tamele. The white "Dragons of Death" passed through the black suburbs, shooting and looting, creating a climate of revenge which would be very difficult to contain. The colonial military and police stayed in their quarters.

When orders eventually arrived from Lisbon to quell the rebellion, the whole process was over in a matter of hours. But the second wave had already been set in motion. Thousands of blacks came out on the streets, creating fear among the whites and locally assaulting shops and other property. The Portuguese exodus began in earnest.

On one level spontaneous and reflecting the drastic changes in power and privilege to come with decolonisation, the exodus was too closely connected with economic sabotage to be entirely an uncontrolled event. It has been estimated, for instance, that around 25,000 vehicles were taken out of the country between 1973 and 1977. Enormous values were exported or destroyed. Files and documentation in the offices were taken or burnt. The liberal white groups which were prepared to collaborate with an independent
regime, found themselves heavily reduced through the exploitation of racial sentiments.

The human strength of Frelimo at the time was far from enough to substitute for the losses of Portuguese manpower. Estimates of the Frelimo forces vary from 12,000 to 15,000\(^3\), but no one disputes that "only a few hundred would be top-quality cadres with an extensive political formation and several years' experience."\(^{39}\) Their task was exceedingly difficult. Among the population at large, only a small fraction was literate. This was not only a result of a colonial educational system whose main aim was the subordination of Mozambicans to a retarded colonial society. Equally important was the linguistic fragmentation of the country. The African languages spoken are all Bantu, but of 10-15 different main groups, with subgroups and dialects.\(^{40}\) Only a few of the languages are codified, with very limited written material.

Two foreign languages dominate; Portuguese and English. The relative dominance of these has never been established. According to one investigation, by 1970 only ten percent of the adult rural population had command of Portuguese. We should expect most of these to be men. Similarly, many of the adult men in central and southern Mozambique had experience of English, through periods of work in South Africa, Rhodesia or the British-dominated sectors of the economy inland from Beira. Portuguese was above all a language of command and control in the public sectors where adherence to 'correct' language was as important as any explicit rule designed to uphold bureaucratic power and hierarchy.

The educated Mozambicans were very few, and those who stayed in or returned to Mozambique under the new government were no more than a drop in the ocean of needs over the country. Lourenço Marques University, established in the early 1960's, by Independence had an enrollment of over 2,000, but less than 30 of these were Mozambicans by origin.\(^{41}\) Unavoidably, the few Portuguese who decided to remain jumped to high positions in administration as well as production. Below them came Mozambicans who had at least a rudimentary education through the rapid educational expansion of the last decade.

The restructuring of the administration into minimally functioning forms, and the creation of political structures over the country in the form of Grupos Dinamizadores (see below), had to be carried out in a climate of collapse, social turmoil and exodus of know-how. Although no statistics exist for the first years after 1973, estimates show a distinct and rapid decline in the whole economy. In agriculture, export products are in 1975 down to two thirds of the volumes of 1973; export itself has fallen even more rapidly to three fourths in 1974 and only half in 1975. Industrial production shows a similar trend to less than two thirds in 1975.\(^{42}\) The
effects are gruelling: In 1974, "Mozambique's deficit in balance of trade and balance of payments deteriorated to the extent that its money-changing fund could not ensure imports (even if limited to priority items) for more than 7 days. Suffering from the oil crisis, Mozambique requested loans, but credit lines to the territory were blocked, resulting in a severe drop in trade." The president of Frelimo had to request financial assistance from the UN, $50 million immediately and a minimum of $150 million for 1975.

Internationally, the 25 April coup in Lisbon meant a sudden and critical change in power relations in Southern Africa. Apartheid South Africa had so far survived well behind its cordon sanitaire of colonies, and worked through a general strategy of 'detente' to contain its own opponents and foster improved economic relations to the independent states of the region. The installation of independent and radical regimes in Angola and Mozambique was a new element, to which apartheid would have to accommodate its strategies, using force or other means as necessary.

Economically, Mozambique was extremely dependent on South Africa. Rhodesia to its west provided a substantive part of the foreign earnings through a transit trade which, after UN had decided on binding sanctions in the late 1960's, were quite important for the colony. 85% of Rhodesian international trade passed through Mozambique, providing its government with 13% of its annual foreign revenues. Often called South Africa's sixth province, Rhodesia was an excellent middleman for South African measures to destabilise Mozambican society. On the other hand, its 270,000 white population in an admittedly strong and integrated economy could not be expected to survive a liberation war if extensively spread over the country. While Frelimo's Mozambique would have had serious difficulties to defend its integrity under the joint threat of Rhodesia and South Africa, a liberated Zimbabwe would carry a very different economic potential for the region north of South Africa, and thereby a different power to handle the neighbour to the south. Arguments like these were certainly behind the Frelimo decision already in 1974, to give support to a guerilla struggle in Zimbabwe in case the Ian Smith regime could not be defeated by other means. A decision to this effect was communicated to OAU in December 1974 in the midst of a Vorster-Kaunda joint detente-exercise. Its implications were to show with force only with the sanctions-abiding border closure in March 1976. Nevertheless, it was a clear indication to the Vorster government in South Africa of the political lines to be taken by independent Mozambique in the region.
No Easy Transition from Extreme Colonisation

The Dynamising Groups - essential base of the new party-state

- We know very well what we do not want: The oppression, the exploitation, the humiliations. But as to what we want and how to get it, our ideas are by necessity still vague. They are born of practice, corrected by practice ... (S. Machel 1974)

Frelimo had grown and formulated its experiences through the rural-based struggles in the north. The liberated areas had presented the organisation with manifest expressions of class contradictions and tendencies towards differentiation within the movement itself. The conclusions drawn on the level of ideology as well as practical politics were based on marxist theory and proved their worth in the years of advancing resistance against colonial forces.

Based in the rural context, Frelimo had no urban tradition except that which was carried by its individual members. Colonial society as a whole was not its breeding ground. This had two important effects; that the particular perspectives grown out of the peasant war dominated many of the initial actions of the party in state power, and that the leadership was rather less prepared to tackle the complexities of an alliance with urban middle strata.

Seen in general terms, the first period of the Frelimo government is distinctly characterised by the heritage of the struggle, translated into the institutional structure of the new society as much as reflected in the politics of the new government. As time passed, the influence of other perspectives became more evident, in the restoration of managerial power, in the centralisation of decisions and in the demands for hierarchical respect. This trend is on one level intimately linked to the strategy of development and its requirements; industrialisation within a system of central planning can not proceed without a centralised control of the parameters of accumulation, transfer and investments. On another level, what we witness is a cultural conflict where the urban colonial society and its values are so much stronger through its presence in all centres of power and its close adherence to the modernisation perspective.

On 20 September 1974, the transitional government led by Joaquim Chissano took office in Maputo. Samora Machel's presidential message was broadcast over the radio. The message was directed to "Mozambican women and men; Frelimo militants and combatants", and contained an outright attack on all colonial sources of power - the rasist hierarchy, the unequal access to education and health, the monopoly of power in factories and government. On the other hand, the perspectives and recommendations
given in the message were those which would dominate the political scene for the years to come.

In essence, the message is to work towards the eradication of privilege and inequality and create the conditions for egalitarian access to the products and resources of society. To achieve this, the colonial legal, administrative and social institutions have to be replaced by a different set of institutions, institutional relations and methods of work. The new government is to be guided and directed by Frelimo, whose representatives already occupy leading posts in the transitional government. The diffusion and defence of Frelimo's line is however not entrusted solely to its government. Simultaneously with the erection of a new government, the militants of Frelimo have to start working in all sectors of society, creating "in every factory, every government bureau, every service, every commercial establishment, in every agricultural firm, Party Committees which put into practice the directives of Frelimo and of the transitional government, liberating the initiative of the masses and setting their creative capacity into action."48

The party committees, soon to be renamed Grupos Dinamizadores or dynamising groups, were to become an outstanding feature of Frelimo's programme of mobilisation, with great importance for developments during the first years of Independence. They were the most immediate expressions of the ideology of Popular Power which surges in all declarations and formal definitions of the new society, not least in the new constitution adopted on the day of Independence.

The experience during the nine months of transitional government did, however, not change the basic perspective of Machel's September speech. A one-party state, the state apparatus subordinated to party directives and local organisations operating according to the directives of party and state - i.e. a centralised form of power - is the model accepted in both constitution and party statutes. To counterbalance the state apparatus, a system of elected assemblies, "the supreme organs of State Power", is to be created as soon as conditions permit.

In contrast to these well-defined institutional relations of power, an issue which was less well settled and thereby also subject to various influences, was that of the forms of leadership to be encouraged in the new society. On the one hand, colonial non-democratic relations of power with all decisions taken by "the boss", ought to be replaced by more collective forms of participation in decision-making. On the other, the emerging principle of hierarchical relations was that of 'democratic centralism', a concept whose application did not necessarily accord with that of 'collective leadership'.

As a leading principle for methods of work in the party and the state, the concept was only formally introduced in 1977 and 1978 respectively. In its essence, it did however exist already in the Frelimo statutes from the Second
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Congress of 1968, and in formulations which carried a somewhat different connotation from those of the Frelimo Party. The tradition of the Front is well reflected in an important discussion about the state and public sector held in October 1976, where the Minister of State Oscar Monteiro sought to express a formula that would reconcile the principle of collective leadership with that of the individual responsibility of the person in charge:

- The existence of a collective directorate does not signify that the director should limit his role to that of chairing its meetings. He ought to analyse his role as the one who coordinates and synthesises the general thinking and in the same way implements it as part of his individual responsibilities.

The implementation of this kind of leadership in a society accustomed to rigidly hierarchical and authoritarian relations did indeed meet with problems in the immediate post-colonial era. The changes that were to follow reflected these problems, at the same time as they signified a change in political perspective to which we will have reason to return.

The dynamising groups (GD) emerged and flourished while conditions for an openly defined "grassroots democracy" were at their best. Machel's call in September 1974 for local committees to form themselves had led to such groups mushrooming all over the country. The process was largely uncontrolled, and showed wide variations. A small written guide for the committees was distributed. But Frelimo cadres were too few to regularly guide the selection and formation of members. In some enterprises they were simply selected by the management. Where the management had left, some enterprising persons, often from the more educated strata, took the initiative. The members could be ex-clandestinesympathisers of Frelimo, or more straight careerists or even such who, having been a bit too close to the colonial power, needed to control their environment and give an optimum appearance of collaboration with the new regime.

The exodus of the Portuguese meant that many enterprises were abandoned and had to be taken over by the new government. This unavoidably led to a growth in the state apparatus, and to new people being employed who were not always ideologically in line with Frelimo. In this situation, Frelimo often had to rely on the GDs "both to carry out explicitly political functions ... and to maintain production as far as possible by helping to run various state and private enterprises." Through their composition as well as the tasks laid onto them, GD activities often were not unequivocally in line with the objectives of Frelimo.

In February 1975, over 400 representatives of the 110 district committees of the country met in Mocuba in northern Mozambique to discuss the functioning and progress of the GDs. This was for many clandestine militants the first occasion to meet with leaders of Frelimo. It was historic also in
The office of the dynamising group is often the center of local community life. Party work, militia training, administration and counselling draw many people to the place.

From the communal village of Inhamitanga, Sofala Province
(Photo: G Eneroth)

another sense. The GDs were instructed to purify their own ranks from those who through their actions had proved to be against the objectives of Frelimo and, in so doing, to "collaborate with the People in the detection and denunciation of such elements ...". In order to carry out their tasks, the GDs had to have the confidence of the majority, i.e. had to have a clean record from the colonial past. The proposed method of popular referendum was to be used on many occasions in the future, with on the whole very good results.
According to one of the early GD members, active in Maputo city, the purification request led to a sharp reduction in membership. Not only did the organisation lose some of its already active members, but new candidates for membership in the GD - and thereby in Frelimo - were certainly less quick in presenting themselves now that they would be subjected to judgement by work mates and neighbours. Despite these effects, the method was later by the party deemed not to be safe enough. A people used to surviving through caution and submission under a harsh colonial government, needed proof of the strength of its new leaders before openly attacking their local adversaries.

Years after the Mocuba meeting, new people were exposed who had kept positions of responsibility despite serious compromises in the past. In transforming Frelimo into a cadre party in 1977, the leadership also took the precaution of not admitting, without test, as member anyone who had come to Frelimo after the cessation of war activities in 1974.

In different summaries of developments during the first years, the Frelimo appraisal of the GDs was quite positive. When at times they were put under criticism, such as in the President meeting with Maputo workers in October 1976, the purpose was clear; only through an open discussion of the insufficiencies and errors of members of the GDs would the workers be able to further their interests in a more class-conscious way. Two cases of GD development, both from Maputo, illustrate their functioning and problems.

Alto Maé in the 'cement city' of Maputo was in colonial times an almost all-white neighbourhood composed of some 20,000 policemen, functionaries, commercial and bank employees and their families. In November 1974 the new GD, which included some sympathetic whites, met for the first time and drew up a programme of information through meetings and pamphlets.

- As this work evolved so did the reaction of many of the residents. Bombs were placed in garbage pails during community clean-up campaigns, and GD members were physically threatened and photographed as a form of intimidation. In response, the GD set up a vigilance sector which helped dismantle an organised ring of foreign exchange dealers. The GD also met with workers of the factories located in Alto Maé and unmasked acts of economic sabotage, in the presence of the owners! Another campaign limited drinking hours in the bars which were centres of prostitution and petty crime.

While more of the white families left, the GD expanded its activities, starting for instance literacy and adult education classes in the area. A major crisis occurred with the implementation of the instructions from the Mocuba meeting in February 1975. All GDs were there requested to check the background and behavior of their members, in order to expose for instance
"former secret police agents and other collaborators" who might have infiltrated the GD:

- During a long neighborhood meeting, several such people were discovered to have been obstructing the work of the GD. They were dismissed and it was decided to institute political courses for GD members and to assign specific tasks which could be monitored ...  

In contrast to this fairly successful neighbourhood, the CIFEL steel factory had more difficult start. With a production of 44,000 tons in 1973, it probably was one of the biggest rolling mills in Africa south of the Sahara. By 1976, production had reached an all time low of 6,000 tons whereafter a slow increase began. Owned by Portuguese capital, the factory was abandoned by Independence and kept going "by a series of short-lived administrators" and a GD. At the end of 1974, a workers' Production Council was formed (see chapter 7 below). 

When the British cooperator Peter Sketchley arrived in Maputo to work at CIFEL, in March 1977, Frelimo had been transformed into a vanguard party. The last CIFEL administrator had just packed his cases and left the country. The still young Production Council therefore "had complete responsibility for the plant with an overworked official of the Ministry of Industry visiting once a fortnight to give them encouragement and sign a few cheques." Only around 15% of the workers could read and write. The 24 members of the Production Council generally used the local language of Shangaan in their meetings.

The GD was the political representative in CIFEL. Formed in 1974, it had six members. Its secretary was "a young, bright assimilated Mozambican who worked in the laboratory." (\'Assimilado\' was a status given by the colonial government to a Mozambican who had earned enough education, income and Portuguese manners to qualify as a kind of second-class Portuguese citizen.) He was only 19 years old, "uninformed politically and deformed by the process of assimilation. ... But nevertheless he was the political leadership at the time and hated by the majority of the workers."

By mid-1977 the owner of some other factories in the region was appointed new administrator of CIFEL. His contacts permitted removing some obstacles to increased production, and results were not long in coming. The managerial structure created under his directives was of the traditional capitalist form. In an "unholy alliance" with the GD secretary, the administrator's authority had soon relegated the CD to the role of policing the workers. These developments were halted only through a direct external intervention by the Party Frelimo.

The building of the new party included visits to the most important work sites to prepare the formation of party cells. In early 1978, a brigade arrived
at the CIFEL factory. Within a week of investigations, it "declared the GD to be a spent force without the support of the workers, and closed it down." Then, after patient meetings and talks to the workers, it finally learnt about the methods of work of the administrator. Within a few weeks, he was removed and replaced with two young, aware Mozambicans. When the Party cell was formed, six of the twelve individuals proposed were accepted, but only after a series of meetings and discussions with work mates and neighbourhood GDs.

Such a dynamic and successful solution of the leadership problems is unlikely to have happened in many places outside of the central urban areas and the strategic industries. And even in CIFEL itself, the struggle over changing relations of production was in no way finished with the party intervention. In 1982, two years after the adoption of new salary legislation, CIFEL workers were reported to complain that nothing had been done to introduce the new wages and rectify existing injustices. Their appeal for government support had no mention of either Production Council or party cell.59

Like in many places of work, GDs in neighbourhoods and rural areas often played an administrative as much as a political role. Replacing a rapidly disintegrating colonial administration, they were in fact initially the local presence of the new state apparatus. Their substitution in this respect was, for obvious reasons, only a matter of the time required for a new administration to be erected.

One rapidly growing area of responsibility for the new state was the management of abandoned units of production, left behind by disappearing Portuguese. Although statistics are lacking, the number of abandoned enterprises was high; in January 1976, in one day alone, 20 firms in Maputo were abandoned.60 By April 1977 well over 300 enterprises had been nationalised. Most of them were small, and less than 50 had a number of employees exceeding one hundred. A similar situation developed in the rural areas, where the many abandoned Portuguese farms would collapse very quickly if not taken over by the state. Colonial statistics from 1970 give over 4,600 units in the so-called modern sector of agriculture, covering an area of about 2.5 million hectares and employing 70,000 workers on a regular basis and a quarter of a million as seasonal labour.61

The land in the modern sector was extremely unevenly distributed, with over one third of the units in the range from 20 to 50 hectares and a similar number between 100 and 500 hectares. Less than 5% of the units were over 1,000 hectares each, sharing between them more than 60% of the total land in this sector.

In some of the small and medium-sized units, the agricultural workers were encouraged to form cooperatives. Larger units were made into state
farms. The state sector came to absorb a large part of all agricultural investments. In area, it has remained modest. From 60,000 hectares in 1976, it grew to 100,000 in 1978 and 140,000 four years later. This represents only a minor fraction of the former modern sector of agriculture.

Necessity, though, was not the only factor influencing state expansion. The government made it clear from the outset, that a control over economy and society was to be instituted in order to provide for a profound transformation. By Independence, all land was constitutionally made into national property. One month later, education, health, legal and funeral services were nationalised. In February 1976, all rental housing was nationalised, and the first years of Independence saw strategic parts of the economy and finance being brought under state control.

Although the actual implementation of the laws was in no way guaranteed from legislation alone - as shown not least by the reestablishment of private landownership in the 1980's - the importance of the state was a point brought home very early on in actions as well as in words. Eight years after Independence, the state had come to hold direct control over in general between 70 and 100% of the activities in different sectors of society.
5. The Adoption of a Socialist Perspective

We have been behind events. We have not yet taken an initiative. We have been working like firemen. This reflects a lack of structures, a lack of organisation. And we say this is a bad thing. One of the key secrets is to hold the initiative. The initiative must always be with us and never with the enemy. (S. Machel 1976)¹

The first years of the new regime were characterised by intense reorganisation and formulation of policies. The general lines of a development strategy had taken form already before the Portuguese flag was lowered. What was needed was a more accurate knowledge of the situation in the country, and the means to give concrete answers to policy questions in different sectors of state activity. Towards the end of 1976, summaries of the new policies appeared in the form of theses for popular discussion, as part of the preparations for the Third Congress of Frelimo. The Congress itself was held in February 1977, and its resolutions put the one-party state on the road towards democracy, socialism and economic modernisation.

The independence of Mozambique and Angola had changed the balance of power in the Southern Africa region. For South Africa, its buffer states against independent Africa had been broken up. The future of Rhodesia was a key issue, given the ideological orientation of the new Lusophone states. The stability of the apartheid state itself as well as its supremacy over the region demanded from South Africa a strategy which over time succeeded in undermining the new regimes and their perspectives, and saved a future Zimbabwe from choosing a similar course. Under premier minister John Vorster a policy of 'detente' was pursued against all the frontline states except Angola, whose geopolitical and economic situation led the apartheid regime to the disastrous invasion of 1975-76. Mozambique was not exempt from the risk of a similar invasion against its capital, only hours from the South African border. The threat never materialised, and a different but equally determined line of destabilisation was initiated.

Independent Mozambique was virtually surrounded by enemy states, from South Africa and its dependent neighbour Swaziland via Ian Smith's Rhodesia to Malawi, one of the few African states openly collaborating with the Pretoria regime. South African interests in the region had been felt already during the struggle, when military support was given to the colonial
forces both from Pretoria and from Salisbury. Frelimo's response had been to encourage, materially and otherwise, the liberation struggle for Zimbabwe. Though neither ZANU nor ZAPU was very well prepared by this time, ZANU had a stronger support in the eastern parts of Zimbabwe bordering on Mozambique. During 1972-74 new fronts were opened up and military activities spread in the direction of Salisbury. Under the Vorster detente policy, an agreement was reached with Kaunda of Zambia which temporarily cut the support to the struggle. A negotiated settlement on Zimbabwe was tried, with the frontline governments putting strong pressure on a reunification of the anti-colonial movement.

Sensing the outcome of these diplomatic efforts, the Machel government took steps to reorganise both the military and the political leadership of the Zimbabwean guerrilla struggle. Military activities resumed again in early 1976. By March, the conflict had begun to escalate so much that Mozambique decided to apply the UN sanctions resolution and close the border to all kinds of communication with Rhodesia. It was a hard blow for Rhodesia, which had been able to rely on colonial Mozambique for the major part of its transit trade. When Machel explained the decision, he was correct in judging the fall of the Smith regime as a matter of time, because "Rhodesia cannot replace these routes In the final analysis, they will suffer most." But he certainly underestimated the impact on Mozambique of this "temporary setback." Militarily, the so-called Mozambique National Resistance, MNR, during this time rook root in parts of the country, to flourish during the 1980's under direct South African nursing. Economically, the border closure threw tens of thousands of workers out of employment in central Mozambique, prevented even larger numbers from doing their rounds of work in Rhodesia and exposed the country to economic and infrastructural destruction, at the same time as large parts of its own human and material resources had to be spent on military defence.

Apart from Pretoria's direct support to Rhodesia, which enabled the Smith regime to survive another four years, the South African policy towards Mozambique was primarily confined to the field of economic relations. South African transit trade through Maputo fell, in part inadvertently, by 1977 to just over 60% of pre-independence volumes. Another major source of income for the Maputo regime, the migrant labour to the Transvaal gold mines, had over the same period been reduced to 41,000 workers from a peak of 118,000 in 1975. Soon after this, the South African government unilaterally abolished an agreement which over many years had given the colonial government vast incomes through the payment of 60% of the mine workers' salaries in gold at a fixed rate far below world market prices. The Mozambican dependence on migrant labour was used as a double-edged
The Adoption of a Socialist Perspective

wedge, cutting into the state finances and at the same time disrupting the peasant ties to cash income in the whole of southern Mozambique.

There were during this period few known cases of open opposition against the Frelimo government. Best publicised is the abortive military rebellion of 17-18 December 1975, where Maputo-based soldiers, disappointed at having to remain in the harsh conditions of guerrilla war and conveniently fed with various personal consumer items from unknown sources, decided to march on the palace where their former commander had taken up residence. The rebellion led to a review of the conditions of the army, but nothing was said about its connection to external attempts against the new regime. Far more dangerous and often more difficult to pinpoint, was the subtle undermining of the economy through the many who left the country and - from abroad - disturbed local production through its external dependency strings, and similar actions from those who decided to stay on. There was no way of distinguishing these acts from the effects of the organisational breakdown in the wake of the Portuguese exodus.

The external threat and its internal links were felt heavily in Mozambique in the first years, and the Frelimo government frequently referred to the danger facing the country - and the region as a whole - in such fora as the UN General Assembly and the Non-Aligned Movement. By mid-1977, the Ministerial Council issued a document on the situation, which was highly critical of local management in state and production, but which also phrased the problem in words which have retained their relevance ever since:

- We are witnessing the putting into operation of a vast plan which corresponds to the current tactics of imperialism against the people's governments ... It is a combination of aggression, subversion, economic sabotage and general destabilisation. The aim is to affect the living conditions of the masses, create problems of supplies, fundamentally to create discontentment on a broad level. 3

The strategy is wellknown from similar confrontations in other parts of the world. Cuba was under virtual US siege in the early 1960's, and survived to a great extent due to Soviet assistance. Undoubtedly, the hostile US reaction went a long way to help radicalise the Cuban revolution and give to it its present strength. The long-term effects on Mozambique are too early to judge. The South African decision not to invade Mozambique around 1975 but to choose a strategy of economic and political strangulation is best seen as mirroring the ideological depth and strength of the new Mozambican leadership. Invasion and occupation through a puppet regime was not a viable alternative. Pretoria opted for the alternative of removing the material base for a popular, equity-oriented development policy.

The purpose of economic strangulation is to maintain and gradually worsen the economic crisis of the transition period to a point where the
government abandons its hostility to international capital or is overthrown by its own political opposition. Theoretically, there are two opposite ways to counter this threat. One is the strategy of slow advance, concentrated on the securing of basic supplies of food and raw materials, before the dependency links are confronted in earnest. The politics is one of reforms. The other option departs from the momentum of the transition itself, its dynamic potential of mass mobilisation and confrontation, on all levels, with old institutions and practices.

The choice of the Machel government was very much in the direction of the latter. Why this option was tried, by an illiterate and superexploited country, has paradoxically been explained on the basis of the economic situation itself:

- It is essential to remember that Frelimo did not inherit a going concern, as did many governments at independence. Instead it took over an economy with a massive and permanent balance of payments deficit, and then faced the withdrawal of a major subsidy (by South Africa) and the dramatic fall in the prices of key exports that in colonial times could be produced profitably only through super-exploitation. Even a financial wizard could not have made that work, and radical restructuring was required. However many mistakes Frelimo may have made, it is hard to blame it for trying one great leap out of the economic pit ...

Joseph Hanlon, whose interesting observation we have quoted, leaves somewhat open the exact meaning of this 'great leap' - certainly he is not unacquainted with the Chinese history. The Mozambicans indeed used their experiences of mass mobilisation, and at the same time put their hopes on a rapid economic recovery followed by industrial growth and modernisation. The weakness lay in the link between these 'two legs'. Frelimo's long-standing links with China before 1975 were carried over into state to state cooperation, which however became increasingly strained with Chinese policies of support to UNITA, cordial relations to South Africa and - ultimately - war against the Vietmanese people. It is a tragic byproduct of this period that the East European influence over the 'modernisation' leg was never sufficiently balanced by the demands of the mass line as they could have been in a closer collaboration with China.

Mass mobilisation and participation certainly did feature strongly in the first years, as witnessed by the generally so successful Dynamising Groups. The distinct feature of the period was that of organisation, everywhere and to cover everyone. Organisation was required to ensure the means for directives to reach out. It was equally necessary to enable the majority, O Povo, to give the weight of their experience and understanding into the development process. In the modern sector of society, a triad was to be established - the State (or management), the Party and the Workers' Organisation. The tricky practice of balancing these three in the phases of
The Adoption of a Socialist Perspective

planning, execution and control was - deliberately or not - left to develop with little support from general principles or guidelines. Their very creation, however, did affect the dialectics of worker-management relations.

In rural Mozambique, the majority of its inhabitants lived dispersed over large tracts of land. Their participation in the process required a different spatial organisation, essentially the creation of villages or concentrations, where health care, education and new forms of production would spread among the peasants together with the emergence of political and state organisation. Collective farming had been practiced during the armed struggle, but only on a limited scale and restricted to the liberated areas of Cabo Delgado in the north. The Aldeia Comunal or communal village movement also spread primarily in these areas, in response to the calls by the transitional government. Soon almost everyone was living either in restructured aldeamentos - colonial 'restricted villages' - or in new erected communal villages.

In most parts of the country, however, few new villages were formed on the initiative of the peasants themselves. Most of the still relatively few villages to be recognised in the first years of Independence came into being through administrative action or, in a few more spectacular cases of emergency caused by flooding, through enforced villagisation in a large scale. This notwithstanding, villagisation was early held out as the key to socialisation on the countryside. Not least important was the need to increase productivity and create a better surplus for industrialisation, as for instance expressed by the Frelimo Central Committee in early 1976:

- The Communal Village constitutes the spinal column of the development of the productive forces on the countryside. ... Like the liberated zones served to feed the people's struggle up to final victory against Portuguese colonialism, so will the communal villages be the base of development in our society ...  

There were two aspects to the question of agricultural production and productivity. For one, the isolated peasant had a long way to go to raise productivity through such means as the tractor or even the animal-drawn plough, which the joint resources of the village would bring within reach. For another, the Mozambican peasant if not producing cash crops for sale, provided the labour for the large-scale farms. By linking communal villages to these units, especially those turned state farms, labour would be made readily available and at the same time the villages could benefit from access to the material and know-how resources of a modern agricultural unit. Among the manifold reasons for the creation of a large and demanding State farm sector, the expected economic and political effects on the peasantry were not insignificant. Like the urban semi-proletarianised working class needed to be organised, educated and trained to assume its role in a
modernising economy, so the rural seasonal worker needed to be stabilised, trained and made to organise as part of the general transition of society. What this implied in terms of labour relations on the state farms was however not necessarily worked out down to the level of state farm practice.

The state farms - modern agricultural production under direct state control - were in many ways a necessary response to the problems created by Portuguese settlers and firms abandoning their farms in Mozambique, and the threat of massive food shortages coupled to rapidly declining exports. While the communal villages would ensure peasant self-sufficiency in food production, the state farms were seen as "the quickest means of responding to the country's food requirements", not least those of the urban population.

The state farm programme was replete with contradictions. The capacity of the state permitted the recovery of only a fraction of abandoned modern farms, and even there the knowledge of modem farm management was highly insufficient. To maintain the peasants as farm labour required more profound reforms in labour relations than this management or even the

In a country housing one of the world's major power plants, the Cahora Bassa...
central party/state apparatus was able to make. The decision to increase productivity through more advanced technology was a labour savings device which meant enormous losses in foreign currency due not least to the lack of skilled labour to run and maintain the imported machinery.

As the by far most important part of the 'great leap' towards modernisation, the state farm policy can best be understood as a reflection of the state of the Mozambican peasantry. The colonial society and its emphasis on modern agriculture, had left the country with a peasant sector which remained unusually technologically backward and unusually poorly integrated into the national economy through sale of crops or livestock. Sufficient surplus through agriculture to permit industrial modernisation - itself a precondition for the essential reduction in external economic dependence - could not for a long time be expected from the peasant sector alone.

The transition from colonial society had led to the breakdown in market functions in large parts of the country, a vacuum which was filled through administrative measures. Gradually the ad hoc nature of state interventions
Bertil Egero was replaced by the construction of a structure of state domination through central economic planning, trade control, price and labour market regulation. For the majority of the people, rapidly growing access to education and health services would be the most tangible benefits of the liberation, while material improvements were to be deferred in favour of capital investment. In its essence, this conforms to a strategy of development of the forces of production prior to, and as a prerequisite for, subsequent transformation of social relations.

Counter to this economic perspective of development ran another current, the political strategy of participation based on the experiences of a successful anti-colonial struggle. At the core of this success was the mobilisation of the people as the real actors of their own liberation, a mobilisation based on their own needs and interests. Following Independence, the same participation was to be achieved through the organisation of peasants into communal villages, of workers into workers' councils, of all people into elected People's Assemblies set to direct and control the affairs of the state apparatus. The blending of the modernisation imperative with the persistent line of mass participation lends a never resolved ambiguity to the overall development strategy. It is a tragic consequence of the colonial heritage that Mozambique, abundant in natural resources and in potential for economic growth, simply did not have the human resources needed to bring this ambiguity into a fruitful development through contradiction.

The state apparatus, despite its near-monopoly on qualified labour, operated out of a position of weakness created by colonial bureaucratism, anti-empirical orientation and lack of even elementary information about society. The essential key to success, therefore, lay with the Party Frelimo. Enjoying massive support at Independence and uniting in its ranks the still highly dominant central leadership with its broad base, Frelimo could and indeed often did defend the people against the state, formulated the guidelines of national development and checked their implementation in the factory or the village. The Third Party Congress held in February 1977 was a political stamp on the development strategy worked out since Independence. As a political campaign of impressive intensity and extension over the vast country, it aimed at securing an acceptance of socialism as the necessary road forward. In addition, the new vanguard party to be created needed massive support from the people, expressed not least in its membership, and a general recognition of its superior authority over all institutions in society.
There were many difficult questions ahead of the new party: its organisational relation to the state and methods of work; its relation as a vanguard to mass organisations and elected assemblies; the difficult combination of hierarchical authority and openness to developments in the grass roots. These will be studied closer in the chapters to follow.
6. Economy and State During Transition

In October 1980, the Frelimo Party proudly presented the international community with a bright picture of national achievements and prospects. "In the People's Republic of Mozambique at present the tasks of the people's democratic revolution are being fulfilled. These boil down to the elimination of underdevelopment and the consolidation and development of the power of the proletariat ...." Consequently, "In the decade that is now beginning we shall transform the face of our country and eliminate underdevelopment."¹

Three years later, the full effects of underdevelopment and dependence were borne out: extensive starvation in large tracts of the country, internationally organised bandit groups spreading their terror widely, and trends toward a new subordination under the exigencies of international, including South African, capital.

A proposed periodisation of development

To link this panorama of crisis to that of internal socialist political construction, requires the exploration of structural constraints and their utilisation by external enemies, and also important traits and measures in domestic development. Underlying the presentation is a guiding framework of periodisation of developments, structured by external as well as internal events (see Figure 6.1).

On the external level, the first period (I) extends from the signing of the Lusaka Agreement in September 1974 and up to the closure of the border with Rhodesia in early March, 1976. It was the Lusaka Agreement which put an end to all Portuguese plans for further control of its former colony, and established Frelimo as the government of independent Mozambique. A year and a half later, this government, by its decision to fulfill in pleno the UN sanctions against Rhodesia, placed the state of Mozambique in open confrontation with the regional political and economic system dominated by apartheid South Africa.

The second period (II), dominated by the military liberation struggle for Zimbabwe and its repercussions inside Mozambique, ends with the ceasefire
Bertil Egerö

Fig. 6.1 Periodisation of Mozambique development since 1974

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>EXTERNAL</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>INTERNAL</th>
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| 1974 | Coup in Portugal | 25.4 | Frelimo in transitional gvt  
|      | Lusaka Accord | 7.9 | Dynamising Groups |
| 1975 | Full sanctions against Rhodesia | 25.6 | National independence  
|      | Full support to Zimbabwe | 3.3 | Nationalisations  
|      | Zimbabwe struggles | | Communal villages  
|      | | | Collective leadership  
|      | | | Worker's Production Councils |
| 1976 | Rhodesian military retaliation  
|      | Pretoria begins economic warfare | | Frelimo's Third Congress  
|      | | | Creation of vanguard party and mass organisations  
|      | | | General elections |
| 1977 | Intensified attacks | | Beginnings of state planning  
|      | | | People's courts |
| 1979 | Rhodesian ceasefire | 15.12 | Refugee problems |
| 1980 | Creation of SADCC  
|      | Zimbabwe independent | | Presidential Offensive  
|      | Intensified South African destabilisation | | Government reshuffle  
|      | | | National currency (Metical)  
|      | | | Local elections & Pop. census |
| 1981 | South African attacks on Matola/Maputo | 18.4 | Party self-criticism  
|      | CIA network exposed | 3 | State farm criticism  
|      | MNR expansion | | |
| 1982 | Growing sabotage activities | | Drought; black market  
|      | | | Preparation for Congress |
| 1983 | | | Frelimo's Fourth Congress  
|      | | | Widespread starvation  
|      | | | War economy |
| 1984 | Nkomati Accord  
|      | Generalised MNR terror | 16.3 | Economic deterioration |
following the 1979 Lancaster House talks and the preparations for Zimbabwe's national independence. From there on (111), the South African policy of limited military and economic pressure on Mozambique was replaced by rapidly intensified 'destabilisation' leading up to the controversial Nkomati security agreement between Mozambique and South Africa, signed on 16 March 1984. Within this framework of three periods of external relations, internal developments in Mozambique are conveniently linked to a more detailed periodisation. The first period (1), from the installation of the transitional government in September 1974 to Independence in June 1975, was marked by the need for an acquaintance with all aspects of Mozambican society, by efforts to extend a minimal control over its different sectors, and by the formulation of main guidelines for the future; the constitution and the nationalisations. This period saw the initiation of what would later become national policy; the cooperatives and the communal villages movement.

Thus the first period, concluded by the date of Independence, spills over into the second (2), where the institution of Dynamising Groups is supplemented and in part substituted by a range of organs of political and state power: workers' production councils started in 1976, the Party formation in 1977, the creation of democratic mass organisations in the same period, and the elections of popular assemblies in late 1977. The Third Congress of Frelimo, in February 1977, was essentially a ratification of all the measures already started, and their subsumption under a coherent economic and political strategy for the creation of a socialist society. The Congress defined the road of socialisation not only in economic terms, but also in terms of the organisation of the state, of the division of power and control between state and party, and of the participation of mass organisations.

The third period (3), conveniently set from 1978 to 198182, is made up of, firstly, the implementation of Third Congress resolutions, secondly a period of assessment and evaluation of the institutional structure and functioning. The new Party Frelimo was extended over the country in wide campaigns in 1978 and, again, in 1980181. The system of production councils was in the same period encouraged to spread from the original Maputo-based industries to all parts of Mozambique. The youth movement and the women's movement established local branches and recruited new members in both rural and urban areas.

During this period the state apparatus was reshaped to assume its new functions. Most important, a structure of centralised planning was created, with the National Planning Commission at its centre, to enable the state to exercise its leadership and control over nationalised sectors of the economy. A series of legal instruments were created, including the regulation in law of the nationalisations of 1975. The first central economic state plan was
adopted in mid-1979. This was the time when the President launched the watchword of "1980 - the Decade of Victory over Underdevelopment" - a signal not only that the war in Rhodesia would soon be over but also that major attention would now be given to a more efficient recuperation of the economy.

The struggle for economic recuperation took the form of a general revision of management and leadership in the economic sectors. The most conspicuous part of this trend was the "Political and Organisational Offensive" started by the President in early 1980 and directed right into the offices, workshops and warehouses of all units related to production. Politically important in its attack on local power abuse, corruption and inefficiency, the offensive served the wider aim of reinstating management and state leadership, as an imperative of the economic modernisation of society. Amidst a series of minor contradictions with party and workers' organs, this process also disclosed growing problems of weakness and bureaucratisation in the political leadership, the party, and thereby set in motion a more wide-ranging evaluation of the whole institutional structure and its development.

This work, though never extended to a critique of the institutional structure as such, left a series of good results with a potential for future change. However, the process was hampered and gradually overtaken by the conditions created through international destabilisation and balance of trade difficulties. The fourth period (4), marked by the growth of South Africa-led banditry over the country, is therefore one of a profound readaptation of both strategy and institutional framework to the politico-economic crisis whose most conspicuous sign is the Nkomati Accord with South Africa. The Fourth Party Congress, realised in April 1983 a year behind schedule, was no longer the intended evaluation of successes in building the foundations for a socialist society. It was a congress searching for solutions to the two most pressing problems, banditry and widespread hunger, outlining a medium-term programme of economic adaptation and mobilising renewed support to the government and party.

Attempting the impossible? Economic recovery and decline

By Independence, the foreign exchange reserves of Mozambique had been drained down to the level of one million dollars. The export of capital and goods had grown during preceding years, and was to continue well into Independence. In the private sector, all international trade served as a useful way for repatriation of capital through false pricing, import falsifications and the like. The government found itself obliged to centralise and thereby also
Map 6.1 Mozambique in southern Africa
bureaucratise all imports and, in general, all transactions involving foreign currency. The result of this control was, inevitably, a slow-down of the whole process of imports, to the detriment of most production.2

This is only one example of the economic struggle characterising the period of formation of the new state apparatus, whose efficiency depended not only on the lack of trained functionaries but also on the introduction of tasks which had so far not been part of its responsibilities. The resulting sharp reduction in both production and export would have led to a balance of trade problem, had it not been for an equally supressed level of imports, combined with the revenues from Mozambique miners in the South African gold mines.

Up to 1975 there had been an increase in the recruitment of miners, who through their work contributed a very substantial part of Mozambique's gold reserves.3 However, already in 1976, the recruitment of mine workers slumped to 43,000, and has since stood at about one third of the 1975 level. In addition, as from April 1978 the South African government unilaterally ceased paying the agreed share in gold. These losses occurred at a time when Mozambique suffered from increasing costs through the closure of all communications with Rhodesia, causing the loss of revenues from transit trade, wide-spread unemployment in affected areas and rapidly rising defence expenses.

By this time, South African trade through Maputo still remained reasonably high, with a noticeable reduction from Independence levels but with signs of a joint interest in keeping and even increasing the transit capacity of port and railway.4 Thus, with the exception of South African transit trade, the main sources of foreign revenue which in colonial times had accounted for over half of the total, had in a few years been cut down to tiny trickles. The effects were only marginally offset by the dissolution of the colonial "escudo zone" in favour of international market prices for Mozambique's exports and imports.

Internally, the slump in production was more or less halted around 1977/178, and a certain recovery could be noted in the years thereafter. A key sector for economic recovery was the modern agriculture sector. The state farms, made up of abandoned and nationalised farm units of varying size, consumed a very high proportion of agricultural investments, most of which were from international assistance, and still failed to reach acceptable levels of production. The failure led to a double drain of scarce foreign exchange. Firstly, "The collapse in settler agriculture and the resulting crisis of food supply to the cities were among the main reasons for the decision first to nationalise abandoned farms and later to invest in new large-scale agricultural and agro-industrial projects."5 The food crisis was not solved however, and imports of cereals, especially wheat, increased steadily up to
Economy & State During Transition

1980.6 Secondly, the state farms continued in themselves to consume foreign exchange which could - theoretically at least - have been used to solve other production problems in the country.

By 1978, Mozambique's assets had turned into deficits. Its foreign debt this year stood at about US$ 250 million, to grow to almost $ 450 million by 1980. Credits from East Europe and the Soviet Union are probably not included in these estimates.\(^7\) Growing international debts was a common trait of third world economies at this time, due to the oil crisis and deteriorating terms of trade. For Mozambique, the debt figures signalled the fact that traditional external sources of income were dwindling to perhaps irreversibly low levels. It took a few years before the full meaning of this situation forced itself into the offices of state and political leadership.

Mozambique's structural dependence on external economies has not lent itself to rapid change. As recognized by the government - though the full implications of this fact were not realised at the time - in its Prospective Plan for the 1980s, still five years after Independence "the colonial economic structure basically remains intact."\(^8\) The economy remained heavily dependent on the import of spare parts, machinery and essential raw materials for industrial production, as well as of petroleum products. Its own production was still largely limited to consumer goods or the processing of agricultural products. The transport network was still directed mainly to the needs of neighbouring countries, and the heavy shortage of professionally trained workers remained unsolved.

The strains of historical trade relations continue within the framework of Western trade, which apart from a few years in the late 1970s has kept a majority share of all Mozambican trade, Exchange with state trading economies seems to have levelled out around 20%, and the relative reduction in trade with South Africa has not been altogether offset by growing exchange with other African countries. (Table 6.1)

During the 1980s the economic situation continued to deteriorate (Table 6.2). Persistent droughts affected the whole region, leaving the main rivers empty and turning vast tracts of dry land into semi-desert. Millions of people became directly dependent on relief aid. Such drastic effects of the drought would not have occured, however, were it not for a general erosion of the peasant economies, deprived of incomes through employment and with agricultural production already reduced for lack of market incentives.

The lack of market incentives was yet another facet of the general deterioration in consumer goods. Scarcities were felt already in the 1970s, not only in consumer goods as such but also in hoes, files and other necessities for peasant agriculture. By the early 1980s, the balance swung even more away from the peasant needs when import quotas were redirected towards serving the needs of an overambitious and unrealistic ten-year development plan for
Table 6.1. *Mozambique’s external trade by type of country, relative and absolute value in current prices (MT million)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Imports (MT mill)</th>
<th>Whereof in per cent</th>
<th>Total Exports (MT mill)</th>
<th>Whereof in per cent</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OECD countries Tot. (Port)</td>
<td>Socialist countries Tot (S.A.)</td>
<td>Other countries %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>11 415.3</td>
<td>69.0 (19.2)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>20.5 (20.3)</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>10 472.1</td>
<td>62.6 (15.4)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>24.5 (17.5)</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>10 821.2</td>
<td>59.5 (9.3)</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>21.2 (19.1)</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>18 575.3</td>
<td>41.2 (4.7)</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>17.3 (14.3)</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>28 317.6</td>
<td>43.7 (4.6)</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>20.7 (12.5)</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>25 571.4</td>
<td>57.8 (9.7)</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>17.6 (9.6)</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>22 903.3</td>
<td>52.4 (8.3)</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>16.0 (11.7)</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>18 298.1</td>
<td>50.8 (3.8)</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>14.5 (11.7)</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gov *Mq*, 1985; Gov *Moç*, 1986

the 1980s. It was the time when rapid recovery was expected following the independence of Zimbabwe. It was also a time when the drought combined with a re-start of South African military destabilisation through a vastly reinforced 'Mozambique National Resistance' or MNR. With the collapse of the Smith regime in Rhodesia, all MNR camps and activities were moved into northern Transvaal, from where numerous MNR-units spread into central and southern Mozambique, soon to be followed by more units in the north.

Local resistance was weakened by the lack of government attention to the needs of the peasants themselves, and MNR units spread like locust swarms over the country, looting and burning anything in their way. Social services were a main target; during 1982 alone almost 500 schools and 400 rural shops were destroyed. When relief operations were organized to Inhambane Province in 1983, only two shops remained outside the provincial capital for
the trading of goods. Transport, communication and energy targets were equally attacked. Transit trade suffered, as did production and export. Long-term investment projects like the Cahora Bassa - Nampula electrification system were brought to a halt before the construction was completed, leaving the state with a growing burden of foreign credits without any prospects of even medium-term return in the form of growing production.

As a further serious indication of Pretoria's intention to bring about "changing political behaviour" of the Mozambique government - if not a change of government as such - the South African Defence Forces began massing troops along the border with Mozambique, thus tying up important resources of the FPLM to a defense against the potential threat of invasion. Economically, the rope was tightened still further through a reduction of remaining transit trade via Maputo down to below 20% of Independence

Table 6.2. *Mozambique: development in productive sectors 1975-85*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commercialised agric prod (thd t)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton seed</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>58.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copra</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citrus fruits</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wood prod (thd m³)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>199.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>84.7</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For export</td>
<td>n.a.*</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food ind prod (thd t)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>228.0</td>
<td>158.0</td>
<td>211.6</td>
<td>177.2</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking oil</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashew nuts</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consumer goods ind</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles (thd)</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batteries (mn)</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soap (thd t)</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capulanas (mn m²)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gov Moç, 1986

*n.a.=not available*
levels. Simultaneously, high-tariff goods such as minerals were diverted to other ports and substituted by such low-tariff goods as coal.

Table 6.3. Mozambique: estimated balance of payments 1975-1984 (MT billion)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Visible trade</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Export</td>
<td>Import</td>
<td>Balance of trade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>10.32</td>
<td>-4.41</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>9.09</td>
<td>25.92</td>
<td>-16.63</td>
<td>-6.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>25.57</td>
<td>-20.28</td>
<td>-14.29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>22.90</td>
<td>-18.84</td>
<td>-10.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: B Odén, 1983; Gov Moç, 1985; Gov Moç, 1986

Whatever had been the prospects of recovery in 1980, three years later Mozambique's foreign debt was over 1.3 billion dollars, three fourths of which referred to development projects still in progress. The state had no means to pay its debt service, and was forced to ask for a renegotiation of the whole debt burden.

Two trends of development ideology - the problem of reconciliation

Much speculation has over the years been given to the existence of different lines in the formulation and, particularly, the execution of development policy in Mozambique. The question has some merit, though not in the conventional sense of translating different trends of thought into the existence of conflicting or even antagonistic groupings within the national leadership. Rather, it deserves attention as an aspect of the ongoing process of political formation in the state apparatus as well as within the party.

The conditions at Independence did not exactly facilitate the search for an economic and political strategy. The modernisation started during the last phase of colonialism had left giant industrial complexes to be concluded and made to work. The industrial sector was growing rapidly, not least in interaction with the South African economy. Economic modernisation was not only a necessary long term prospect, but an already unfolding option to lift the agrarian economy out of its state of underdevelopment. At the same
time, modernisation had affected the population very unevenly. The majority remained poor illiterate peasants, who produced important parts of the cash crops and provided the labour for the "modern sector", in a complex and little understood dependency relationship.

The new regime operated under a series of contending influences. There were, firstly, those in government and party who had taken part in the modernisation "boom" of the colonial economy and saw this trend as the way to establish a real economic independence from the old colonial power. Their interests at least in part overlapped with those political forces in Portugal and its colonies whose East European links reflected in their emphasis on development of the productive forces, essentially industrialisation, as the prime aspect of socialist advance within a centrally planned economy. The combined influence of these currents, a strongly urban-oriented ideology, was later nick-named "the Maputo ideology".

The Frelimo leadership had its own longstanding links with socialist states, which provided important bases for reflections on Mozambican development. The liberation struggle itself, a peasant war based in rural areas, raised few questions on post-liberation issues of productive forces. The whole struggle evolved around social relations of production, of trade, of political power. From there emerged the emphasis on socialisation of the means of production, on collective control over trade and distribution, on collective forms of production, in short on collective people's power organised so as to eliminate the exploitation of man by man.

The problem of merging the "Maputo ideology" with that of the liberation struggle into one coherent strategy reflects itself in many ways in post-independence development policies. For the critic, they may give the appearance of inconsistency, or incoherence between words and deeds. Seen from another side, the existence of two so different poles of ideological nourishment is what maintains a tension in Mozambican political development, what permits a government action such as the extensive Political and Organisational Offensive of 1980, and what allows for the surprisingly tenacious "adaption without basic retreat" which has maintained the government in control under excessive external pressures of destabilisation.

Part of the success of destabilisation and the growth of organised banditry over the country could be referred to the factual dominance of the "Maputo ideology" over the economy and a corresponding relative neglect of the needs of the peasant sector. This is reflected not least in the policy of "socialisation of the countryside", notably the Communal Villages movement.

The necessity of a profound transformation of the peasant sector has been a constant theme of political statements and resolutions ever since the
Extreme danger to people and property is what the South Africa-led MNR bandits aim to achieve.
(Photo: G Tiroler)

President’s Independence speech. In October 1975, at the opening ceremony of the new party school in Matola, he explained the economic and political significance of concentrating the dispersed peasantry into new communal villages:

- The Communal Village constitutes the backbone of the development of the productive forces in the rural areas. It is in the Communal Villages that we bring together the aggregate productive effort of the peasant masses, where in collective life the organised people liberates its immense creative initiative. Politically, and this is the essential characteristic of the Communal Village, it is the instrument for the materialisation of the workers power ... in all sectors of social life. The Communal Villages are a political instrument because they unite us and organise us and in this way prepare us for the effective exercise of the power we have won. We must be aware of the fact that scattered and disorganised, we cannot exercise our power.12
The position on communal villages was reiterated in the resolutions of the Third Frelimo Congress in February, 1977. In the perspective of the Congress, the communal villages movement is a long-term transformation of the countryside, in part dependent on the formation of a powerful state sector of agriculture and yielding productivity effects only in later stages of the transformation. The "modern sector of agriculture", especially the state farms, was defined as the principal source of accumulation and food supplies to the urban population.

By the time of the Congress, the communal villages movement was already underway in some parts of the country. In the north, in Cabo Delgado and Niassa, many new villages were formed already during the transitional government, to house those returning from the liberated areas and the many refugees coming back from neighbouring countries. Portuguese sheltered villages, aldeamentos, were particularly frequent in all the war zones. Not all of these were abandoned when the war ended, and some gained accreditation as communal villages.

Further south, the main waves of village formation took place in the wake of floods. In Gaza 1977 and in Zambezia the year after, widespread flooding caused many people's deaths and extensive damage to habitations.

*Sometimes they leave behind conspicuous evidence of the ideology that guides them.*

(Photo: TEMPO/Afrikabild)
along the river banks. The rescue programme was combined with directives to move people higher up and to form communal villages as their new home-steads. Again, when the Rhodesian attacks spread out over Manica, the Mozambican defence forces evacuated people into villages more easy to defend.

Alongside these actions, spontaneous creations supplemented by administrative measures led to the appearance of **communal** villages in all provinces. The variation in local action contributed to a very uneven dispersion of village formation over provinces and districts. The number of recognized communal villages stood at 850 in 1978, growing to 1350 in 1982 - the latest available estimate. In the same period, the population in villages rose from 1.25 to 1.81 million, about one fifth of the rural population. (Table 6.4)

**Table 6.4. Mozambique: estimated number of recognised communal villages and population, 1978 and 1982**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>No of villages</th>
<th>Population 1978</th>
<th>Population 1982</th>
<th>% of rural population 1982</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cabo Delgado</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>800000</td>
<td>815600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niassa</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>72000</td>
<td>63200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nampula</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>500000</td>
<td>154200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambézia</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>49200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tete</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25000</td>
<td>84600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manica</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>143500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofala</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>106100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhambane</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>73400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaza</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>180000</td>
<td>298800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maputo</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>40000</td>
<td>17900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>857</td>
<td>1352</td>
<td>1250000</td>
<td>1806500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


There are many more rural villages in the country than indicated by the statistics in Table 6.4. To be recognized as a communal village, and not just a rural concentration, administrative and political organs must have been erected and made to function. Not all recognized villages comply with these standards however, and even fewer have any significant production in collective forms. According to one estimate from 1982, one in five of the communal villages had an agricultural cooperative.

The slow and erratic development of what should be the backbone of rural transformation, has many factors behind it: The tendency on local levels to
transform a political decision into an administrative measure; faulty deci-
sions by incompetent and overstressed local officials; more or less overt
resistance from the peasantry and, not least, endless cases of non-fulfillment
on the part of the state of the necessary services and supplies for this
transformation to become economically viable. By far insufficient resources
were during the period allocated to the family and cooperative sector, a
result of a general scarcity of resources and also of a general lack of
comprehension of the economic significance of peasant production as such,
of the meaning of the intended transformation in terms of relationships
between state and peasantry, and of the links existing between state farm
development and the organisation of peasant production.13

The voice of the peasantry has been carried by the Party. Beginning with
the Fourth Central Committee session in August, 1978, and increasingly in
subsequent speeches, the President has criticised the state for not carrying
out its directives in relation to the cooperative and family sector. In July
1980, the Seventh Central Committe resolved to make its highest provincial
representatives, the party secretaries cum governors, directly responsible for
the development of communal villages.14 Less than a year later, the Minis-
terial Council noted that the Party strategy for rural socialisation is being
implemented with only a fraction of the attention and priority it should have:
"The direction, the support and the conjugation of efforts in relation to the
movement of communal villages and agricultural cooperatives have not been
secured by either central or local organs."15

Again, the Fourth Frelimo Congress in April 1983, summarising develop-
ments since 1977, concluded that no real changes had occurred. "Of the
investments in the agrarian sector between 1977 and 1981, only 2% went to
the cooperative sector. The family sector had been given no priority ... In
reality, the support to the family sector was almost non-existent, particularly
in production implements." 16

The creation in early 1978 of the National Planning Commission, with a
mandate to coordinate sectoral planning into general state plans, was
accompanied by the formation of another commission with similar status but
directed exclusively towards communal village development. Called the
Comissão Nacional de Aldeias Comunais, or CNAC, the new organ from
the beginning reflected the low priority given by the state to its task. Housed
in a very modest building and with a modest number of staff, its relationship
to the ministries was that of a constant struggle to convince them of the
importance, indeed necessity of collaboration in rural development.

Some changes did occur in the lifetime of CNAC. They were mainly
directed to the problems of internal trade and commercialisation and thus
referred to the peasant sector as a whole more than to the village movement.
Following years of neglect, local production of hoes and other tools was
quadrupled in the first years of the 1980s, as was importation. For 1984-85, the distribution of hoes alone was expected to reach about 3.7 million. Serious efforts were made to improve the supplies of consumer goods, at the same time as inefficiencies in extension services, tractor hire and the like were increasingly criticised. At the height of communal villages discussion, around the time of the first National Meeting on Communal Villages in 1980, it was announced that CNAC would soon be replaced by a Secretary of State for Communal Villages, in line with those already existing for instance for cotton and cashew. This never materialised, and instead CNAC slowly faded away. No mention was made of the Commission in the Fourth Congress, and in the same year it was quietly closed down while responsibility for rural and village development was given to the Ministry of Agriculture.18

"I would not like to call it the existence of two lines", said the then director of CNAC, Job Chambal. "Rather than two different lines, there are two different realities existing side by side in the state apparatus. Following our National Meeting in 1980, a directive was issued that each sector of the state apparatus was to have a special organ directed to the issue of communal villages. But this never materialised. There was always the problem of lack of cadres, of the multiple tasks linked to the big projects in the plan... There has long been a tendency to despise of the family and cooperative sector, to ignore their demands. It is like a cancer disease, you cannot get rid of it".19

State planning and development

How is it, that this originally central aspect of the strategy of socialist transition, the political and economic "backbone of rural development", has come to play such a decidedly secondary role in state planning and priorities? Perhaps an important part of the answer is to be found in the relative weakness of the "ideology of the liberated areas" in relation to that implicit in the creation of a centralised state planning system directed towards industrialisation and modernisation. By this should be understood not only the weight of the "Maputo ideology" in forming the perspectives of development, but also the social process of planning itself. Planning, on the one hand, requires information, measurable units of situation or change. Planning further needs to deal with quantifiable units, through which the plan can be expressed and against which plan fulfillment can be measured. In all of this, the planning institution needs to relate to identifiable and accessible entities in society, amenable both to the extraction of information and to planned performance demands.
Planning efforts in the first years were seriously crippled by the lack of reliable information. Colonial statistics left much to be desired. Reflecting conditions under a fascist regime in Portugal, empirically oriented social science was absent not only from the academic scene but from the minds and competence of government departments as well. Statistics were produced and published, but the data was limited to certain sectors or activities, often not very reliable and rarely with anything like a methodological analysis, let alone interpretation of the substance behind the data. In the first years after Independence, all planning for the peasant sector was seriously hampered by the lack of even elementary knowledge about production, consumption and market relations. Only with the work of Mark Wuyts at the University of Eduardo Mondlane was the basis being laid for concrete evaluations of the peasant sector in the national economy.

Lack of data on the economy was a general problem of all state sectors, and the main reason why in 1977 the plan targets for 1980 were defined as equal to the production of the last year of statistical data - 1973. "We started the process of recuperation not from zero, but well below zero", said Samora Machel in 1979. "We had no statistics, no cadres, we did not have the necessary 'stocks', the inventory of requirements. We did not possess the notion of the intimate relation between all different production sectors, between all the economic and social sectors ..."

Some of the wordings in the President's speech support the contention that the fragility of data had permitted government economists to draw an unduly optimistic picture of the trends in 1979. While the President exhorted the nation to "A Victory over Underdevelopment" within the decade of the 1980s, staff of the National Planning Commission still had to go to different parts of the country for on-the-spot checks of factories and farms. Economic statistics covered only the most advanced sectors of production or communication, those capable of compiling the necessary data. Not even these sectors could be expected to provide a necessary minimum of information, let alone propose realistic plan targets. A not necessarily representative, though indicative, case is given by the giant CAIL complex of agricultural production in the Limpopo valley in Gaza. A careful examination in 1981 of the problems of this flagship among state farms, which by the time had almost 17,000 hectares under cultivation, disclosed among others that the whole complex could count on only one professional book-keeper (employed in 1979 and at the time on sick-leave) and one agricultural economist (recruited in 1980).

Despite their staff shortages, the various production units were expected to compile and deliver necessary production statistics for central economic planning. Coupled with the desire of any management to show good results, this could only have led to substantial deficiencies in the data. How serious
they were is seen by the fact that when, in 1982, a state decree criminalised the delivery of faulty data, many firms preferred not to fill in the forms at all. The workers' production councils were at times asked to check on the information provided and report directly to central levels, but there is no evidence that they managed to fulfill this task and significantly alter the situation.

The shortcomings take on real significance when seen against the growing weight of the state in Mozambique: by the end of 1982 the state exercised direct control over between 70 and 100% of activities in different sectors of society. Forced by the necessity created by the Portuguese exodus, the state had come to assume responsibilities far beyond its capacity. This is reflected not least in the institution of state planning. The weaknesses in planning are abundant. On the one extreme, "the plan is a catalogue of new projects". In the other, it is a series of sector growth rates. Even the ten-year Prospective Plan for the 1980s, the PPI, has been characterised as extrapolations of growth trends calculated down to two decimals.25

With the proclamation of the 1980s as the decade of the "big jump", ideology came to dominate the content of state plans. Rather than being the sum total of locally based production and development plans, their point of departure were the centrally defined goals for 1990. This increased the internal contradiction in the planning process between central demands and local means. Targets were generally set unrealistically high and with persistent disregard for the possible, as expressed by annual output figures (Table 6.5). Targets were generally stated in quantities which led to a tendency to sacrifice quality for quantity in order to reach pretended plan fulfillment. The effects were not limited to the producing units alone - the whole economic process from raw materials distribution through transport to delivery or export was liable to distortion.

Table 6.5. Mozambique: Plan targets and real production 1980-83 (thousand tons)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soy beans</td>
<td>Plan: n.a.</td>
<td>1 194</td>
<td>1 596</td>
<td>18 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prod: 3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>Plan: n.a.</td>
<td>736</td>
<td>2 370</td>
<td>3 159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prod: 99</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>Plan: n.a.</td>
<td>1 654</td>
<td>1 950</td>
<td>14 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prod: 776</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Figures published at the 1983 Party Congress exhibition at Facim, Maputo
Economy & State During Transition

Things were not made easier by the central state decision to use law enforcement to encourage a better plan fulfillment. Nonfulfillment of set targets was, in principle at least, punishable as a criminal act. Most likely, no case of nonfulfillment was brought to court. Still, the very position taken by the state acted as an effective impediment on any discussion of the causes behind failures to achieve plan targets, let alone of the realism of plan targets themselves. Inevitably, this created a problem of confidence in planning as such, as an instrument of work:

- In the best case, to respect the Plan is assumed as an act of respect of directives; in the worst case it is seen as a formal exercise destined to satisfy the wishes of functionaries very far from the real problems. As we have seen, this situation brings many cadres to doubt, not this type of planning but any type of planning or planning as a method.26

The issue of discussion and critique is a serious problem within the central planning structure itself. In 1983, the Fourth Party Congress made an effort to formulate the problems of state direction and leadership. The Congress noted, that "still today and for many of us, the planning ends with the central state plan and with the National Planning Commission."27 The content of state planning was criticised for its emphasis on new projects and especially the inclination for gigantismo or fascination of scale. Among the effects were noted, "particularly the marginalisation of the family sector of agriculture and the excessive dimensions of the state farms, in relation to our management capacities."28

The conclusions of the Congress ought to have opened the scene for frank critical discussion about problems of the national economy, development and state economic planning. Nevertheless, endogenous factors were conspicuously absent in the important report on economic development since Independence, prepared and released in early 1984 by the National Planning Commission.29 This report places the causes of the economic crisis squarely on external factors, firstly deteriorating terms of trade, secondly the war situation, and thirdly the natural disasters. A fourth factor, mentioned only in general terms, is the frequently occurring 'excuse' for different failures - "our errors and insufficiencies".30 These are all wellknown signs of the gradual entrenchment of a partly incompetent bureaucracy defending its positions of power and privilege, a social force which, if not confronted early and with determination, rapidly grows into a threat against the very values to be upheld through the intervention of the state.
The Presidential Offensive: Anti-bureaucratic attack with repercussions

When Samora Machel in January 1980 launched "The Political and Organisational Offensive", this was seen by many as a head-on attack against the problems of growing bureaucratic power and autonomy through the state. The Offensive, apparently initiated with a rather limited aim, came to develop its own dynamic, once again exposing the contradictory ideological elements in development policies touched upon above. It was not the first time that the word "offensive" was put to use. During the liberation struggle it was applied in the mobilisation of guerrilla soldiers to participate more actively in production.31 Again, "generalised political and organisational offensive" was the campaign word used by the Central Committee meeting in February 1976 to tackle problems of deteriorating production.

The signal of a new campaign to follow was given in a presidential speech of 23 December 1979, shortly after the signing of the Lancaster House Agreement on the Independence of Zimbabwe. Reviewing the problems of development during four years of Rhodesian aggressions against Mozambique, Machel rounded off by noting: "...now we can no longer blame the external enemy for our problems. Now the blame rests with ourselves. We must turn our arms inwards, attack the problems in our midst." A few days later, the President himself started the offensive in the second largest city of the country, Beira, the principal port in the transit trade with Zimbabwe and at the time a centre of internal reaction and external infiltration. After inspecting port areas, factories and warehouses where many deficiencies were detected, President Machel moved back to Maputo and set in motion a process of visits and disclosures of totally unprecedented intensity and duration. Unexpected visits, equally unexpected returns a few days later, yielded discoveries which must have been the result of advance information from workers on the site.

Ministers led delegations to all the provincial capitals and started their work with methods similar to those developed by the President. And everywhere the picture was the same: warehouses with goods stored for years despite desperate shortages; essential spare parts or raw materials not reaching their destinations; disorganisation in ports, airports, hospitals; work sites paying salaries to people turning up only on pay-day. The state shop system created to preserve all abandoned shops after Independence was a disaster, employing large numbers of staff at high salaries but without any goods to sell. The national housing authority, APIE, was a centre of advanced corruption in the distribution and use of the housing stock.

The immediate effect of the Offensive, apart from the dismissal and detention of people in leading positions during the campaign itself, was the
decision to drop three ministers from the government. But more was to come. In early April 1980, a general remodelling was announced: two important party leaders, Marcelino dos Santos and Jorge Rebelo, were relieved of their ministerial portfolios to carry out their party functions on a full-time basis. New ministries were created, ministers and vice-ministers appointed and leading members of the defence forces and the national bank given ministerial status. Other decisions led to a change of provincial governors and ambassadors. Contrary to Western interpretations the explicit intention was "to ensure that the party exercises its leading role over the state and the society in a concrete and operative way". This recognition was taken one step further when the Central Committee of the party, in its Seventh Session in July, openly admitted its error in having, since Independence, paid more attention to the state machinery than to the party machinery. A number of decisions were taken to strengthen the party and establish its hegemony over the state.

A little over a year after the conclusion of the offensive, a second round was started. This time it was made in a systematic and organised way, without much of the enthusiasm and exaltations which accompanied the first campaign. It was extended to include, along with provincial capitals, important districts and centres. The findings, though not so spectacular, carried the important conclusion that a one-time only action has few lasting effects: "...the Offensive has lasting results only when it manages to install a local will to ensure its continuity. The Offensive should not be limited to a wind which sweeps and passes on; it ought to be a constant wind, though in certain more intensive phases it sweeps with greater force."32 In line with this conclusion, various offensives have been started over the years since 1981, which justifies labelling the Offensive a method of work of the government.

There is no denial that the campaign set off in 1980 was an important event in the internal struggle of state and party. The unfolding of the Offensive brought to the surface a number of problems which otherwise might have gone undetected, and permitted a revision of policies which at the same time became an attack on a consolidating 'state bureaucracy'. However, in order to evaluate its contribution in these respects, it is necessary to place the Offensive in the context it was originally launched. "The Offensive started as a comparatively limited action. To begin with, the party leadership only felt that there were certain errors and deviations in the state machinery which would have to be corrected...", says the Party organ Voz da Revolução.33 The context was that of economic recovery, emerging central planning and the issue of management in government and production.

Analysing the situation in Angola after independence, M. R. Bhagavan concludes his study of problems in the state apparatus, in industry and in
large-scale agriculture in one statement: "The situation can be summed up by saying that we have in Angola a case of hierarchy without authority." It was this problem that the Mozambican Offensive was primarily set off to tackle. Since the big meeting with provincial and district leaders in July 1979, the presidential addresses had consistently referred to the problem of leadership, unity of leadership, authority and power. The trend was distinctly away from collective leadership and diffuse responsibility, to administrative power of decision, execution and control. Climax was reached in the presidential speech given at the central hospital in Maputo in December 1979, where an immediate reinstitution of hierarchical order was demanded, including differential treatment for patients of different employment status. The ward councils which had at least in part succeeded to create collective responsibility and collaboration on the ward, inevitably came to suffer from the new demands for formal relations of authority between doctor, nurse and ward assistant.

The obvious aim of the campaign was to set things straight, to clean up in the morass of misconceptions of power, responsibility and collaboration. There were three contending units of power in the ordinary firm: the management, the party and the workers' council. The lack of concrete definitions of the domain of work of each of these, and their responsibility, had in many managements created a fear of confronting the other two, in others it had led to policies of laissez-faire in relation to the execution of power. The cleaning up was aimed at replacing this state of affairs with one of hierarchy and authority, power and responsibility, i.e. accountability. A significant part of this process was the dropping of 'comrade' as the general way of addressing each other within the administration. Administrative power was to be separated from that of the party and made the central executive power of the firm.

Undoubtedly, the campaign of the Offensive itself disclosed many serious cases of lack of authority and discipline. At a big rally on 18 March, 1980, the Resident hammered home the point he had already made so many times: power was to be concentrated to the management; power to decide, to execute, to control and to punish. True, the process was to be accompanied by a 'purification' of the state, an examination of all its employees, high and low, by special commissions working under the direct leadership of the minister. Similar work was to be done on the sites of production. But the directives, giving what amounted to undisputed power to the director and the manager, were a clear deviation from the line of collective responsibility that distinguished party work so far.

In the state apparatus, the immediate effect was a tightening up of hierarchical subordination, with less room for discussion and critique. In the factories, some directors justified their monopolisation of all information
and decisions by direct quotes from the 18 March presidential address. Locally, party work suffered. "Concretely speaking, the political organs are being isolated, \textit{marginalised} by the managements which, pretending to \textit{fulfill} the directives of the Party and the State, refuse these organs to participate and get involved in discussions and solutions of the problems of the firm, including questions related to the \textit{fulfillment} of the annual plan", complained party \textit{workers}.\textsuperscript{35} Cases were reported of workers being harassed and even sacked for being active in production council or party cell.

These developments gave renewed emphasis to questions raised during the Offensive itself: who is there to defend the collective interests of the workers at the work site? Why was it that party or workers' representatives had not managed to resolve the problems discovered during the Offensive, or at least report them to higher levels of the political organs? The exposures forced a more profound study of these organs themselves and their development. The Offensive, itself a response to problems in the substitution of new relations of power and cooperation for the inherited and still potentially active colonial relationships, created its own "antitheses" in resulting shake-ups of the party from its incipient bureaucratisation, in empirical studies of party-state relations and in renewed attention to central questions around the planning process and its participants.

The Fourth Party Congress and the State

The Fourth Party Congress in April 1983 was conspicuously silent on economic problems and financial means for recovery. Its revision of party activities and problems was little more than a revival of earlier statements made after the Offensive. The main target of criticism of the Congress was the state apparatus, its methods of work and its policies. A series of reforms were proposed, which reflected the crisis in planning and the problems of the government and the democratic organs exposed by the events of the last few years. Together the recommendations make for a new course in economic and political development:

- The range of state activities and responsibilities has grown too wide and must be reduced. The state should in principle withdraw from direct management and concentrate on its main task to direct and support the different sectors of production.
- The heavy centralisation in decisions, in staff and in budget, is to be replaced by decentralisation. Both human and financial resources are to be allocated to a greater extent to provincial and district offices.
"Long live electricity..." The demonstration on May 1, 1983, not only concluded the Fourth Party Congress. It showed the immense creativity and will to develop the country that today is frustrated by destabilisation and economic crisis.

- Decentralisation should be achieved also through the reinforcement of local democratic organs and greater autonomy for local government. This is the base for a reversal of the planning process.
- Planning, hitherto essentially a process from central to local levels, should take its departure in the districts. Annual district plans, based on local resources and capacities and resumed into provincial plans, are to be the cornerstones of central plan coordination.
- In this process, the plan needs to be supplemented by the market. Market relations should be allowed to stimulate economic processes through more flexible price and salary policies. Better conditions should on the whole be created for private sector participation in production, trade and distribution.
- Local initiatives outside of the state sector, which make use of local resources and their mobilisation should be allowed, indeed encouraged and supported, by the state.
"Firm in our struggle against hunger". Ration systems keep city people going, while famine has become a frequent visitor to many rural areas. (Photos: Author)

The whole package of reforms, presented only in fragments here, fits with what Gordon White has labelled "Reformism and market socialism", the third of a stage-wise transition of socialist development in the Third World. It was put on print by the Fourth Congress; its realisation has been a matter of increasingly uneven battles against foreign interests operating in the region, and against internal contradictions resulting from material crises and distortions in the internal political process.
7. Organising the People

- In the People's Republic of Mozambique power belongs to the workers and peasants, united and led by Frelimo, and is exercised by the organs of people's power.
- The People's Republic of Mozambique is guided by the political line laid down by Frelimo, which is the leading force of the State and the Society. Frelimo lays down the basic political orientation of the State and directs and supervises the work of state organs, in order to ensure that the State policy is in conformity with the people's interests. (Excerpts from articles 2 and 3 of the 1975 Constitution)

Introduction: The institutional structure

The first constitution of independent Mozambique, adopted by the Central Committee of Frelimo a few days before Independence, embodies the whole perspective of institutional relations meant to guide national reconstruction in subsequent years. The supremacy of Frelimo, the subordination of not only the state organs but also the organs of Popular Power and - as stated in other articles of the 1975 Constitution - the mass organisations, were thus formally established before any experience had been gained from an independent, Frelimo-run government. The institutional structure of today's Mozambique is therefore essentially based on the experiences of the armed struggle and on the international heritage provided by the natural allies, the socialist states.

The main part of this chapter will be devoted to a study of the most important organisations in Mozambique and their development. The institutional structure as such is not very complex. It is mainly composed of the following elements:

The **vanguard party** Frelimo was created in February 1977 out of the old liberation front with the same name. Ideologically, the Party is "... guided by the synthesis of the experience of the Mozambican people's revolutionary struggle with the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism." Its highest body is the party congress, meeting ordinarily every five years. Between congresses, the central committee directs the work of the party. A politbureau consisting of 11 members, a secretariat of 6 and a control commission make up the top organs.

Corresponding party organs have been or are being created on provincial, district and subdistrict levels. At the base of the hierarchy, over 4,000 party
cells carry the daily life of the party into factories, state institutions, cooperatives, schools, defence forces and neighbourhoods, in principle into any place of work or residence.

The statutes of Frelimo define its supreme role in relation to all other organs. Thus, Frelimo

- defines the policy of the government and guides and controls the activities of the government;
- directs the armed forces and the security forces as a whole;
- establishes the mass democratic organisations which, under the guidance of the party, guarantee the participation of and integrate the broad masses into the process of transforming society, and into building socialism.³

The party exercises its control and guidance in different ways. The party cell embraces all party members at the workplace. The cell is represented at all important meetings, and may discuss any problem in its own internal meetings. Party committees on various levels perform the same function in relation to the government as a whole. So for instance, the meetings of the Popular Assembly (see below) are regularly preceded by a Party Central Committee deliberation of the issues to be included on its agenda.

Union of leadership is another method to implant proper party guidance. From the top down, the party head is also the Head of Government and the president of elected People's Assemblies. The party has a key role in the selection of candidates for election to any organ, and party members are frequently elected to leading positions in these organs. The distinction between party and state is therefore a complicated issue, not only on the level of debate but in the practical functioning of different organs, including the party itself.

In contrast to for instance Cuba, where popularly elected organs of Popular Power were created after a decade and a half of independence, Frelimo set out preparing the elections of People's Assemblies already in the second year of Independence, 1977. An interim text on the system of popular assemblies and their mandate was included in the 1975 constitution, stipulating the period of elections to within a year of the third Frelimo congress.

Locality or sub-district assemblies have been created through direct elections, followed by representative or indirect elections of corresponding bodies up to the national Popular Assembly. By 1980, over 1,300 assemblies existed in so-called administrative localities, and in communal villages all over the country (Table 7.1).

After the first round of national elections, the constitution was revised to define the status of the assemblies as the highest organs of the state, at each administrative level. All legislation is in principle passed through the
Popular Assembly, which approves of annual state plans and budgets, deliberates on the functioning of the government and oversees the activities of assemblies at lower levels. The Popular Assembly meets ordinarily twice a year. In the interim periods, its functions are assumed by the Permanent Commission, which may undertake "legislative acts" to be ratified later by the Assembly.

The transformation of Frelimo into a vanguard party in 1977 made it all the more important to create alternative types of organisations of the majority of the population, the workers, the women, the youth etc. The directives of the Third Party Congress in 1977 assign an important role to the Democratic Mass Organisations: They are to become "... the great school where the consciousness of millions and millions of workers, men and women, old and young and 'continuadores' can develop. They are the recruiting ground and the centre for the continual training and improvement of Party militants. The democratic mass organisations constitute the fundamental means of broadening and consolidating on a national level the wide-ranging popular anti-imperialist front: they are a school of democratic life and organised participation by the People in social life."  

The Organisation of Mozambican Workers, OTM, embraces all employed persons in Mozambique, whether in production, services or the public sector. It was created in 1983 after seven years of development of basic units called 'production councils'. OTM is the umbrella organisation of about a dozen syndicates, charged with the responsibility of organising the workers and improve the conditions for higher production, more active participation in planning and control, and a better environment at work.

The Mozambican Women's Organisation, OMM, existed before Independence and has since grown to a nationwide organisation particularly active in the local context of work and home. The other major mass organisation is the Organisation of the Mozambican Youth, OJM, created in 1977. It expanded rapidly in the first few years, but showed in the early 1980's clear signs of stagnation linked to unfortunate rigidity in organisation, ideology and methods of work.

In addition to these broad-based national organisations, a number of socio-professional organisations have been created since Independence. Among these are the National Organisation of Journalists, ONJ, and the National Organisation of Teachers, ONP. These can not be regarded as trade union organisations. Their purpose is rather to raise the professional level of their members, within the ideological and political context of socialist development in Mozambique.

The sections to follow cover the development of the first three organisations mentioned above. Certainly the OMM is worthy of as much attention as these three, and would have been included if only resources had
Bertil Egero

permitted an independent study of this organisation. Fortunately, the role of women and their organisation has recently been made the subject of two good studies, consultation of these is warmly recommended.5

Nursing a vanguard party in the shadow of the state

Frelimo we know from before, and trust. But what the government is, or what it is doing, this we do not understand today. (Peasant from Nandimba village, Mueda 1983)

The transformation of Frelimo from a broad front to a vanguard party was not a sudden break with history. The beginnings had been made already during the armed struggle. With Independence, the arena of political struggle widened drastically, and thousands of sympathisers were drawn in who did not have the experience of the liberated areas, nor did they work in an environment which facilitated ideological advance. Confusion reigned everywhere where colonial withdrawal had come suddenly. It was hard to distinguish friend from foe, hard to say what was the correct line in all local conflicts. Frelimo was not only the natural home for everyone who had opposed colonialism, it was also an attractive coat for those who wished to defend old positions of power or create new ones for themselves.

Frelimo had come to power not through a working class struggle in the heart of the colonial economy and society, nor through a massive front struggle such as that which led to victory against Somoza in Nicaragua. Frelimo's basis and justification was the protracted peasant-borne struggle which had exhausted its enemy and widened its internal contradictions to the breaking point. Almost everything remained to be done to bring the different strata of Mozambique in line with the new situation. The leadership argued that this situation demanded not a front but a vanguard party, a party of the most conscious and most militant members of society. These, equipped with ultimate authority in the local context, would be the means to steer over to the new course.

The transformation of Frelimo could be seen as a way to "retain its capacity for disciplined action" in the new context.6 All those who had been members of Frelimo since before the independence agreement with Portugal of September 1974, were automatically admitted if they so wished provided they still fulfilled the conditions for party membership. These were the veterans of the struggle, who were then the only ones to formally propose new candidates for membership, following a statutory trial period of one year. Demands on new members were high, but the leadership took pains to explain that a vanguard is not an elite, that history is made by the people and that therefore the new party should first of all consist of members of the working classes:
Organising the People

- ... the Party should be composed of vanguard cadres, of the working class and also of militant peasants, first of all those who participate actively in the cooperatives and communal villages. The other workers, intellectuals, functionaries, nurses, employees, teachers, who through their struggle show that they are leaving the old mentality behind, can also be part of the Party.

In the first year of its existence, the party extended its presence in society. Party members visited work sites to assist the new workers' production councils and combat poor management. They played a key role in the selection of candidates for people's assemblies and in organising the election meetings. The creation of party cells was prepared, and new candidatures invited. But people were apparently hesitant, and the number of candidates did not reach expectations. A campaign was launched at the end of the year, to attract candidates and implant the party in a wider range of places. A major function was to clarify what it meant to be a member of the new party, and that it was political practice which counted, not familiarity with the theoretical tradition of Marxism-Leninism.

Like any political process, even this one had its flaws. Reports tell about the intensive efforts made to create a climate of openness and confidence, conducive to a frank debate about the candidates. General meetings were held similar to those where deputies to the local assemblies had been elected, and candidates were exposed to public criticism. Some had to withdraw their candidatures, others - not least those with positions in the state - were more able to steer the test in a favourable direction. As an important support to the campaign, all those who had in one way or another collaborated with the colonial regime had their names published and the nature of their past discussed in general meetings in the place of work. This process brought new facts to light, and prevented those exposed from being blackmailed into any kind of anti-government activities.

During this period, the party was most noticeably existent in the central state apparatus and the strategic industries. The Central Committee meeting roughly twice a year, just before meetings of the national Popular Assembly, provided public summaries of the situation and directives for state and party action. Further out, however, the party as a separate entity was less easy to find. No statistics were, in this period, published on party cells or membership, but a survey of the District of Angoche in Nampula Province gives an idea about the situation outside of the main urban centres. Angoche is an economically important district on the coast, which had been left untouched by the armed struggle and followed the general speed of reforms in the country. Altogether eight party cells were formed in the district in the first four years of the new party. All but one were located in factories and administration in the district centre. It was only with the second party
campaign, in 1980, that the party extended itself institutionally into the rural areas.\textsuperscript{10}

This "rural weakness" is to some extent an artifact, the formal or institutional weakness of a new organisation. The inauguration of a party cell in a communal village might have been the chance to get rid of a corrupt leadership. Often, however, it was the members of the dynamising group who joined the party and staffed positions in the cell secretariat as well. And this is where the weakness of the party was most prevalent: in the lack of a dynamic approach to the training of new party members, in the lack of concrete support to the cell trying to find its own role separate from that of the state. The resources that did exist were undoubtedly reserved for urban areas, not least the industrial workers. A policy which corresponded to the party analysis of the working class as the main political force for change\textsuperscript{11} and which unavoidably left the peasantry ideologically less well armed to meet the material hardships to come.

During this period, both the Frelimo party and the government made great efforts to institutionalise the revolution - create formal organisational channels to reach out to all parts of society. Apart from the party itself, mass organisations were revitalised or created for this purpose; the Mozambican Women's Organisation OMM, the Youth Movement OJM, the organisation of journalists ONJ and others. In this sense, Mozambique was really becoming an "Organised People"\textsuperscript{12}, accessible for the many rapid and far-reaching campaigns to be launched over the country. Where resources and attention were insufficient, was in the consolidation of these institutions, their mandates, internal relations and methods of work. The party itself had no regular means of reaching its members in writing, either centrally or at lower levels. Apart from the different campaigns, party cadres were engulfed in work in the urban areas and without the means to maintain contact with the day-to-day work of party cells.

The urban bias of the party was to a great extent a bias in favour of the industrial, urban worker. But the trend was reinforced through the equally strong emphasis on the state apparatus. Up until 1980, top party leaders were without exception the holders also of important posts in the government, military or security. This pattern pervaded through all levels of local government. The resultant relationship between party and state was not necessarily in favour of the party. With party leaders engulfed in government work, the second line of party cadres was generally too weak to keep up a momentum in party work. The integrity of the Party was established in form, but not in the daily practice of work. Gradually, indications grew that local party representatives had difficulties in defining their party role as distinct from that of the state. In the Maputo urban wards, party cells tended to copy the behaviour of dynamising groups, which led to serious setbacks.
for the latter without any corresponding growth of the former. In Angoche, the district administrative office was little more than a records and public service office, while all important meetings and decisions took place at party headquarters. In Mueda, the workings of the two 'structures' seemed inseparable not only in the villages but in the district office as well (see Chapter 8).

It was the Political and Organisational Offensive, launched in early 1980, that forced a profound investigation and debate around the situation of the Party. The Offensive had been started on the assumption that certain problems existed in the management of government and production, which needed to be rectified. But the problems exposed during the campaign were much more common and more serious than expected. The first question to be tackled was therefore: why was it that party representatives or workers' organs had not reported on the problems, let alone resolved them? That the workers were aware of the problems was undeniable - they were the informers whose hints led the President straight to the spots of crime or negligence. It was starkly obvious that the formal existence of political or workers' organs in no way guaranteed their ability to assume their functions.

The second question, no less important, referred to the relationship between party and government in the creation and execution of policy. The weakness of the party in the local setting reflected an overall shortage not only of party cadres per se, but of skilled party workers able to work separate from and as a control of the state. The question was, who was controlling whom:

- In practice, we/the party/ allowed the ministerial council and the state organs to be those which determined many of the options of the country, the party remaining with the role of subsequent verification, ratification and correction.

In the government reshuffle undertaken in April 1980, two leading members were relieved of their posts to work full-time in the party leadership. This was intended to be accompanied by recruitments of people to party vacancies on all levels. Central Committee meetings decided on the urgent necessity to reinforce the party from the base. Special efforts were to be directed towards the illiterate majority of rural party members. The party secretariat started the publication of a series of texts, the first ever produced for mass distribution and consumption within the party. Simultaneously a general campaign was launched for the creation of more party cells not least in rural areas. The secretariat initiated a series of empirical studies on the functioning of the party at local levels, which were important not least in that they brought the central leadership into direct contact with the party in its local reality.
Similar moves were undertaken by the state department responsible for the organisation of People's Assemblies. Even these belonged to the reorientation in work methods set off by the presidential offensive. The isolation of the city office should be broken and replaced by direct contacts with the people all the way down to the lowest levels. Missions travelled the country and spent periods working together with their local counterparts. A first serious effort was thus made to break with the inherited tradition of hierarchical supremacy and anti-empiricism. It was important not only in that it permitted leaders to see the real life of political organs under the shadow of a state apparatus in possession of virtually all human and material resources. The party, albeit much smaller than the state apparatus, was the political vanguard and as such far from immune from the problems going with hierarchically exercised power and authority.

Publically available evidence is fragmented and its value for generalised interpretations uncertain. Nevertheless, the self-criticism of the party in 1980-81 which was made available through the mass media, confirms to an

Peasants have responded to the calls for communal fanning, but the necessary support has never been forthcoming.

From the communal village of Muatala, Nampula Province

(Photo: A Gunnartz)
"Mobilisation is done in a mechanical way, without attention to the concrete situation"

A typical situation where the party representative requests the peasants to produce more cotton "to give our people clothes". The peasants keep silent, thinking of the cotton harvest from last year which is now rottening uncollected, and of the lorry they had asked for but never received.

Source: The Frelimo Boletim da Célula, 1981

uncontestable trend of growing elitism, bureaucratism and formal isolation from the people. With all the exceptions that existed top and bottom of the party ranks, the weakness of middle levels combined with the functions they were required to perform must have made fertile ground for formality as substitution for authority.

Party authority was and is underlined through the protocol or rules of conduct surrounding all party work. The authority has often been interpreted to imply that - as expressed by a local field worker - "the Party must always have the answer", and therefore is not free to enter into a dialogue about a problem and its solution. It is not difficult to imagine the problems of party leaders who have the political confidence but not the technical know-how, while the administration - or the management - has got both know-how and plans. The politically nominated party leader who is also the local head of the government, needs a great deal of practical political experience to make an independent judgement of the plans and programs of his administration. Lacking competent members in the local party committee, he is at the mercy of the state - still party authority makes his judgement the final word on the
matter. **What** remains is mobilisation for the execution of the plan.

The problems of party authority in local government were made no easier when around 1980 central economic planning was instituted over the country. The principle of subsuming local development plans under centrally formulated priorities may have nothing against it - provided the conditions for its functioning are fulfilled. One of these is that local organs are capable of expressing the restraints and possibilities for local development, the other - no less important - that central organs are able to listen and respond to the contextual framework of local development. In Mozambique, these conditions were not present, and planning generally became a system of diffusion of unrealistic demands from central to local authorities, demands which could not be ignored as they were put in a legal framework and given full sanction from the state leadership.

This system could only have worked as a trap, and a devious one, for the party worker. Even where he fully realised the unrealistic nature of the plan targets, he had no choice but to defend them. For instance, the relative priority given to large-scale projects and the corresponding neglect of the needs of the family sector could be the subject of debate in preparatory stages of the plan, but had to be accepted in the final plan. With increasing shortages of both agricultural tools and consumer goods for the family sector, the position of the party member as a mobilising agent must have become increasingly untenable - a good reason to resort to a position of formal authority in order to avoid the inevitable criticism from below.

The reactions to the situation varied over time. Initially, it was the 'management line' which dominated. Central directives gave full authority to the administrative and managerial leadership to implement annual plans. People's assemblies and production councils were explicitly restricted to the role of mobilising for plan fulfillment. Even the Party made it the task of its members to control and support plan fulfillment. With repeated failures to reach plan targets, the workers were the first to be blamed. Gradually, however, other criticism gained in force. Locally, demands grew for a participation in the planning process by the workers themselves. Production targets should only be set after consultation with them, as "only the workers know what is required to reach these targets." \(^6\) Requests were made to the party to open the door of the management and create conditions for worker representation in the planning process. However, neither these pressures nor the - somewhat ambiguous - responses to them from the state leadership were sufficient to bring about more than marginal changes in a planning system which was simply unsuitable for the country at this time.

Two events alerted the leadership to the wider political dimensions of this development. One was the Polish crisis of 198018, where a bureaucratised and heavily centralised party/state was challenged by its own social base, the
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working class, through a workers' organisation strong enough to put a serious challenge to its authority. This profound political crisis in a socialist country set a case even for Frelimo, however critical its official position against Solidarity.

Another event contributed to challenging the image of strong popular support to regime and party. In January, 1981, South African troops moved overland to within 15 miles of Maputo, where they opened fire on a few buildings belonging to the African National Congress. A dozen people were killed, whereafter the units returned the same way they had arrived. The events led to the exposure of extensive foreign infiltration into the security network of Mozambique. Equally serious was the apparent lack of any organisation of popular defence in Maputo. Brigades were sent to different Maputo wards to study the local situation. All of them returned with gloomy reports. The party had not established itself in the large suburbs, still the very fact of its creation had directly affected the ward centres, the Dynamising Groups, or GDs:

- After the party restructuring campaign in 1978, there followed a period of almost complete lack of activity on the side of the GDs, which lost their dynamism, prestige and authority with the masses ... The majority of the GDs function as offices for the receipt and emission of messages and authorisations ... In practice, the circumstances require that the GD is at the same time an administrative organ and a party organ (in fact the only one at ward level), but it is not capable of doing so for lack of clarity concerning its role and duties...

There was no easy solution to the problem. The government resolved to make the GDs a part of the city council and to rehabilitate them to assume the necessary administrative functions. It was more difficult to get the necessary political and militia functions off the ground; active party members had their main political duties at work and could not be expected to perform the same work at home. Frelimo was left to recommend local party recruitment among, in the first instance, "artisans, reformed people, housewives, unemployed, house servants and the employees of little workshops existing within the ward ..."

At the Fourth Party Congress in April, 1983, figures on the size and composition of the party were released for the first time. 110,000 members were organised into 4,200 cells. Just over half of the members were classified as peasants, and one fifth as workers. Women made up one quarter of the members. Many of the cells were contacted by party brigades during the preparations for the congress, and for most of them it was the first opportunity they had had to discuss their role and function. The very act of mobilising for the congress brought many new members to the party. But there were other aspects of party membership which were not brought before the congress. The work of the party brigades had disclosed many
cases of members not meeting standards, in activity or in personal behaviour. In the north, polygamy was on the increase, and some male members when asked preferred to resign from political work rather than abstaining from the materially rewarding polygamy. In other areas, the bandit activities of the MNR were particularly focussed on local representatives of government and party, many of whom were murdered in attacks on villages or local centres. The material hardships and general insecurity were beginning to make inroads into party stability as well.

The People's Assemblies - first steps towards representative democracy

- It is not a matter of having elections to see which class is going to win. That choice had already been made by the Mozambican People during the ten long years of struggle against the colonial bourgeoisie...

   It is a matter of carrying out an electoral process as an integral part of our struggle, for the reinforcement of the power of the working class allied to the peasantry, with the participation of the whole People of Mozambique, united from Ruvuma to Maputo. (Samora Machel addressing the first session of the Popular Assembly in its provisional composition, 31.8.77.)

A system of elected representative bodies of the state was written into the 1975 constitution of Mozambique. Realisation was intended to take place just over two years later, during the autumn of 1977. The People's Assemblies are therefore essentially an adaptation of experiences made during the armed struggle, a new form of popular participation which had not been tested against other institutions and power regulations in independent Mozambique.

   Every state needs a legislative body. In Mozambique the prime function of the national Popular Assembly was that of legislation, plus that of overseer of the state apparatus and its implementation of policies outlined by Frelimo. The essentials of its mandate were written into the 1975 Constitution, amended and extended by the first elected National Assembly after the 1977 elections. The constitutional updating also included the identification of a hierarchy of elected bodies, the People's Assemblies, parallel to the government in each province, district, city and locality (sub-district) of the country. Their particular responsibilities were more directed to the promotion of local development:

   (a) To promote social progress, the consolidation of state power, increased production and productivity, the development of collective work
and improvement of material and cultural conditions of life in their respective areas;
(b) To make decisions about matters fundamental to the development of their respective areas, achieving their objectives within the framework of legal norms.20

In official declarations and speeches on the Assembly structure, references are frequently made to the democratic structures created during the struggle. Similarly, the first assemblies to be created were seen as a direct continuation and institutionalisation of the democratic line of the dynamising groups. The constitutional formulations and the rapid process of national elections meant that, whereas the form and formal character of the assembly network was well defined, its content - the methods of work and relations to other political bodies - was not given a concrete formulation based on the conditions of the country after Independence. It was only around the second round of elections, in 1980, that reflexions on the assemblies and their functioning mirrored a growing interest in local realities. A few years later, time seemed ripe for a general revision of a too formalistic and complex structure, work which was halted by the military destabilisation over large parts of the country.

For many observers, it is near at hand to identify the role of the People's Assemblies with that of elected parliaments or councils in other parts of the world. The speed of development after Independence make it easy to forget that colonial Mozambique, only a few years back, had neither the practice nor even the pretence of a democratic system - even among the colonisers themselves. The blacks were altogether excluded from any decision making processes. The very first thing that was needed in the new society was therefore to get people to participate, to communicate and discuss. Through the assembly structure people could be brought together who enjoyed a local recognition and confidence, they could be informed about the plans and policies of the new government, they could even be asked for an opinion on these plans. These people in turn could be expected to reach their 'electorate' with presentations of what the government intended to do, mobilising people into a different kind of participation than the passive submission to orders which were neither explained nor justified.

Only when this top-down process had borne fruit, when a confidence and an understanding had been established, would it be possible to move in the direction of 'exercise of democratic rights' or defence of the class interests through elected representative bodies.

Such essentially transitional characteristics of the democratic process in Mozambique might help to understand the structure of the assembly network. Unlike in most parliamentary, party-democratic systems, the tradi-
tional concept of representativity does not figure here. The deputies "do not serve nor represent the particular interests of any village, locality, district, province, region, race, tribe or religion", says the electoral law. They are mandated to serve the interests of workers and peasants as a whole, in the materialisation of Frelimo's orientations. This facilitates the election process in a country where voting registers are a reform of a distant future. Elections are based on confidence, on people's trust in the candidate as well as their confidence in the party and state. Only on the first level (locality) are the elections direct. People gather to discuss and elect among candidates put forward by an electoral commission.

Assemblies on higher levels are all elected indirectly. Local assemblies meet to select from among themselves, from the party, defence or any other organisation or unit, delegates to Electoral Conferences of the next higher level. These conferences are responsible for the analysis and vote on candidates selected by respective electoral commission. Only on the highest level, the national assembly, are the elections carried out in secret vote by the provincial assemblies themselves. Candidates may or may not be deputies of lower level assemblies. The territorial composition of second- or higher-stage assemblies is nowhere explicitly defined. In practice all territorial sub-units are certain to be represented, but the idea of "balanced representation" does not necessarily affect the election of deputies.

Another characteristic which has already been mentioned in preceding sections, is the relationship of the assembly to party and state. Its relationship to the former is assured through, on the one hand, strong party presence in the electoral process and the selection of candidates for deputies, on the other the First Secretary of the Party who is automatically also the President of the assembly. He is at the same time the highest state functionary, i.e. the provincial governor or the district or locality administrator, and as such leads the Executive Council elected within the assembly to direct the affairs of the government. This arrangement serves to underscore the serving, supportive role of the assembly in relation to both state and party. How well it works in creating and encouraging democratic participation is highly dependent on the way power is exercised by the leadership itself.

There is no doubt that the first assembly elections were a very well received and forceful measure to reinforce the strength of Frelimo among the people. "The hands we raise when we vote are like banners", was only one of the enthusiastic voices recorded in the process of basic elections. The method used was perhaps worthy of the name ultra-democratic: local commissions led by Party or GD leaders invited candidates, screened and made their selection. Through all available means, people were informed about the meaning and significance of the forthcoming elections, the necessity to elect only those who had the confidence of the majority and the import-
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ance of speaking out about the candidates. General meetings were held where the candidates were asked to present themselves. They were then subjected to comments from the voters. In many cases, discussions about the candidates took place in meetings separate from the voting process, to give the people time to reflect and discuss between themselves.

No process is foolproof. People who are since childhood used to indiscriminate abuse of power, who have learnt survival through obedience and silence, do not overnight accept the promises of a different reality. Candidates with authority, ability to speak and means to retaliate, were let through here as in any similar context. Election statistics will be used below to tell part of the story of how people managed to make use of their collective power in the first round of elections. Similar data from the second round of local elections held in 1980 might tell whether the trend is towards greater openness and confidence of the electorate, or the other way around.

During a little less than two months from the end of September 1977, elections to locality assemblies were carried out all over the country. The Rhodesian military aggressions prevented the realisation of elections in half a dozen of the localities (and, later, two of the districts). In all, close to 900 assemblies were formed with over 22,000 deputies. Over 2,000 candidates were rejected (see Tables 7.1 and 7.3). When locality assemblies had been created, electoral conferences were arranged and district and city assemblies elected. Finally, on 3 December, electoral conferences met in all provincial capitals to elect Provincial Assemblies.

The report of the National Election Commission shows this to be the last stage of elections according to established legal procedure. No electoral conferences were held to elect the National Assembly. Instead the Central Committee of the Party, in secret vote, elected and proposed a list of candidates, which was unanimously adopted by the provincial assemblies at their first session on 4 December.

According to law, local elections were to be held within two and a half years and general elections within five years of the last elections. Mid-term local elections were also prepared and carried out during 1980, in the midst of an intensive period of work. To start with, this year saw the launching of the Presidential Offensive, which undoubtedly created a favourable climate for an open appraisal of deputies and candidates, but which also gave local government and party staff a heavy workload. Immediately after the conclusion of the elections, a rapid and extremely efficient currency reform was carried out, which in three days permitted the exchange of all notes of the obsolete Escudo to be exchanged for the new Metical. A few months later the first independent population census was carried out, following intensive preparations in all districts since the beginning of the year.
Table 7.1. *Mozambique 1977 and 1980 elections: Number of assemblies and elected deputies*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>No of assemblies</th>
<th>No of deputies</th>
<th>% women of dep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locality</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>1332</td>
<td>22230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>3390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Province</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In 1980 the City of Maputo was given administrative status of province.

These are among the reasons cited by the Electoral Commission in its report on the 1980 elections, assessing the differences to the first round of elections. The report itself is a comprehensive document, presenting different aspects of the process in a way which reflects the open climate of criticism created by the Presidential Offensive. Whereas in 1977 attendance at the elections was estimated at 3 million or more - evidently a very uncertain.

Table 7.2. *Mozambique 1977 and 1980 elections: Social composition of elected deputies*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Workers</th>
<th>Peasants</th>
<th>Members of Defence and Security</th>
<th>State Employees</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Province</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Gov *Moc*, 1977; Gov *Moc*, 1980b  
*The third round of general elections was eventually held during the latter part of 1986 in all but 20 (of about 130) districts of the country. Preliminary results show that the proportion of women among elected deputies increased particularly on higher levels - 25% in provincial assemblies and 16% in the national assembly. The social composition of the latter also changed distinctly in favour of 'state employees' (28%), who gained their seats from 'workers' (22%) and 'peasants' (18%).

Source: M.I.O. Newsreview No 95/96, Jan 1987.
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Statistics for 1980 showed that 2.25 million people had cast their votes. There are many other signs that conditions had changed; preparations were deficient in some areas, the listing of candidates did not always follow acceptable procedures, in some areas elections were rendered invalid by too low attendance whereas in others the elected assemblies were accepted provisionally while new elections were prepared.

The mere creation of local assemblies in 1977 had not been sufficient to guarantee their survival and well-functioning in the years to follow. Many of them were affected by the transfer or moves of important members, others had ceased to function for lack of understanding of duties and tasks. Our own observations from Angoche and Mueda on the problems of "over-organisation" for local society were confirmed in the election report, which noted the frequent "occurrence of a lack of clear demarcation between the Party and the State organs and their respective competence." It was in

Table 7.3. Mozambique: 1977 and 1980 elections. Number of candidates rejected and reasons for the rejection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Assembly level</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local level</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>Province*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collabor with colon</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regime</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional holder of</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>power</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable behaviour</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incomp, laziness,</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>2446</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passivity</td>
<td>1980**</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>2182</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4389</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of elected dep's</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Gov Moc, 1977; Gov Moc, 1980b
* 1980 elections covered only locality, district and town assemblies
** New category introduced in 1980 report
many cases evident that the assembly institution as such had not really contributed to resolving local problems and improving the standards of living of the inhabitants.

The report contains various observations on the causes of these problems, relevant for a discussion of the realism of the 'Assembly project' at this stage of development. It is obvious, though, that a profound reflection on the project is necessary if any progress should be expected: "The first great lesson to draw from the 1980 elections is, that the level of quality of future elections will be determined by the results of the work of the assemblies which have now been elected."25

Seen in quantitative terms, the elections were reasonably successful. Due to military destabilisation, four of the over 110 districts had to be left to a later opportunity. Another eight areas which had not yet been granted the status of district, were also left out. Significant changes occurred on the lowest level, where over 550 new Assemblies were created, many of them in communal villages. The total number of Locality Assemblies grew from just under 900 to over 1,300, composed of nearly 40,000 deputies (Table 7.1). Some data on the social composition of deputies on different levels have also been published (Table 7.2).

Women form a significant fraction of the deputies. Typically, the proportion decreases with increasing difficulty in participating, i.e. in assemblies on higher levels. In 1977, from 28% in local to 12% in the National Assembly were women. These are figures which compare well with those of other countries. In Cuba, for instance, by the late 1970s the proportion of women increased from a low of 7% in Local Assemblies to 22% in the National Assembly (see Appendix, Table 1).26 The high local average in Mozambique does however hide a large variation over the country, from next to no representation of women in the northern provinces to an equal or even higher number of women than men in areas in the south.27

It is indicative of the change in times, that for all the levels included in the local elections of 1980, the proportion of women deputies had declined. Does this reflect the judgement of hard-working women, that assembly work has not been worth the effort? From the statistics of district and town assemblies, it is also evident that state functionaries have increased their presence at the expense of workers and members of the security and defence sectors. Such changes are certainly connected to the role the assembly network has played and continues to play in society.

Election reports tell little about the background of the changing composition of deputies. There is no doubt however that the turnover between elections was high. Of elected deputies in 1980, only about 30% were re-
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elections. Calculated on the 1977 totals, half of locality, one third of district and 40% of city deputies were re-elected.

The remainder had either resigned or were rejected during the elections. There is no doubt that the voters exercised their right to debate and choose between candidates, about as much in 1980 as in 1977 (Table 7.3). On the local level, 11% of the candidates were rejected, the majority of them for not conforming to the standards of behaviour of a deputy; "the best representatives of the People, the most dedicated patriots, ... exemplary at work and capable of mobilising and directing the masses in a correct way.", according to the electoral law recommendations.28

The 1980 elections marked a new phase in the work of creating a system of popularly elected and functioning assemblies. They were followed by efforts to study empirically the conditions of growth of institutionalised people's power, in much the same way as political institutions were being investigated in the positive climate created by the Presidential Offensive. However, the application of conclusions drawn has had to be postponed. The second round of elections, set for 1983, could not be held at that time. New dates have been set for 1985 and, again, for 1986 respectively. A major reconstruction will no doubt be necessary, once the security situation improves enough for new elections to be organised.

The concept of institutionalised people's power and its application in Mozambique is a fairly complex question. For one thing, the assembly is different from the traditional village gathering in that it is a bureaucracy with rules and procedures, not easily understood in illiterate society nor necessarily very functional as a model. In 1980, the district administrator and president of Angoche District Assembly summarized:

- Frankly speaking, the assembly work has been very poor so far. To start with, there was much confusion over the limits between party and assembly. And nobody had any experience in the procedures of formal meetings, agendas or minutes. The district assembly did not receive any reports from lower levels, and spent most of its attention on the district centre itself. Only lately has it been possible to give local leaders some formal training, and results are definitely forthcoming.29

The 1977 election campaign created the form or structure of elected organs. It did not give them a content, or an area of work, distinct from that of the party. Formality and 'protocol' grew out of the best thing the local leaders could do in this situation, namely to reproduce the patterns of conduct of higher assembly levels or of the party. The 1980 electoral commission pointed out the lack of formal education and elementary knowledge of many deputies. Still in 1984, the 12th session of the Popular Assembly noted the stifling effects of formality on the participation and contribution of deputies to local assembly work, and recommended a
Elections to the People's Assembly - a new means for participation in Mozambique whose potential value as a tool for Popular Power is closely related to the reduction of illiteracy and poverty in the country.

(Photo: AIM/Afrikabild)
simplification of all procedures. How wide the gap was between illiterate peasant-deputies and the role they were assumed to fulfill, was made shockingly clear by the recommendation that "the interventions of the deputies may be made without having been prepared in writing."\(^{30}\)

All local work, whether in party or state organs, takes place under more or less serious hardships. In rural areas, where no modern means of communication exist, the very act of calling a meeting, preparing the agenda and ensuring an active participation by deputies living far apart is replete with problems. It should therefore have been no surprise for the 12th Popular Assembly to hear that at least a hundred or so of the local, and some of the district assemblies, could not be regarded as functioning.\(^{31}\)

The problem of maintaining democratic participation takes on a similar character on all levels of the assembly organisation. In the communal villages of Angoche or Mueda the leadership, whether party or state, came from the same distinct group of people - as it was in the early years when the Dynamising Group was in charge. The same de facto concentration of power is found in offices higher up on the scale, right to the top.\(^{32}\) Various sources confirm that the deputies of the Popular Assembly do little work in this capacity between sessions of the Assembly. Some of them are members of special working commissions which, however, because of the logistical problems and the many other tasks assigned to key members, "have not carried out their activities in a satisfactory way."\(^{33}\)

A normal task of the national deputies would be to relate the debates and resolutions of the latest Assembly session to the local community, and likewise to prepare forthcoming issues through local 'referenda' on the matter. Obviously, not much of this work does take place. In very concrete terms, the gap between demands and resources is too wide to be bridged. The Assembly secretariat is too small, the items of any agenda too many, the background material made available too late, for most of the deputies to know more than - at best - the agenda itself, when they set off for Maputo. Again, the highly formalistic level of language in texts, interventions and resolutions do not facilitate their recounting the Assembly resolutions when they are back home in the village again.

The work of the Popular Assembly therefore depends almost exclusively on its Permanent Commission, the organ responsible for the state in between sessions. In an open presentation of the work of the Assembly, the Secretary of the Commission gave some facts about its mode of operation. The Commission, first of all, serves the Assembly in preparing its sessions and maintaining the contacts and relations which are essential for its work. Secondly, between sessions the Commission "by law should direct the other State organs. In this sense it is a real organ of power within the State."\(^{34}\)
Members of the Permanent Commission participate regularly in the meetings of the Ministerial Council - in fact some of the Commission members are ministers in the government. The Commission also frequently holds meetings with the Politbureau of the Party, "to analyse and decide on specific issues of fundamental interest for the Country and the Nation." It is in these meetings that both political, legal and other issues are dealt with, such as revisions in the law of state security or the massive "Operation Production" campaign to move the urban unemployed.

In this capacity, the Permanent Commission carries out some of the important functions of the Assembly itself. Thus, "during the six years since its inception, the majority of the laws and resolutions of the State were approved in the Permanent Commission. In fact, 51 of the 66 laws published were approved by the Commission, as were over 70 resolutions." The power of the Permanent Commission is therefore considerable. It is to a high degree the power of the state and the party: Led by the President, the Commission has fifteen members. The first six of these are also among the eleven members of the Frelimo Politbureau, and a further four are members of its Central Committee.

This coincidence of state and party leadership is prevalent on all levels, down to the locality and the communal village. The separation of the state and the party into two different institutional structures is an organisational complexity which is difficult if not impossible to uphold in practice. Nor is this separation even theoretically the only or perhaps the best solution. When few capable people are at all available to man the different positions, it would be difficult and pretentious, even harmful, to maintain the pretence of separate organisational identities. The issues have been raised in the Maputo offices, and Mueda (see ch. 8) is certainly not the only district where a few years into the 1980s the formal distinction between state and party was being replaced with a kind of interim solution of working with 'people of confidence'. That reforms will come is certain; how far they will go in softening up the fundamental principal division between state and party in poorly equipped local offices remains an open question.

Organising the workers - into which role?

Colonial Mozambique was not without its industrial workers. Disregarding the tens of thousands who had received their vocational training during spells of work in Rhodesia or South Africa, workers were also needed for an industrial sector which grew rapidly over the last decade of colonial power. 250,000 workers were employed in industry, construction and transport in 1974, to whom should be added about 50,000 permanent and
250,000 seasonal workers in agriculture. Still, the significance given to the working class in Frelimo's post-independence strategy for socialist transition was born more out of theory than actual practice. In the preparations for the armed struggle, workers were mobilised and organised to start actions in the urban areas; the long arm of the security police PIDE reached out and destroyed the network before the war had even started. When Frelimo returned to Maputo in 1974, workers were on the whole poorly prepared to support the transition to come.

Whatever tradition of trade union organisation that had existed in Mozambique had been white, and had already in the 1930s been dismantled by the Salazar regime. In their stead came state-controlled corporate syndicats, open only to "civilized" or whites, and the second-class "assimilated" citizens. Even so, they were closely controlled by the government which preserved the right to dissolve them through administrative decision. Strikes were of course prohibited. Workers' unions were thus an integral part of the fascist corporate state, which in the words of Samora Machel "is the reason why our workers' movement, in contrast to those of other colonies, has evolved on the margin of the colonial syndicats".

The political strategy of working class development and participation was presented in full at the Third Frelimo Congress in 1977. By this time, several important steps had already been taken to create, albeit in embryonic form, conditions for worker participation in several of the larger industries and other work sites.

Dynamising Groups had been formed in factories, like everywhere else. In some factories, they were the de facto management. In others, they were basically an organisation of the employees, sorting out work problems, starting literacy classes and generally informing about the policies of the new Frelimo government. Their history of creation varied widely, as did their degree of contact with the workers. White-collar workers tended to dominate in leadership if not in numbers, and it would be wrong simply to assume that all the GDs had the confidence of the workers as a whole.

The British cooperant Peter Sketchley arrived to work in the giant CIFEL steel mill in Maputo in the early period of worker organisation. His studies show how, in the absence of a strong party, the GD composition could turn out unfavourably for the workers:

- Remember, the dynamising group was formed before Frelimo was organised as a party to oversee the selection of people for positions of power and responsibility. As a result, the process was wide open for most opportunistic elements - the former PIDE police, the people who collaborated with the PIDE agents in the Portuguese days - to put themselves forward. Some became members of the dynamising group in the factory - basically persons who weren't preoccupied with the good of the people or the process of national reconstruction. They really cared about what they could get for themselves, or for being respected, being at the centre of things, having power.
In October 1976, President Machel called a big meeting with the Maputo workers. He dwelt at length with the experiences of GDs in the factories, painting a critical picture of their methods and objectives. The overriding concern of his speech, however, was with structure and forms of leadership during the early period of transition. By this time the collective leadership ideology was given prime emphasis. The President's meeting ended with the launching of workers' Production Councils, to be elected by the workers themselves in a selected number of industries in Maputo. Soon thereafter, Machel turned to the important Central Hospital in Maputo. In his directives to the health workers, the collectivist line was clear and unequivocal:

- It is where they work that the workers first of all must get organised. It is here that we must urgently destroy the colonial structure, based on individualised, bureaucratised and antidemocratic management, and substitute for it a new democratic and collective structure, which permits an organised participation of all the workers in the study and solution of the problems.

Conselhos de Base or Ward Councils were formed, embracing all who worked in a particular ward. In the government, similar workers' councils were formed in all departments. Directives were diffuse, failing to delineate the mandate of these organs as distinct from those of the administrative and the party organs respectively. Over time, the balance between the three was to tilt over in the direction of administrative power. In the first years, however, management was if not non-existing, then often weak or untrustworthy. Workers were given the double task of checking the general functioning of the factory and of mobilising among themselves towards the joint task of arresting the fall in production wherever possible, bringing it back to old levels.

Production had slumped in the first year of Independence, and there were no signs of a recovery. The recruitment of Mozambican workers to the South African goldmines had gone down to one third of the 1975 level, and revenues from the transit trade had suffered heavy reductions. To get production going again required all the management knowledge available, plus all the worker motivation that could be mobilised.

The historical lack of any trade union tradition among the workers certainly weighed heavily on the new organisation at its start. Production Councils were during 1976177 formed only in the Maputo area. Up to August 1977, four different meetings were held to evaluate the experiences and draw up guidelines for the organisation of Production Councils. These indicated the size of the councils, from 3 to 20 members depending on the size of the firm, and the methods of nomination. GDs were, as representatives of Frelimo, at the centre of the nomination of candidates. But only
general meetings with all workers, where each candidate was presented and discussed by members, could take the final decision on the composition of the production council.

The documents of the four meetings record the numerous problems encountered during the formation of the Maputo-based councils. In the midst of perhaps too ambitious views of their capacity to organise and solve the problems of production, many observations focus on the central problem of division of power in the firm. The main obstacle to advances were the hostility of managements, whether in the state or the private sector, against what they clearly perceived as a threat to their monopoly on information, planning and decision-making. 'Collective leadership' in some places remained a phrase with little relation to reality, as management strove to reduce to a mere formality its collaboration with both political organ and Production Council.44

The balance of power between workers and management was to be exercised through collaboration, not confrontation. Management remained with executive and administrative power, and was expected to seek the consent of party and Production Council before putting its decisions into effect. In the nationalised firms, the government exercised its control over management through its nomination of the director or, in the early days, an administrative commission, to head the firm. The party role was, theoretically, that of overseer and guide, while the Production Council essentially should direct its efforts towards improved production through better worker organisation.

The theoretical and somewhat diffuse notion of balance of power was alien to all earlier experience of both management and workers. In the inevitable conflicts to follow, the workers' side was often helplessly weak, and only the direct intervention of the party would impede a return to old and well-known labour relations. A strong and active party presence seemed a necessary condition for political progress in the firm.

The 1977 meetings on production councils prepared for the creation of a nationwide network of councils, organised according to type of industry. Originally, no less than 22 branches were distinguished, but the sheer lack of cadres to fill all the required posts contributed to a reduction to 10. Organisation according to industry is the common form in socialist societies where the means of production are nationalised and where (state) management and workers are assumed to work for the same end.45 Consistent with this, membership was defined as open to everyone in the firm, from simple worker to (employed) director.

Seen in numbers, the organisation grew rapidly over the country. By 1983, Production Councils had been created in about 6,000 units of work with a total work force of close to half a million employees. Many of these
Table 7.4. Mozambique: Industrial branch organisation of production councils as of 1980

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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Metallurgy, metal work and energy</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Chemics, rubber, paper and wood</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Cement, civil construction, glass and extractive industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Textile, clothes, leather and shoes</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Public sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Commerce, bank, insurance and certain other services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Hotel, restaurant and tourist industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Food and drink industry, vegetable oils and soap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Cashew, sugar, farming, cattle and poultry raising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Transport, communications and fishery</td>
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Source: CNICP, 1980

councils existed in name more than in reality. The national, and even more the provincial coordinating offices remained weak. The act of officialisation of a nation-wide organisation had been postponed twice; still when the step was taken in 1983 the background documents evidenced the virtual non-existence of key national organs of the trade union structure.46 Too few cadres were available, too many tasks had been given to each one of them.

The production councils over the country had one thing in common: both their material and their social base was extremely weak. In the CIFEL steel mill referred to above, four fifths of the 500 workers were completely illiterate, and only a handful had reached lower secondary education.47 Three years after Independence, the first 350 workers started their first level literacy courses. In addition, all the workers without exception were first generation urban dwellers from peasant backgrounds.

At Texlom, a Maputo textile factory built only a few years before Independence, the situation was better, but only because the colonial management had refused employment to workers with less than four years of primary education.48 Illiterate workers were admitted by the new management in 1975, and through an active policy of literacy training about nine tenths of the workers in 1980 were literate.49

Texlom is hardly a typical case. Most production councils were composed of workers with little or no competence and experience. The means for training were limited; up to 1983 only 3,200 workers altogether had received basic trade union training in the country, and another 300 had received their training in socialist countries.50 This equals an average of one worker for every two production councils, not including the numerous posts to be filled in the provincial and central offices of the evolving organisation.

Within the firm, party and Production Council were close not only in membership but also in their daily work. It was no surprise to see the total
unity in all actions between the two in a private firm such as the Companhia de Culturas de Angoche, whose expatriate director still in 1981 appeared to be able to continue with "business as usual". But even in the more advanced factory Texlom which was nationalised by Independence, visits during the 1980s disclosed a persistent pattern of power struggle for continued administrative control by the management, and a corresponding co-ordination of actions of the party cell and the Production Council.

Behind this closeness was not 'only the need to gather strength in the struggle for new labour relations. The immediate tasks at hand brought the two bodies forcefully together. In many firms, the sudden exodus of managers, administrative staff and technicians at the time of Independence had led to more or less anarchic conditions: routine control systems of attendance, fulfillments of daily tasks, maintenance or stock replacement, had broken down. Workers were left on their own, most of them unprepared for the new responsibility that was now demanded from them, kept ignorant by their former master about the overall organisation or process of production of their own workplace. The dynamising group, later the party cell and the Production Council, had the difficult task not only of restoring controls but of creating a common understanding of what independence meant: the factory belonged to the workers and was their responsibility, everyone now belonged to the common management, and as part of this all workers had to accept more sacrifices in terms of low salaries and long working hours.

The Production Council was supposed to have a representative in every section of the firm, whose task it was to identify bottlenecks in production, report on spare parts, tools or raw materials needed, improve on working conditions and institute checks on the individual worker. Gradually the tasks of Production Councils have grown to include literacy classes, occupational training, transport to/from home, the provision of meals, child-care and other questions related to the workers' social and economic security.

In the new societal structure slowly seeing the light of day in Mozambique, trade union bodies were not created to represent workers in negotiations with employers. Where investments to improve the conditions of the workers were needed, they had to be presented to appropriate bodies of the management and the government, whose decision was taken in relation to the relative needs of one workplace against all the others. Wage negotiations were a matter for government, with the workers' organs providing the necessary information and later explaining the government decision to the workers. In the concrete circumstances of Mozambique, this must have been a weakness of the trade union structure which impeded its growth. The colonial wage system had been grossly unfair to the blacks and, in addition, allowed for wide salary differentials in the 'civilised' part of the labour
market, even for very similar jobs. During the chaotic months preceding Independence, firms added to the general chaos by introducing drastic wage increases among the black workers. To bring order in this chaos required both time and careful investigation. Only in 1980 was a new salary law adopted by the Popular Assembly, whose implementation gave rise to many cases of conflict between workers and management.

General austerity was at all times called for by the government. There were good economic reasons to demand care with scarce resources. But there were other reasons as well. The long ideological struggle over what type of incentives were to guide individual motivation in the socialist state had its counterpart also on the Mozambican work scene. In the late 1970s, "socialist emulation" campaigns were introduced in different sectors of the economy. Symbolic or non-material rewards were created to stimulate workers to greater efforts. For a while, the campaigns might have met with some response. But time worked against them, and it became increasingly difficult for the production councils to defend symbolic rewards when workers could no longer find the basic necessities on the market, could not spend their wages on materials to improve their material wellbeing. It took some difficult work for production councils and local party organs before the central authorities had accepted that results could only be expected if material rewards were allowed "which are meaningful for the worker in the general scarcity of all goods and materials", as explained by the Texlom Production Council in 1983.

In Texlom in 1983, a fairly elaborate system had been worked out whereby the performance of each worker was recorded and given a rank by the section where he was working. A special commission took a monthly round of all records and nominated the best worker in each section. The nomination could be, and apparently sometimes was, challenged by the section in question. Every three months rewards were presented to the most qualified workers - a radio, roofing material, a bicycle (where the worker had to pay part of the cost) or some other product worth around MT 3,000.

Workers' organisations were introduced not only in the industrial sector. By the time that the first production councils were being formed in Maputo, government departments were instructed to create Conselhos de Controle de Produtividade or Councils for Productivity Control. Like in the factories, they were open to all employees. Little has been said about the development and functioning of these organs. When Machel carried out his Offensive in 1980, no mention was made of them. The campaign ended with the creation of special control commissions in each ministry, to deal with labour relations and work organisation. That the workers' councils were not even then implicated, is perhaps a sign of their relative impotence in relation to state hierarchy and party representation.
Organising the People

The hospital system had more attention given to it. Simultaneously with the other campaigns in 1976, the Central Hospital in Maputo was instructed to create *Conselhos de Base* or Ward Councils, a democratic organ through which important changes in work relations were to take place.

Health has always been an area of central concern to the Frelimo leadership. High priority was given early to the development of health services for all, preventive as well as curative. But the distortions of the colonial health system prevailed, which included the Central Hospital with its proportionately colossal budget and staff demands. The prestige of this hospital was to weigh heavily on the reputation of the health system as a whole, even after Independence.

Richard Williams has provided a detailed account of the process of democratisation in the Central Hospital. He acknowledges the role played by the dynamising group in keeping this complex apparatus going right through the immediate crisis of the post-independence period, but... "in a manner that was little changed from the colonial Miguel Bombarda Hospital. Frelimo began receiving a barrage of complaints about the quality of treatment in the Central Hospital, and the Party intervened."

Samora Machel's meeting with the hospital workers on 6 October 1976 was the first in a series of direct interventions from the national leadership, with effects throughout the health services. In a long speech, the President analysed the present problems and their historical origins. His major conclusion was, that even if a new management had replaced the old hospital director with his dictatorial power, the structures through which power was exercised remained: "The colonial structures persist. Here was our mistake. We did not strike a mortal blow against these structures."

The solution proposed by the President was to set up a collective management, a council in every ward and section of the hospital. As an immediate effect, "The dynamising group was dissolved. A 'Committee to Restructure the Central Hospital' was set up to dynamise and support the campaign to create the new collective management bodies." This was to be a struggle with many obstacles and only slow victories. Williams' presentation of the problems has a general value, which justifies quoting at some length from his account:

- It is important to reflect on the causes of the vulnerability of the councils. Under Portuguese colonialism no democratic institutions of any kind had existed in Mozambique. Thus knowledge fundamental to the operation of a democratic system, such as how to function in a meeting, how to contribute to discussion, how decisions were taken, how the council related to other levels in the hospital structure, and so on, were absent from the culture.

This created problems on at least two levels. On the ward level... meetings were complicated by the fact that many of the workers had only a poor grasp of Portuguese... The principal problem, however, was that the authoritarian nature of colonial
Bertil Egerö

society made it difficult for workers to conceive of disagreeing with someone above them in the hierarchy or even participating on an equal footing in a discussion.

The second level at which difficulties arose was at the higher levels in the hospital directorate. At independence, the rapid exodus of most people with exportable skills meant that the few who stayed had to take on responsible roles in the new health service. .../of these/ all, to a different extent, bore the scars of their personal development under colonialism and also lacked a positive vision of the possibilities of the new society in creation. The very people entrusted by Frelimo to lead the task of destroying colonialism in the hospital, frequently and sometimes quite destructively demonstrated a tendency to undermine the work to which they were quite genuinely committed...57

Two years after his first visit, Machel returned to the hospital to commend the workers for the development of the councils. A few months later, in January, 1979, the Central Committee of Frelimo resolved to create a national commission to reinforce the ongoing process of spreading the council system throughout the health service. Machel's new visit to the hospital in December 1979, his sharp criticism of 'ultra-democratic' tendencies and order that hierarchical subordination and distinction be reintroduced full front, was therefore a shock to the whole system, even more so as the ward councils were not even mentioned. The attack might be best understood as an introduction to the Presidential Offensive which served to reinforce administrative power and authority - nevertheless it left behind a confusion with lasting effects. Whether related to this or not, the forms for integrating government health sector employees with the general system of syndicates was not yet resolved by the time the national trade union organisation OTM was inaugurated in 1983.

The new organisation was greeted with applause all over the country. But the Frelimo leadership had to go some length to explain whether it also meant a qualitative change in the status and mandate of the workers' organisation. Party secretary Jorge Rebelo made it clear:

- Basically, the change is one of organisation. Because, what should be the role of the syndicates - to defend the interests of the workers? Is this not the task of the Party and the Government? Should it be a defence against the Party and the State? ... There should never exist competition or rivalry between the syndicates and the Party. At the base level, the syndicates have to be subordinated to the party cell.58

The official views on the role of the workers' organisation in 1983 are very much the same as in 1976, when the first steps were taken with the production councils in Maputo. The relation to party and state is written into the programme of OTM - in the following manner:

- Under the direction of the Party Frelimo, the Syndicates participate actively in the creation of the New Society... The orientations of Frelimo deepen the responsibility of the production councils in the organisation of the working class, in increasing the
production and productivity, and in the improvement of work conditions and life of the workers.

The Syndicates should collaborate directly with organs of the State Apparatus and exercise a decisive influence in order to guarantee that the economic and social development plans of the country are implemented.59

The perspective of collaboration and not confrontation permeates all official documents and speeches on OTM as well as on other mass organisations. It is equally present in documents of the state eg the decrees regulating the organisation of state enterprises.60 Power and responsibility rests with the management, which is expected to take the necessary initiatives to ensure active worker participation in planning and management and in the transformation of the social relations of production.

At times, fragments of the internal discussions in the various organisations in Mozambican society reach an external audience. Such was the case in the wake of the Presidential Offensive. Press and other media carried reports of obstructive management power being monopolised in the name of the Offensive itself, of obstructions against party or worker representatives. The workers had to defend themselves and find the means to counter such tendencies on the side of the management. These experiences were discussed within the organisation of workers' councils, and a more militant orientation did in fact come through in the last meeting of the organisation, the April 1983 meeting preparing for the creation of OTM:

- The production councils in the units of work ought to engage the directors of their units as workers... We must see the importance of the class struggle, not just lament the difficulties made by the directors ... The production councils must act according to the understanding that worker participation in the planning and management of the economy is the result of a struggle ...61

At Texlom, the secretary of the Production Council confirmed this perspective, when interviewed about the significance of the creation of OTM, "It is an organisational improvement. For us, the most important fact is that from now on we have our statutes and our programme. We are a recognised national organisation, and we will have a stronger base in our dealings with the management of Texlom. Even the State Secretariat of Labour will have to treat its relations with us with greater care."62

The set-backs in production, the fallacies of central economic planning and the power struggles of the management sector have provoked a variety of responses by the party and the state, especially in the period since the launching of the Presidential Offensive in 1980. It is clear, however, that the responses given remain firmly within the overall strategy of political leadership and organisation which gave rise to the vanguard party Frelimo in
Xiconhoca, the enemy

Xiconhoca (pronounced Shiconyoka) is a popular cartoon figure used to carry images of direct enemy infiltration, or of individualistic behavior and attitudes which go counter to the new society. Here, Xiconhoca thinks up ways to undermine the work of the new Production Councils. Then he tries to split the workers by suggesting that they should refuse to produce more. Instead they should demand higher salaries and fight the government...

1977: The supremacy of the party, subsuming in its leadership and control the contradictions existing within and between the state and the various sociopolitical organisations. Machel made this very clear when, in the inauguration of the new workers organisation, he stated:

- Let us be very clear over this point: given the class character of our party and our State, the socialist syndicates are no instrument of confrontation. ... Their task is not to make demands. ... Our Party synthesises in its political line, its statutes and Programme, the interests of the worker–peasant alliance and the strategy for their realisation.
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The materialisation of these interests is guaranteed by our socialist state.../and/ the socialist syndicate should establish itself as the organisation embracing all Mozambican workers in the implementation of the objectives defined by the Party...⁶³
Connecting the present with the past - fieldwork in the 'liberated areas'

When the research group arrived in Pemba towards the end of October 1983, there was a distinct risk that all domestic flights would come to a halt and the date of our return be postponed indefinitely. The car to fetch us for Mueda was also intended to bring fuel supplies for the transport needs on the plateau - in Mueda itself electricity had been cut off since weeks back for lack of diesel for the generator. Mozambique was heading for a generalised economic crisis.

Essential food supplies for the field work teams, in part imported, had to be brought from Maputo. A few additions could be made locally. All supplies were divided up between the teams in Mueda, and soon one team was left in Nandimba village 10 km from Mueda, while the other continued right up to Ngapa on the border to Tanzania." The Nandimba team was to be housed in the home of Simone Alima, a "regressado" from Tanzania who was now one of the highest in the village leadership. His two wives and children moved out to the backyard huts, to give room for the team.

Mueda is a legendary district in the history of Mozambique. It was there that the historic massacre took place on 16 June 1960, hailed as the "point of no return" for the armed struggle. Years later, Mueda was the scene of some of the most furious battles between Frelimo forces and colonial troops, including the massive colonial operation operation No Gordio (Gordian Knot) which failed to solve the "insurgency problems" and ended the hopes of the fascist Portuguese government for a military victory over the liberation movement.

Mueda was also the centre of other struggles. It was here that Lázaro Nkavandame in 1957 organised the Mozambique African Voluntary Cotton Society, a cooperative allowed to survive for three years which earned him

*The Nandimba team was composed of* Gary Littlejohn, Bernardo Estevão and myself. Yussuf Adam and Lars Rudebeck, plus assistants from the Swiss-Mozambican project FO-9, made up the Ngapa team. A joint research report in Portuguese has been published in Maputo. *See Centro de Estudos Africanos* (1986).
and his associates a good deal of experience in private entrepreneurship.\(^1\) It was not least these abilities which brought Nkavandame to the position of provincial chairman for Cabo Delgado in the early Frelimo civil organisation. Again, it was the peasant and soldier opposition against continued exploitation of labour under his very chairmanship which was the main force behind the ideological contradictions in Frelimo in the late 1960s that gave rise to the practice of Popular Power - in Mueda and gradually also in other regions embraced by the struggle.

Mueda was the first district of the war where the colonial administration collapsed, to be replaced by self-government in 'liberated areas'. It was here that the first trials were made in collective production, to serve the needs of both soldiers and ordinary peasants. Growing trade with Tanzania, through the many thousands engaged in carrying the products on their heads, brought further impetus to the new relations emerging between people engaged in a joint and massive effort for the benefit of all. The vanguard position in the struggle has earned Mueda the name as cradle of the revolution and rear-base of post-independence development towards socialism.

Mueda town still bears witness to the history: The big military installations only in part demolished; the deep defence fences and fields still dangerous because of the mines; the many graves of Portuguese soldiers; the monument in honour of all those killed in the massacre of 1960. Other dimensions of the historical heritage are more immediately relevant to our study: Once cease-fire was agreed with the Portuguese, Frelimo's policies of socialisation were spread and implemented all over the district. Soon, all rural people were living in communal villages. Private shops exist only in Mueda town, while in the rural areas the system of state-run lojas de povo or people's shops has been maintained together with a small cooperative sector. By contrast, in all other parts of the country the system of state shops was abandoned in 1980, and most of them were left in private hands.

In Mueda the people had learnt through the struggle to assume common responsibility over their resources, to find solutions for their survival and to defend their advances. Our search for Popular Power in 1983 would take place in the realm of a historical experience which had profoundly changed the self-perspectives of those involved and which thereby posed itself as the best possible base against which to see and judge developments under the new Frelimo government.

The Centre of African Studies in Maputo had through its History Workshop undertaken a number of studies in Mueda, on issues of the liberation struggle. Of late, the CEA had also become involved in research on present trends in the organisation of production and habitation, through studies of cooperative development and trends in village organisation. The Centre
Mueda in the 1980s • Popular Power & the Peasant

possessed experiences of great value for the study, which provide the general context of our analysis and interpretation.

The study was organised so as to complement and enrich the earlier CEA research. New areas of settlement were selected and care was taken to provide room for the study of an apparently new phenomenon in the district, that of *desagregação* or the falling apart of communal villages. Besides the political importance of such a trend, the actual events would serve to expose more clearly the problems of articulation of power in the local context. The term 'disaggregation' was used in such cases where a group of villagers in joint action left the village to settle at another site. This had taken place in more distant parts of the district already during the 1970s, but from 1982 onwards cases occurred in areas quite close to Mueda and the central district authorities.2 Their understanding of this process and its causes was poor, but there was a fear that it represented a rejection of Frelimo authority and a resurgence of traditional forms of local power. If this was true, disaggregation had to be firmly resisted and the rule of Popular Power reinforced. The alternative view, that the peasant action was somehow justified in relation to developments after Independence, was more difficult to grasp and certainly required a more profound look into the process.

The study was planned so as to include the three levels of political and state power in the district: the village itself, the *localidade* or administrative locality which is the lowest level of state administration, and the district level. Elected people's assemblies exist on all levels of state administration and also in the best organised communal villages. These villages are therefore called "political localities". The locality administrator has jurisdiction over all the villages in his locality, while there is no such relation between the assembly of the locality and those which exist in the villages. Given the size of Mueda district, the locality administrator would be an important mediator between the people and the district authorities. There was however little in earlier data collected by the CEA which confirmed the notion of a visible and functioning administration in the localities.

*Ngapa* is one of the five localities of Mueda. Located some 60 km northwest of Mueda town and overlooking the lands of Tanzania on the other side of Ruvuma River, Ngapa is characterised by a certain degree of both administrative and commercial autonomy from the district authorities. The settlements created during the transitional government began to crack up already a few years later, and by the time of the investigation at least seven villages existed which were not authorised by the district government. Ngapa was deemed suitable for the investigation.

Much closer to the office of the district administrator was *Nandimba*, a communal village of apparent stability, formed in 1975 before Independence. Nandimba had its own people's assembly. Administratively, it
belonged to the locality of Mueda, the administrative locality surrounding the district centre. As is the case in most if not all districts in Mozambique, the centre locality had neither an elected assembly nor any administrative resources separate from those of the district offices. Thus Nandimba was under the direct authority of the district administrator.

A year and a half before our study, in March 1982, a large group of peasants had decided to leave Nandimba and form a village of their own. Probably more than one quarter of the Nandimba households began to build new houses on a site only halfway between Mueda and Nandimba. The official reaction had been ambiguous. Except for cutting the water supplies and periodically detaining the leaders, no firm action had yet been taken against the new village, nor had it been recognised. This was a sensitive and difficult case for any government, and an analysis of the factors behind the disaggregation could, if accepted into the process of decision-making, help expose the actual political relevance of the phenomenon. Nandimba was thus selected as the second case study of the investigation.

The field work was carried out over a brief period in October - November 1983. Teams went to the selected areas to interview inhabitants and record available data, visit the sites of production and commerce and study the way leadership was defined and functioned. Data and interpretations were cross-checked with district offices, whose part in local development was the object of more interviews. The fieldwork itself gave perhaps little more than an idea of the problems, yet when departing from the results of earlier work of the CEA and others, it provided a comprehensive yet concrete view from the ground of national policies and trends.

The setting: Mueda

Mueda, and more specifically the Maconde Plateau or the Planalto, is the home of the Mozambique Maconde, closely related to the Makonde of Tanzania settled on the Newala Plateau on the other side of Ruvuma River. While the Tanzanian Makonde over time descended from their homeland to search for employment on the large coastal plantations, the migrant waves from Mozambique also reflected the need to get away from a brutal and exploitative colonial government. The Maconde migrants reached as far north as Mombasa in Kenya and largely settled as rural labour on the sisal plantations. These labour communities were important bases for support to Freîlimo during the struggle, as well as for the recruitment of the first groups to carry the struggle into Mozambique.

In the months following the first shots of the war, fired on 25 September 1964 at the post of Chai, Portuguese retaliation was very heavy. People
were forced to desert their homes and leave the plateau. Outside of the *aldeamentos* or fortified villages created by colonial troops, the plateau over time became more or less depopulated. The peasants who did not flee to Tanzania retreated to the lowlands, where they became intensely involved in the struggle as porters, producers or guerrillas. At the time of the cease-fire in 1974, they were able to return gradually, first those who had survived in the bush, then those who had been active on the northern side of the Ruvuma river. Substantial numbers of early refugees and labour migrants who had settled in Tanzania in a more permanent way followed in their tracks. The merging of these groups with their different experiences in the new villages was often a process of continued contradictions.

Today, the plateau with its estimated 1,700 km² has a population of about 90,000 people. Apart from the few thousand in Mueda town itself, they live in some 60 communal villages. A few of these are direct descendants of the colonial *aldeamentos*, others were formed during the years of war. Most however are new villages created from 1974 onwards. Their creation was a kind of negotiated compromise between the peasants' needs to return home - to the land of their ancestors and the land to which they could claim rights - and Frelimo's need to impede the reproduction of colonial/traditional relations of production and power into the new society. In many cases, the result was a village built on virgin ground, housing the inhabitants of a number of smaller settlements, and located within accessible distance from their traditional farming land.

The Frelimo government saw the importance of the former liberated areas in the development of the country as a whole. But their position after Independence was different; they belonged to the peripheral areas of the country where subsistence agriculture dominated and had little to attract investments in economic development. Mueda did however receive extra attention, in response to the Party decree that priority be given to the liberated areas. One of the projects was to undertake the rehabilitation of the old colonial system of piped water on the plateau. There are few rural areas in

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Table 8.1. Mueda by territorial division, area and population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area km²</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>People/km²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southern peak of plateau</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>40 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern slopes of plateau</td>
<td>1 300</td>
<td>50 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowlands</td>
<td>23 300</td>
<td>41 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25 000</td>
<td>131 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Recenseamento Geral da População, 1980; FO-9 (1981)
Table 8.2. *Mueda district* by administrative division, area, population and villages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locality</th>
<th>Area km²</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>No of villages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mueda Sede</td>
<td>4 744</td>
<td>69 636</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairoto</td>
<td>6 038</td>
<td>6 911</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negomano</td>
<td>4 173</td>
<td>1 534</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muidumbe</td>
<td>1 160</td>
<td>33 320</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngapa</td>
<td>4 195</td>
<td>20 287</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>20 310a</strong></td>
<td><strong>131 688</strong></td>
<td><strong>64</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Recenseamento Geral da População, 1980  a=excluding Toma

Africa where the villages have access to piped water. On the plateau however, it was unusually difficult to get water. The inhabitants had to descend its steep, several hundred meters high, slopes to reach springs closer to its foot. Why, then, did the colonial government invest in a system which required expensive pumps to get the water up from towards 1,000 meter deep holes? The answer lay in the cronic labour shortage and the interest in reducing labour migration to Tanganyika. There were aspects to this as well:

- The escape to Tanganyika and wage work created the conditions for a proletarianisation of the majority of the male population in this region. Our investigations lead to the conclusion, that only a small minority had no experience at all of wage work during their life. Many adult men were during certain periods of their life completely and exclusively dependent on the salary they received.5

In this way, the people of the plateau were continually informed about the conditions of life in neighbouring Tanganyika, and the unfolding struggle for *Uhuru* - freedom and independence. To understand the situation, the government initiated a series of investigations under the direction of the Portuguese anthropologist Jorge Dias. In secret reports,6 details were given which never appeared in Dias’ main scientific publications. Various reforms were proposed, because ”the discontentment increases from day to day and is in no way only the result of ideologies spread by subversive propaganda.”7

One of the reforms was the supply of water through a radial system of pipes from the pump station in Mueda. The system was destroyed during the liberation struggle, and the Frelimo government undertook to restore and extend the system to new areas of the plateau. As was the case with many inherited development plans in Mozambique, the new water supply plan
Map 8.1 The District Mueda
constructed by a consultant engineer was "remarkably similar to that originally drawn up for the colonial water system." From 1979 to 1982, the system was restored to cover roughly the same areas as in colonial times. In the next few years, new lines were laid to densely populated areas on the south-eastern side of the plateau.

This latter decision was preceded by some arguments on the comparative suitability of alternative extension plans. The south-east areas were already suffering from the effects of high population density, as shown in problems of soil exhaustion and erosion due to over-cultivation. The lowlands near the plateau could support a much larger population than at present, if provided with some clean wells. To extend the system to the south-east would attract more people there, thus aggravating the problem of population pressure on land. One inevitable consequence of this development is the increasing privatisation of land, in direct contradiction to the nationalisation of land proclaimed in 1975.

There are indications that the first cases of sale of land in the Mueda area took place in the 1930s, and it appears that individual property and heritage rights had over the years largely replaced the traditional collective ownership system. Suppressed by the settlement and development policies of the Frelimo government, the issue of land ownership was bound to become a political problem with increasing scarcity of fertile land.

Ngapa - outpost on the Tanzanian border

The administrative locality of Ngapa was up to Independence the posto administrativo of Mocimboa de Rovuma, set up in the 1950s. It is not unduly large, perhaps 4,000 km², with a population of around 20 - 25,000 living in 20 villages. It would not be an insurmountable task to govern this locality, if minimal means of communication and transport were at hand. The problem is that they are not.

Living about 60 km from the town of Mueda, with its hospital and other facilities, the Ngapa administrator has no means of his own to get in touch with them. Either he walks, or he just waits until some transport arrives on business. Bus services do not exist. There are hardly any roads of quality within the locality itself. Telephone does not exist, nor radio communication. This situation is, if anything, normal to the rural administration in Mozambique and first of all the result of a dependent and poor colonial economy. Compare the conditions of the following two administrators, hailed by the Frelimo government for their dedication and capacities:

- Omar Santana - his locality is situated 175 km away from the district centre, without communication. Since the time of the Government of Transition, he has had
to find his own means to travel, not rarely in dangerous situations because of the frontier character of the locality.

- Joaquim João Mpiuca - when he was assigned to the district, the Rhodesian aggressions had led to destruction of the road network and other infrastructure. In these conditions, he covered large distances on foot or bicycle... It should be noted that contacts with province headquarters could be maintained only through walking or riding the bicycle, a trip of 150 km through in no way risk-free land.10

The sheer material obstacles to any exercise of state authority in such areas has, and must have, certain implications. Even if in the initial phases of a transitional period people may go along with the government in required breaks with the past and new reforms, the stabilisation of new forms of social organisation cannot be effectively supervised. Sanctions against deviations become erratic and temporary. The impact of local attitudes is correspondingly greater, whether in opposition to directives from above or as an adaptation. Ngapa in addition has a long tradition of exchange northwards, with Tanzania. Whenever that exchange is more favourable to the people of Ngapa, they will find themselves generally unrestrained to continue, clandestinely if necessary. Skills and habits do not disappear with the end of colonialism.

The Frelimo government has not been unaware of this state of affairs. Nor has it been able to deny the existence and growth of illegal trade over most international borders. The situation turned more precarious with the sharp deterioration in the supply of consumer goods after 1980. As one consequence, the whole area bordering on Tanzania was in early 1984 declared a free trade zone.

The Portuguese military presence in Ngapa lasted to the end of the war.11 While large numbers of Mozambicans had fled to Tanzania in the early years of the struggle, the colonial power had managed to keep some of the inhabitants in the area, by forcing them to live in aldeamentos. One of these was situated at Ngapa centre. When the troops finally left in 1974, representatives of Frelimo arrived with instructions that they should remain in the area and improve both houses and village facilities. Soon, people started to come back from Tanzania. Many settled in Ngapa village, which today has a large majority of regressados. Among others who joined the village were former prisoners of the colonial secret police PIDE, who had often spent several years in prison and were poorly informed about the liberation struggle and subsequent political developments.

With people of diverse ethnic and other backgrounds joined together in this way, tensions were inevitable in the new village of Ngapa. It would have required intensive political work combined with concrete efforts to resolve the material problems of the village, to keep it together. As it were,
resources were highly insufficient, and breakouts started already a year after Independence. Gradually peasants moved out, opening their farm land in areas some distance away and spending more and more time at the sites of cultivation. By 1980, four de facto villages had been created, complete in all respects except for official recognition by the government. In the locality as a whole, at least three more have been formed in a similar way, one of them in part by peasants from Ngapa village.

The process has in no way been painless. Withholding official recognition means that none of the public services, such as teachers or health staff, is extended to such a village. Nor is there any guarantee that it will be left alone. Various attempts were in fact made especially during the 1970s to bring the peasants back to Ngapa. Some of the attempts were quite forceful, including even the burning of their new houses. But they have always returned and continued their life as before. Apparently, the state and party lacks the means of either mobilisation, incentives or compulsion, to bring about a permanent change in the behavior of the peasants.

What is then the organisational strength of the party and state in Ngapa? Our fieldwork left the following picture: Until 1977, when the locality was officialised, the Ngapa village leadership or dynamising group had been the only centre of administration in the area. In 1977 an administrator was appointed who remained until 1981. His successor largely failed to assume his responsibilities and was removed in early 1982. Since then, the locality has remained without an administrative head. The effects are hardly surprising: The People's Assembly, elected for the first time in 1980, has not been convened since 1982. Its secretariat does not function, members have left and those who remain wait for the district authorities to initiate the necessary restoration of membership and functions.

Most of the deputies of the Ngapa assembly were from the village itself. This reflects its lack of formal jurisdiction over other village assemblies in the locality. The conclusion, then, can only be that the state has no presence in Ngapa locality outside of the central village. The party is at least nominally better off. In the Ngapa party committee are found peasants also from breakaway villages.

In September 1983, little over a month before the fieldwork, two party members had been transferred to Ngapa to study the situation and activate the party on all levels. In principle, there were eight party cells in the locality. In reality, however, they did not function. In the breakaway villages the party exercised its influence only through occasional visiting brigades. Still, the two party cadres were likely to become involved in state functions as much as or even more than in party political work - the problems of production, trade, consumption and social services were indeed quite pressing.
The way local party and state officials handled the question of the break-away villages is indicative of the weakness of these organs. Instructions received from above had consistently underlined the need to avoid force. Nevertheless in the first years coercion was used to get people to return, supplemented by compulsory participation in collective work in Ngapa village. Later, the break-away peasants were instructed to start collective cultivation - in 1978/79 three of the villages participated, and the sales rendered a profit of MT 20,000. The money, or what remains of it, is in the hands of the Ngapa village president, and has not been put to constructive use. In 1979, the promulgation of a law of cooperatives led to the paralysis of collective farming in Ngapa as elsewhere. Concrete advice on the new form of production began to appear only in 1983, by which time the Ngapa authorities proposed the formation of one single cooperative out of four break-away villages plus Ngapa village, an impossible construction for all practical purposes but formally correct if one views the four villages as one (authorised) village and accepts the norm of one cooperative per village.

The proposal should be seen against the background that all the three investigated break-away villages have formed their own cooperatives. The areas under cultivation are small relative to the number of members, but joint cultivation exists. With small areas and low productivity, it is hardly the economy of the venture that attracts peasants. Rather it appears that the cooperative organisation was the only way open to the villagers to get a recognition from and cooperation with the locality administration. On that level, contact had been maintained, a contact which was paving the way for another attempt to create the semblance of unity through the proposal to form one cooperative out of the ones existing.

The question remains to be asked - why has the communal village of Ngapa fallen apart? What is it that motivates people to choose an uncertain existence away from the common village, without education or health services, without official recognition and with the threat of government action forever present? Are there no advantages connected with life in Ngapa? What are the advantages of the life they have chosen?

The creation of an aldeamento in Ngapa during the colonial government was primarily the result of military considerations, while the suitability of the area for peasant cultivation was of secondary interest. Unless in the meantime the new land proves to be good to them, the peasants naturally tend to return to their old homesteads once the force of the state disappears. There is no evidence that this aspect was sufficiently considered when Frelimo moved in during 1974.

In their efforts to create and consolidate the new settlement, district officials have not had much support. For instance, the price policy developed in the Maputo offices in effect meant that the local prices paid for agricultural
products from the peasant sector were distinctly lower than the prices on the other side of the border. In 1983, one kilo of cashew nuts gave MT 6 in Mozambique and MT 35 in Tanzania. For rice, the price was MT 10 and 25 respectively. These differences are easier to accept if one is offered lower prices for goods in the shop. The exchange rate is what matters, not the absolute price levels. And for some products, the Mozambican price control gives competitive price relations. When available, a bicycle in 1983 had a price of MT 6,000 in Mueda, about half the cost for a similar bike on the other side of Ruvuma River.

The politically motivated peasant may then decide to remain within the domestic market, sell and buy his products in the People's shop. Which probably is what most people did, as long as there were any products to buy. But after Independence, the shops never again reached the level of their Tanzanian counterparts. From 1980 onwards, goods appear only intermittently and in quantities insufficient for local demand. Even those who hesitated earlier, now had to start their barter with Tanzania in order to obtain any goods at all. Others, looking at profit possibilities, had of course even earlier been balancing the advantages of smuggling against the risks of judicial penalties. With some distance between you and the locality centre, the risks involved are not overwhelming.

That the process of disaggregation started so relatively early in the life of Ngapa is most likely related to the composition of its inhabitants. Few had arrived there from the liberated areas. Apart from those who spent the war years in the Portuguese aldeamento or prisons, the vast majority of Ngapa's new inhabitants were 'regressados' from Tanzania. Their ethnic origin differed; Angoni, Ajaua and Macua were represented along with what must have been a majority of Maconde. Whereas the hardships of the guerrilla war reduced the weight of cultural differences among those involved, the exile status as refugee peasant might well have led to the reinforcement of cultural identity. The differences are reflected in the composition of break-away village population. In one village, virtually all are Angoni, in another the Ajaua are in clear majority.

This tendency towards ethnic homogeneity should not be confused with that of revivial of colonial/feudal relations of power. Although the 'elders' of an ethnic community may well be the principal instigators of the move away from the communal village, it does not automatically follow that pre-independence relationships of production and political control are being restored. The peasants are aware of this aspect, and the formal leadership presented to visitors corresponds well with official requirements. Still, it is clear that the elders do play a role in the leadership, that there is an "elders council" - baraza ya wazee - or similar form of de facto political power kept by the elders. "This does not mean the resurgence of feudal power, but a
new power structure erected on the basis of predominating values: the leader should be experienced, old and wise..."12

Nandimba - open credibility crisis

The road north to Ngapa from Mueda town goes through Nandimba village, situated about ten kilometers away. Nandimba is built on the grounds of one of the settlements formerly subordinated to the old régulo Mbavala. His own residence was the village Nambavala, about half-way to Nandimba and marked by old mango trees and a water tap connected to the old colonial water system.

Nambavala had been abandoned during the war and some of its residents settled after the war in the new village of Nandimba. By October 1983, however, Nambavala was again the site of a thriving village, a break-away settlement whose fate remained to be decided by the government. Opinions varied on the causes and the actual situation of the break-away group, and both government and party officials had been involved in actions on various levels. A final decision was yet to be taken. It was urgent, as similar events had been recorded in at least three more districts in Cabo Delgado after the Nambavala people moved out. The decision on Nambavala would set a precedent for the whole province.

The alternative roads of action were, basically, state force or political work. In the first case, the village would be eradicated and the people transferred - a process which implied finding a suitable alternative settlement form, unless the government was prepared for a permanent and growing conflict with the peasants involved. In the second case, the result could have been official recognition of the village under a leadership enjoying the confidence of the authorities, or a joint search for another solution to the settlement issue. Two approaches, ideologically different from each other and therefore more dependent on overall trends in Mozambican politics than on the concrete circumstances of Nambavala. This makes even more important the question of what forces are behind the move, what considerations gave the Nambavala peasants the courage to challenge the authorities.

By the end of 1983, Nandimba had a population of about 2,700 people, in 500 households. An estimated 150-200 households had been lost to Nambavala, which by the time of the fieldwork, housed about 260 households in all. While Nambavala had no officially recognised administrative or political leadership, Nandimba had a party cell created in 1978, a dynamising group transformed into an Executive Council in 1979, and an elected People's Assembly from 1980. It had a primary school and a People's Tribunal. The basis of production was the peasant family farm, one or two hectares
Bertil Egero

cultivated by the slash-and-bum technique. Despite various attempts, collective agriculture remained weak if not non-existent. Artisan production in Nandimba appeared individualised, except for a cooperative of wood sculptors of distinct economic importance within the village. This cooperative dominated the one existing consumer cooperative, whose members almost exclusively belonged to the sculptor cooperative.

The creation of Nandimba during the transitional government was a matter of some dispute between the peasants, with Frelimo intervening and mediating at various stages. The disputes were apparently related to the location of the village in relation to the old settlement pattern of the area, which was also the old pattern of political power and control over land. The colonial administration consisted of a Portuguese Administrator in Mueda town, controlling the plateau by means of a hierarchy of ‘officials’, the régulos, capitão-mors and waziri. The regedoria belonging to the régulo was subdivided into areas controlled by his subordinates, who also lived there in respective smaller settlements. In the case of the régulo Mbavala, three capitão-mors controlled the northern parts of the regedoria while Mbavala held direct control over the southern part with only a waziri resident within the area.

The Frelimo leadership saw the risks in a reproduction of the colonial pattern once the peasants could return again after the war. It was important to steer the localisation of settlements as well as the composition of their inhabitants in order to counter the prevailing tendency to restore likola or clan relations which in turn were directly related to political power and land possession. In this, Frelimo had to take into account the different experiences of people during the liberation war. There were the militants who had struggled as porters, producers or soldiers. There were also the refugees or other migrants to Tanzania, many of whom spent the war years far away from the struggle, and the peasants who had been forced to remain under colonial control in the aldeamentos or had spent the war years in prison. All these factors played a role in the creation of Nandimba. A struggle developed over the site of the new village which could only be resolved through direct intervention by the governor of Cabo Delgado, Raimundo Pachinuapa. His decision was a compromise which left the basic problems or tensions to be resolved by other means. In the formation of the village itself, the main likolas tended to concentrate in different wards of the village. This contributed to preserve the togetherness of families from the same likola and keep the separation from other likolas alive. As material conditions got worse and political leadership weaker, family ties became a factor of growing importance.

The stabilisation of the village leadership took several years. Conflicts erupted not only over the balance between likolas or land rights, but also
between *regressados* and *guerrilla* veterans. The latter were often illiterate, having spent many years in the armed struggle. In Frelimo there was a distinct tendency, though probably never formulated in official language, to favour the *former*. Many of the illiterate veterans were told they had now made their contribution and should settle into family cultivation. The better educated *regressados* could thereby easier rise into power in local organs, helped by the drain of qualified Frelimo cadres to centres of production and administration.

In 1978, the effects of the creation of the new Frelimo Party began to be felt. A district brigade visited the village, informed the villagers about the requirements for party membership and invited people to apply. 23 men and 5 women were listed, presented to a general meeting of all villagers and then approved. Those who did not meet the requirements, among them some veterans and some members of the dynamising group, did not apply - the main stumbling block being polygamy. A year later, the new executive council was formed to replace the GD. According to rules, its president should be the party cell secretary. A change of leaders took place, removing polygamists from power and cementing the unity of party and state in the village. Bernardo Nampatima, the party first secretary, also took charge of the executive council, where he still remained at the time of the field visit in 1983.

Bernardo Nampatima is the son of a *waziri*, who lived in the interior of the Mbavala *regedoria* not far from Nandimba. The *waziri* had four wives and ten children. Perhaps it was the income from his work on one of Lázaro Nkavandame's cooperative farms which permitted his son Bernardo to attend a missionary school, up to second class (about four years of simple education for 'africans'). When the war started in 1964, Bernardo was about 16 years old. He spent all the ten years of war in Frelimo-controlled areas, where he worked as peasant and porter, together with hundreds and sometimes thousands of others carrying agricultural products to the Tanganyikan side of the border and returning with cloth, soap, salt and military equipment. When time permitted, he and a group of other sculptors used to make wood carvings which were taken to Mtwara in Tanzania to be sold. Members of this group were later to form the sculptors' cooperative in Nandimba. Today, however, Bernardo Nampatima and his wife, who also carried burdens during the war, have five children and live off the land which used to belong to his father the *waziri*.

In 1977, the first round of elections to People's Assemblies were held in localities, districts and regions. Re-elections took place in 1980, by which time many localities had their assembly created for the first time. To these belonged Nandimba. The elections in Nandimba appear to have been a rather formal process, with far narrower participation than when the party
Cosme Mbogwe, one of the veterans of the armed struggle and among the early village leaders in Nandimba, Mueda.

(Photo: Author)
The party cell with its secretariat and the assembly with its executive council are, in a formal meaning, the leadership of the village. But there were other individuals with special duties: the members of the Popular Tribunal; the ward and block secretaries; the members of the Women's Organisation OMM; the elders advising the leadership. Some but not all of these are also members of the party and/or the assembly. Thus, there is an inner core of about five people, the de facto executive, surrounded by a circle of another forty people "of confidence and capacity", who are to a varying degree called to decide and execute the different tasks of the village. There was no regular system of meetings in the state or party bodies.

Table 8.3. Nandimba village: Membership of Party cell and of People's Assembly respectively, November 1983

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Member of Party</th>
<th>Other Party member</th>
<th>Not Party member</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Member of Party</td>
<td>Other Party member</td>
<td>Not Party member</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exec Council</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy of P Assembly</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P Assembly</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: Field work data
Meetings were decided and people called when deemed convenient for the problem at hand. The distinction between party and state, or between elected representatives and government, carried no meaning in Nandimba.

Other dimensions of leadership are however necessary to put on record. Does the composition of the various bodies reflect tendencies towards monopolisation of power, by one subgroup or another? The existence of informal links of power, involving for instance special likolas or the very much alive 'landlords', can only be disclosed in more long term and probing studies. Available evidence has it, that landlords as a whole are barred from influence through membership in assembly or party. They do of course belong to the "council of elders", consulted by the executive council as well as by the judge. On the other hand, likola networks are complex and intricate. The break-away Nambavala leaders were, through likola members, represented right into the core executive of the Nandimba leadership. And the sculptors' cooperative, an important body to be presented below, was similarly represented both in the party cell and in the assembly.

The data gives the impression that power and privilege had not tilted over in favour of any single grouping in Nandimba. Hypothetically, this would give a strong leadership a good chance to work through all the links it possessed to important groups in the village. The heterogeneity might however act in exactly the opposite way, fragmenting leadership power through internal opposition to any steps infringing on the rights of subgroups. Case material presented below will help to shed light on the issue.

In early March 1982, a group of families packed their belongings and, led by their elders, left Nandimba not to return. They walked to the site of Nambavala, put down their burdens and started to build a new village. Somewhere between 60 and 90 families took part in this first wave of leavers, to be followed by more. A year and a half later, the process had still not come to a complete halt.

In Nandimba, the move could not but make a strong impact. Most of the Nambavala people had been living in the same ward, whose houses were now deserted. Some important people, among them a member of the OMM secretariat and two members of the party secretariat, had decided to go along with their kin. The authority of the village leadership had been undermined, and there were tensions also in other parts of the village structure. Meetings were held with representatives from Nambavala, and the president of Nandimba undertook a number of journeys to Mueda, each time having to pass through the break-away village, to consult district authorities on the case. Meanwhile, the abandoned houses which he claimed belonged to Nandirnba village became the object of private speculation.

What had happened, to make all these people decide to uproot themselves from Nandimba and try an uncertain existence under the threat of govern-
ment intervention? All the answers pointed in one direction; social conflicts, increasing aggression between the break-away group and the rest of the village. There were stories about conflicts over water use, over separatist cultural expressions, over adultery across group boundaries. In February 1982, shortly before the exodus started, a violent battle had taken place, with one person seriously wounded and the other obliged to pay a fine of MT 5,000. Was this really the reason, or were there other, more profound factors allowing for the cultural differences to cause unbearable tensions?

Even the district authorities seemed undecided. Opinions varied, the Party Secretary of Mueda District demanding an uncompromising attitude while the District Administrator saw the need for a better understanding of the roots of the event and a search for a politically correct solution. As an interim measure, Nambavala village was given the status of a ward in Mueda town, in commercial as well as administrative terms. In June 1982, the three elders suspected of having led the break-away were arrested and kept in Mueda. In March of the following year they were sent to the provincial capital, from where they were released in June with the instruction to move all the people of Nambavala to Mueda town itself. When nothing happened, they were again detained for a period. Meanwhile, the Nambavala water tap which had been functioning when the people first moved there, was cut off in February 1983, from which time water had to be fetched either from Mueda town or from wells far away from the village.

It was not difficult to argue that Nambavala was a case of resurgence of traditional power, in contradiction of the government and the Frelimo Party. The break-away group was held together by likola links sufficiently strong to make even some of the dedicated party members decide to subordinate their will to the demands of the clan. There was evidence that the detained elders, linked by kinship to the régulo, had played an active role behind the scene to get the people to move. A few of them were known to have collaborated with the Portuguese during the war, which made them highly suspect as "trouble-makers". Their power, however, apart from the certainly somewhat eroded likola authority of their spoken words, must have been linked to other factors, most importantly to that of land control.

In the first years of Independence, many people started their cultivation in the vicinity of Nandimba, within easy reach from home. Others, among them members of the break-away group, made a point of returning to their old lands in the Chilumo area of the regedoria, were the soil was more fertile. Soon, land near the village had to be laid fallow and competition grew over the Chilumu land. All land had been nationalised at Independence, and the matter would in principle have been to divide it according to household needs. However, even the promulgation of a land law in 1979 did not give the government real means to work for its implementation. In
practice, little has been done to defend or implement the law, i.e. to stem the resurgence of traditional land rights within the family sector.

In Nandimba as elsewhere in Mueda, the struggle over land has grown in proportion to growing population density and pressure. Lacking other guidelines, popular tribunals have tended to resolve land conflicts with reference to historical relations. In fact, colonial law had been amended shortly before the start of the armed struggle to recognise individual concession of land even to Africans. Thus, as summarised in a related study, "given the changes in the economy of the previous few decades, and given this stimulus to private African land-ownership a few years before the armed struggle, ... it is understandable that there were pressures to reestablish such patterns of land ownership after independence, in spite of the nationalisation of the land. What is surprising is that such claims to land were in effect supported by the new local state administration in drawing up boundaries between new communal villages, and in adjudicating disputes over land between individuals."\(^{13}\)

The dilemma of the problem was formulated by one of the Nandimba peasants:

- The local government can resolve many problems, but not the question of land. Why? Because the government is composed of the villagers themselves. Therefore someone has to come who does not belong here, to help us resolve our land problems...

When everyone, from the president to the ordinary peasant of the village, is related to land by likola and ancestry, the village itself cannot without a great effort make a radical break with this heritage of the past. But the necessary external support has not been forthcoming. In fact, up to 1983, the problem of land had not been properly recognised among district officers. A seminar on agricultural cooperatives raised the issue in terms of the peasants' difficulties in getting hold of the good land now controlled by private land owners. The district administration was forced to recognise the problem, but had no efficient measures to propose for its solution or even for measuring its prevalence.

For the Nambavala people and their leaders to leave Nandimba and settle closer to "their" land would, if successful, make them the undisputed owners of this land, inherited from the régulo land ownership. Land was also in fact used to consolidate the village: early on peasants from other parts of Mueda were invited to settle in Nambavala with offer of good land for cultivation.

In Nandimba, however, there was no one who seriously confronted the Mbavala descendants over the issue of land. The village leadership had not taken action to change status quo. What provoked the break-away must therefore be found in other aspects of social relations in Nandimba.
The village leadership had no means to halt the move to Narnbauvala, once it had started. Its authority was eroded, not least due to factors or conditions imposed on the village from the outside. Among these are the deteriorating terms of trade. For the peasants, any comparison with the situation at the time of the armed struggle showed that they nowadays got less, sometimes considerably less, for their products. Still worse, there were no goods they could buy with their hard earned money. Products existed more or less through the 1970s, but in recent years they had arrived only sporadically and in insufficient quantities. The consumption power was high, and the struggle over scarce goods was a central aspect of political life in Nandimba - as probably anywhere in Mozambique.

The forms that this struggle took in Nandimba depended on the existence of a production cooperative, to which consumption had been tied in such a way that it reached only a small part of the Nandimba households. Despite quite serious efforts, the village leadership had not managed to change this situation, and appeals to district officers had not brought any improvements. The case reveals the way well-intentioned reforms can back-fire in the local setting.

Among the early members of Nandimba were a group of wood sculptors who had been working together during the armed struggle. In 1966 they formed a producers' cooperative and presumably accumulated some funds which they used already in the first year of the village to set up a consumers' cooperative. By this time there was no immediate lack of consumer goods, and their distribution was handled through the state shops or lojas depovo and the consumer cooperatives. The sculptors continued their own work and built up reserves in a Mueda bank account as well as in local cash. Whenever goods arrived, they had the means to purchase.

Although initially the consumer cooperative served the whole village, its direction remained with the group of sculptors. They made up its board, and nine tenths of its seventy members were sculptors. Over time, this connection had come to play an increasingly important role, as the consumer cooperative was the receiver of scarce consumer goods from the district. New members were in principle accepted, and one of the new primary school teachers had just entered - paying a fee of MT 1,500. In practice, the cooperative was guarding its membership closely as, in the words of its president, "we do not know how to give room for new members. We cannot increase the membership as long as the goods we receive are insufficient for those we have." Pressed by the Executive Council of the village, the cooperative at times shared the supplies equally, on a fifty-fifty basis, between its members and the rest of the village.

To make the consumer goods equally available to all households of the village had been a central problem for the leaders of Nandimba for several
years. The obstacles had been many. Firstly, in order to register a new consumer cooperative, the village must have enough funds both to open a shop and to pay for the goods. Secondly, only one cooperative may exist in each village, and so sculptors would have to be persuaded either to close down their cooperative or to merge it with the one created by the village leadership.

Some funds had been accumulated through collective farming in the 1970s, when in turn one general village farm, one school farm and one farm run by the OMM women had been started. All were closed down after only one season of cultivation, and the funds were either used for purchases or kept with the executive council. In 1978, the new party cell decided to collect from its members MT 50 for the common fund. This was however still not accepted as sufficient to ensure a financial basis for the new cooperative. In the village, disappointment grew with growing lack of goods. Early in 1983, the executive council managed to mobilise eighty people to contribute another MT 500 each, a net sum of MT 40,000. Again, the president went to talk to the Mueda office. It was decided to send a team to Nandimba. The team arrived and returned, and, according to the president, "we are still waiting for a result. Those who contributed are waiting for news from me. They begin to talk bad about me, to say that the money has been embezzled ... It seems we have to give the collected money back again."

But the money still remained with the council. The village was recommended to start an agricultural cooperative whose proceeds would give the consumer cooperative a good economic basis. At this time, during 1983, a seminar on agricultural cooperatives had been held where village representatives were told that only one consumer cooperative would be accepted in each village. The council organised the preparation of a collective farm, and so did the sculptors' cooperative. The council called the villagers to a meeting to decide on the merger of the two. The idea was approved by the ordinary villagers, but turned down by the sculptors.

The problems of maintaining a viable leadership were obvious. When general meetings were called, few turned up. When people were asked to take part in collective work such as cleaning or decorating the area, participation was low. The women's organisation OMM had one active member, the youth organisation OJM was defunct. The non-solution of the problem of Nambavala was a source of eroding official authority in Nandirnba itself. It was hardly made better by the decision to send the second highest party member of the village to the Fourth Frelimo Congress in April 1983. He was a polygamist, suspected of adultery and skilled at maintaining for personal use whatever scarce goods he could lay his hands on through his official position. He returned from the Congress with no solutions to the
problems of the village. The message he delivered was that, on the one hand everyone was obliged to cultivate for sale at least two hectares of land, on the other the old chicote or sjambok (a kind of cane or whip from the colonial times) was to be introduced again as a punishment for non-compliance with government directives.

The households in Nandimba have hardly received any material benefits so far from the eight years of Independence. They are embarrassed and ashamed at the lack of decent clothing for the children at school and for themselves whenever they appear in public in the village. They look around for traditional methods of making soap and use whatever scrap metal is available to try and make knives and hoes. The gains have to be formulated in other terms; political freedom, self-determination, democratic rule. By 1983, these gains were disputable. The institutions had been created and the formal framework of guidelines formulated. But this was not enough. Materially and politically, conditions were not yet there. In the words of the president of Nandimba, "it is really hard this work in the village. I am dependent on the district and waiting for them, and the people are waiting for me ..."

District leadership - authority under strain

Mueda, with its 25,000 km2 is by far the largest of the twelve districts in Cabo Delgado, covering one third of the area of the province. According to the 1980 census, 900,000 people live in Cabo Delgado. 130,000 of them live in Mueda, in some 60-70 villages in the administrative centres. The geographical distribution is highly uneven; two thirds of the population live on the plateau and its northern slopes, about 1,700 km2 of the total (see Table 8.1), while the remainder are spread over the vast lowlands to the south and east. The district was, in 1983, in the state of being reorganised, with Nairoto locality in the south in fact subordinated to the Montepuez district while the Mueda office prepared to extend its authority to include the Nangade area on the north-eastern border - all this in order to facilitate communication between centre and periphery.

At the time of our study, only two of the four outlying localities had an administrative office: Wegomano and Ngapa in the north. The populous central locality "Sede" was directly subordinated to the district offices, though it had its own People's Assembly and Executive Council - situated in Mueda and largely concerned with the affairs of the town itself. In addition to the locality assemblies, there were after the 1980 elections 58 People's Assemblies in the villages of Mueda, with from 15 to 35 deputies. In preparation of the - so far postponed - 1983 re-elections, the district office had
Bertil Egero

made a proposal to group villages into a smaller number of "political localities", which would result in a reduction to only 22 People's Assemblies.

Thanks to two rounds of elections, in 1977 and 1980, People's Assemblies have been formally created in all parts of the country. In contrast, the creation of party representation has been slower. There is evidence that few Frelimo cells were formed outside of urban areas and production sites before the second party revitalisation campaign of 1980-81. In Mueda, one of the most advanced districts in this respect, there were only 44 cells as late as in November 1983. Many of the villages retained the dynamising group as its political leadership. By January 1983 party membership stood at about 2,800 in Mueda as a whole. New candidates were applying around the time of the Fourth Frelimo Congress. There was however also a trend in the opposite direction; reports told of members resigning for different reasons, including polygamy.

Mueda was in 1983 the only district in Mozambique with a physical separation of the political and administrative leadership of the district. Normally, the district administrator is also the first secretary of the party and the president of the people's assembly. A similar arrangement exists in provincial headquarters and in locality offices. The Mueda case was intended as a test of the value of separating the two functions to two different individuals.

Even without any systematic investigation into the situation, there were reasons to doubt that this separation had had much political significance. The Party Committee, with many of its 36 members from distant parts of the district, did not meet often. More frequent meetings were held by the secretariat with only four members. To these meetings however, the district administrator, the secretaries of the women's and the youth movements (OMM and OJM), and the head of the militia organisation were always invited. Activities that were exclusive to the party, e.g., the formation of party cells or the political education of members, workers, functionaries etc., remained weak. The problems tackled by the party were the same as in the administration, and all the work seems to have been done in common - certainly for good reasons given the scarcity of transport, staff and other resources.

It was not possible to get more than a general presentation of the division of labour and responsibility between party and state. Admittedly, the arrangement was still not very old. By the time of the study, the administrator had been there for only a year (he was transferred to another district in the province shortly thereafter). But it seemed unlikely that much more headway would be made on the issue of separate identities. Rather, the trend in Mueda was to simplify the institutional structure, to economise with people and to tackle problems in unison rather than along formal lines of
institutional separation. These developments reflected what was already taking place in villages and localities. In Mueda, and not only there, adjustments are underway and will continue whether or not Maputo agrees.

The Mueda district People's Assembly had been created in 1977. New elections were held in 1980. By the time of the field work, the assembly had not met for over a year, and nothing had been decided about its next sessions. The difficulties facing the assembly were certainly great. The district leadership saw its own work programmes jeopardised by demands and orders from higher levels. To call an assembly at short notice was impossible given the wide spread of deputies over the district. In the wake of general meetings, other methods of work emerged. The deputies who could be reached were called to discuss different problems, join district teams and go to visit localities and villages. During these visits, deputies from the visited area could be called upon to participate and to take responsibility for recommended follow-up activities.

The obstacles caused by lack of resources are obvious. The village to be visited had to be advised in advance and through personal contact. The Mueda teams in general carried no provisions and had to be catered for by the village. Generally the teams had little to offer the village apart from enquiries or instructions. When for instance villages received the news from the Fourth Party Congress that they were obliged to cultivate a minimum of two hectares of land, no seeds or hoes or extension officers accompanied the message. Nor were the peasants told that there would be more goods in the shops for which the harvest could be exchanged.

The lack of instruments of implementation extend beyond material means, to the knowledge and/or instructions necessary to give concrete advice to village executives. There is a general insight that land has been nationalised. The text of the law of land has been distributed at least to the District Tribunal, but the tribunal - created in November 1982 - found that no guidelines for its application had yet been worked out. Struggles over land were part of everyday life in Mueda, but few of the cases reached the tribunal and its means of judging each case, let alone control the implementation of the verdict, were minimal.

A similar lack of knowledge, competence and/or authority to remove obstacles and get a process moving is shown in the case of cooperatives. The confusion as to what constitutes cooperative organisation in economic terms, its relation to members and other villagers, is prevalent not only in the villages but also on higher levels. The consumer cooperatives handle increasingly scarce supplies of goods and thereby bring their members favours which put them at odds with the rest of the village. No solution to the problem has yet been offered by district officers, who simply transmit the central directive that "there can be only one cooperative in each village."
The Frelimo government has, ever since Independence, recommended cooperative organisation. Collective farming was tried in many of the new communal villages, but when the legislation on cooperatives was passed in 1979, its immediate effect was a reduction in collective activities which, it was feared, did not conform to the new rules. This is what happened in for instance Ngapa. Local officers unacquainted with cooperative principles or law texts could do little to really clarify the issues. Instead, they tended to recommend the local formation of agricultural cooperatives as a means of financing consumer cooperatives. Peasants who saw the chance to get some more consumer goods created new agricultural cooperatives with this in mind. When cooperative agriculture is seen as the means to some other ends, its potential for increased production and productivity may never be realised. It is symptomatic, that even in Mueda comparatively successful cooperatives lost their momentum after the announcement at a district seminar in 1983 that they did not automatically pave the way to more consumer goods.

The distance is long indeed from the central offices of Maputo to the district office in Mueda. In Maputo, it is tempting to see the unfolding of the Mozambican revolution as a continuous process, a constant unfolding of new perspectives, new laws and new institutions. The district office is the principal receiver of the central directives. It is there that means should be found to carry them out, to control their implementation and bring home the fruits as the case may be. Rarely however does the district receive any material support for its tasks. Concrete instructions are rare, and specially prepared material for study and training is virtually absent.

This lack of a minimum system of support from above is all the more serious when the tasks have the form of new demands on those further down, the peasants. Demands on the villages to build schools can give good results only when there are teachers to work in the schools and material to put in the hands of the children. Demands that the peasants should open up more land for cultivation have to be accompanied by trustworthy promises of material support in tools, implements or consumer goods, if any positive and lasting response should be expected. Demands that the villages accept new forms of leadership will give good results only if they are followed up with constructive support to the work of the new leaders.

The Mueda peasants knew Frelimo from the days of the struggle, when the collective interest dominated and compliance with demands also led to improvements in their situation. After Independence, the same peasants have come to know a government whose demands may not differ so much from those of the liberation movement, but which is proving increasingly unable to fulfill its own part of the social contract. Inevitably, this leads to an erosion of its authority, to which it responds with repressive means -
whether the milder forms of withholding access to scarce goods or the reintroduction of the old sjambok.

Peasant responses differ. In Ngapa far away from the centre of authority, they decided to move out of control and continue their production and their business for the best of the local community. Closer to Mueda, such an option is not available. The alternatives are to stay, try ones best and wait for better times, or to confront the problems head on. The Nambavala people trusted their strength as a collective, left what they saw as an unacceptable situation and started vigorously on a new project to be realised through their own leadership. The courage to move and settle in the immediate vicinity of the district offices showed the strength of their motivation and their expectations that the case would be recognised as something else than a violation of party principles.

The experience of Mueda shows the profound dilemma of a national government ridden by demands of a complex economy, plagued by the effect of oil crises and destabilisation, held back by the lack of cadres, infrastructure and communication. In the liberated areas, the peasants had a voice and Frelimo understood how to answer. In independent Mozambique, the voice of the peasants is weaker and the government has neither the means nor always the understanding to answer. Where government is weak, other forces grow stronger. They may not necessarily be reactionary or counter-revolutionary. In Mueda, the old systems of authority over land and people have not altogether disappeared. But the experiences from the war weigh heavily in the life of most peasants and do not run counter to the choice already expressed by some of the them: where the government fails to assume its responsibility, the local community has to do it.
9. Popular Power in Cuba - Contrasts and Similarities

Cuba - an illuminating comparison

The appearance of the term "popular power" at about the same time in the Mozambican peasant liberation struggle and the Cuban post-revolution national reconstruction, might be an historical coincidence, an outflow of the contact and communication between leaders of popular-based struggles. It is a good term in political rhetoric, a challenging appeal or at least a good expression for the dream of a different society. So, when need arose - for the challenge or the dream - the term was coined, put to use and gradually filled with content.

Ours is however not a politico-linguistic study. The Cuban and Mozambican leaderships shared a profound preoccupation with participation and democracy as fundamental elements in the transformation of society. Contacts between them brought not only new insights into the problem, but also new terms for analytical and political expression. What motivates a comparative interest is the widely different background to revolution in the two countries, and the equally different socio-political context into which the term was introduced and conceptualised.

These differences are, strictly speaking, enough to invalidate a comparative analysis. The broad historical patterns of foreign or minority domination, resisted and conquered through internal mobilisation, do give a common framework for development. Within this, the concrete historical experiences, the material and political development of society and the concrete forms of struggle are all sufficiently different to make the analyst stumble. Comparative notes can, however, serve a different purpose, that of illumination and understanding. Simply speaking, we would like to use Cuban modern history to shed light on the political processes in Mozambique and deepen our understanding of their nature. If in this work some aspects of the Cuban revolution are brought out in a different light, so much the better.

Lusophone Africa, in particular Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, has over the years been subject to different types of comparative studies. This was particularly so during the years of armed struggle, where the liberation movements themselves preferred to appear under joint banners
such as the CONCP and where the colonies were kept under a close economic as well as political control within the Portuguese escudo-zone. Such studies appear even after the countries have won their independence. That they are less frequent might be linked to the difficulties in securing detailed information - Angola is a case in point. There might also be some significance in the fact that the common basis, Portuguese colonialism, has lost its dominating importance. Once national or indigenous factors are allowed to show their strength, comparative studies within Eusophone Africa are not particularly called for more than any comparative studies of Third World states of socialist character or orientation.

There are many different works available on Cuba's political history before and after the revolution. A few studies are more directly concerned with political organisation and decision-making, with popular power in its institutional form and practical functioning. To set these varying pieces of description and analysis together in a framework of interpretation which would serve to highlight the experiences of Mozambique, a separate study had to be undertaken. This work proved most illuminating and worthwhile and led up to some very interesting conclusions which will be discussed in this chapter. The study itself is included in the Appendix to the volume, where the interested reader can follow the reconstruction of Cuba's experiences in ways similar to those which have been adopted for Mozambique.

Important similarities

At first sight, it is the similarities that strike the observer. Castro's Cuba, whose victory over Batista took place three years before Frelimo was created in Dar es Salaam, and where important phases in socialist transition took place before Mozambique had thrown off its colonial yoke, this Cuba has had to pass through the same hardening confrontation of ideas with a recalcitrant reality as is during the 1980s so evident in Mozambique. Fundamentally, in both countries the development ideologies are - or were - coloured by a profound will to accelerate or even to skip stages of development. Radical reforms were proclaimed which would pave the way for the emerging Homen Novo - new socialist man - whose creative capacity once released would transform society both materially and socially. The results were remarkable, in societies shaken by acute class struggles in the first and most vulnerable period of liberation.

The similarities extend from ideology to the state and financial organisation. Like in Cuba but without the "Great Debate" on the national political economy, in Mozambique the economic policy over the years up to the important Fourth Party Congress in 1983 was that of budget financing.
Thus, production in individual units was to be directed through state production plans, but without the economic viability controls of individual financial accounts. It is quite likely that practical reasons supported the ideological arguments for such a choice - there was simply no trained staff available to do the accounting in all the enterprises and departments. Nevertheless, like in Cuba the policy implied a somewhat unexpected confidence in the state as the loyal and capable instrument for the realisation of development strategy. In both countries, rapid nationalisation gave the state tasks immensely larger than it had so far had to handle. Admittedly, the nationalisations were to a certain extent forced by circumstances. Still, both governments decided to go all the way to a next-to eradication of the private sector. In both cases the market advantages were down-played or ignored in favour of a central state planning system which simply did not possess the means of providing a minimal substitute to the market.

For the state to replace the market, there is a need for an alternative set of 'feelers' to identify successes and mistakes in the allocations and regulations. In Cuba the growing problems of absenteeism during the late 1960s, and in Mozambique the work site problems exposed during the 1980 Presidential Offensive, both point to the key role that worker organisation could play as "the device of self-control that non-market allocation requires". But that is not enough. Organised workers are needed as an informed ally of the central leadership in relation to bureaucratic or management deviations, or other non-intended policy effects.

The discussion of working class participation brings up a more fundamental question of how political leadership is shared in a young state where revolutionary consciousness is still embryonic and highly dependent on the strength and cohesiveness of the leadership. In Mozambique as well as in Cuba, the leadership has responded with high levels of centralisation of both state and party power, without at times a clear distinction between the two, and with subordination of workers' and mass organisations to the direct leadership of the party. In Cuba, a serious scrutiny and reversal of this trend was begun in 1970; in Mozambique the issues were brought into the open in the aftermath of the 'Offensive', but essentially remained unanswered even after the Fourth Congress.

Learning from the differences

However interesting the similarities between the Cuban and the Mozambican revolutions, the differences are equally or perhaps even more important in exposing the conditions of revolutionary change. Two such differences stand out as historically significant: The conditions of the struggle leading
Like in Cuba, the people's songs, music and dance have flourished under the encouragement of the national government. In campaigns and festivals, local people come forward with manifestations of a culture which was banned during the colonial era.

(Photos: Author)
Popular Power in Cuba - Contrasts & Similarities

up to liberation; and the political organisation and traditions existing in society by the time of liberation. In Cuba, the ideological roots of the 26 July movement were the bourgeois democratic traditions and the nationalist aspirations which had led to the 1940 constitutional reform. That constitution had land reform as one of its major reforms. Land reform also became a political reality within the political movement when links were forged with the poor peasantry during the guerrilla struggles of 1956-58.

Further, in its search for possible forms of 'institutionalisation of the revolution', the Castro government had to establish itself in the midst of an ongoing organisational struggle for political power. At the centre of the struggle was the communist party PSP, compromised by too close a connection to Batista in the years before the 1952 coup and only reluctantly accepting the primacy of the anti-Batista struggle a few months before his defeat. PSP, important not least through its contacts with the USSR, also had a major influence in the trade union movement which had failed to give a direct contribution to the struggle. In addition to these, there were various farmers' associations and other organisations representing important economic interests in Cuban society.

The ideological heritage, the complex political scene by the end of 1958 and the forceful effects of the US trade embargo on internal as well as external relations - all this is a necessary background to understand the experimental orientation of most political work of the 1960s. The Cuban revolution in fact took off largely after the victory over Batista - with "the great debate", with the struggle over different economic models, and with the search for political institutionalisation, party and state forms and concrete political expressions of the ideology of the New Man.

For Frelimo and Mozambique, these struggles unfolded within the anti-colonial guerrilla war itself. During this war the nationalist ideology was gradually replaced by or embedded in a broader ideology of political and economic liberation, linking the oppression and exploitation of the colonial power to economic organisation, classes and political power. In this sense, the framework of post-independence development strategy had been written already before the collapse of the colonial empire, and the first independence years saw the making of concrete policies departing from the colonial economy and society of 1974. Unlike Cuba, which soon found itself under severe economic isolation and military threat from the US, Mozambique was not exposed to any such 'shock treatment', nor was its external trade structure such that rapid and drastic adaptations were necessary for the continuation of trade.

Compared to Cuba, the political reality to which Frelimo had to adapt itself was not one of organisational complexity. Rather there was something akin to "institutional vacuum" - no political organisations, no trade unions, no
farmers' or producers' associations stable enough to survive the exodus of colonialists by Independence. Frelimo had to start by organising the Mozambicans, in order to reach them at all. This gave a very different start to post-independence political work. "O Povo Organizado" - the organised people - was a succinct label for a period of intense implementation of institutional forms written already into the independence constitution.

The Dynamising Groups (GD) of Mozambique were grass roots organisations formed immediately after the collapse of colonial hegemony. In their composition and their grass roots orientation, the GDs resembled the Cuban Committees for the Defence of the Revolution, the CDRs. Following the GD formation came the successive creation of mass organisations, the embryonic trade union structure, the elected People's Assemblies, all of which came into being in a climate of centralised authority. Even the party was, despite its heritage from the Front, new in its role as supreme leader of state and society. Unable to create a clear division of functions between itself and the state apparatus, the party tended to engage in government tasks as much as in those of a vanguard party, and to show signs of growing formality and bureaucratisation in the process. The organs of Popular Power were from the time of their creation subordinated to the party/state authority and have therefore never developed the power to tackle and resist such tendencies.

In Cuba, the 'institutionalisation of the revolution' was rapid only as far as the grass roots organisation, the CDRs, went. The formation of elected bodies of the state, the assemblies, was postponed for many years and finally implemented not least as a measure to come to terms with bureaucracy, inefficiency and excessive centralisation. It went hand in hand with a revitalisation of all organisations from the mass organisations to the party, a generalised drive for democratic participation for which large segments of the population were both prepared and motivated. The movement was strengthened not least by the material improvements resulting from government measures to increase the supply of consumer goods.

By contrast, the democratisation of Mozambique was a rapid organisational campaign carried on the wave of enthusiasm over Independence. When time came to turn to work, the lack of a democratic tradition allowed a growing party/state centralisation to direct democratic activities into mouthpieces of state interest more than expressions of the interests of members or electorate. The gradual socialisation into democratic participation and control that had been envisaged was seriously hampered. Worsening economic and military problems added their weight.

Today, the growing hardships make for a de facto adjustment of all institutional structures to suit the local conditions and needs. Whether in this process the original goals of democratic equality and justice will give way
for another set of values, reflecting a new balance of class forces in Mozambique, remains to be seen.
10. Socialism in a Poor Country

Post-war national developments in the Third World have taken many different forms. To identify the basic elements and expose the kinds of development taking place in the name of socialism has been, and remains, a challenging task. This search unavoidably poses questions about the nature of development, what the historical motor forces are, and how it relates to the classical theories of revolutionary transition. It has become necessary to pose the question what socialism is, in Third World practice.

Socialist-oriented transition appears to be primarily a phenomenon of poor countries, societies dominated by peasant smallholder production, by low levels of economic development and high levels of illiteracy. Add to this a pronounced economic dependence, and it is not surprising that the question has been raised whether at all "socialism is possible on the periphery". A multitude of terms have been invented to denote the new societies - non-capitalist, socialist orientated, proto-socialist, state socialist - a sure sign that, although the African, Arab, Islamic and other 'socialisms' are more or less shelved as political rhetoric of the past, there still remains a great deal of uncertainty as to what Third World socialism represents, in relation to classical Marxist theory of transition.

Societies characterised by uneven capitalist penetration, low development of the productive forces, a weak working class and poorly developed class consciousness simply do not conform to the concept of socialism growing from the class contradictions under advanced capitalism. What then is the type of socialism that we witness? To answer, as did Gordon White, that it is an historical substitute for, rather than successor to capitalism, is in a way only to invite new questions. If there is no working class, oppressed by and opposed to capitalist exploitation, what are then the forces behind an anti-capitalist revolution? What kind of social, if not economic, transition is in fact taking place, through what means of political and economic power?

Paul Sweezy points to an historical parallel, which might bring a clearer understanding of present-day history:

- There are important similarities between the situation which existed in the center in the nineteenth century and that which exists in the periphery in the twentieth. Traditional patterns of social relations torn apart. Masses of people uprooted and subjected to the arbitrary play of impersonal forces beyond understanding or control. Extreme polarisation of societies into riches, privilege, power on the one hand and poverty, suffering,
frustration on the other. ...As we have already seen, it was under these circumstances that socialism as an ideal and as a movement was born more than a century ago, and it is under these circumstances that socialism has been reborn in our own time.³ (my italics)

There is however an important historical difference to be noted. Today's political movements are growing out of a long tradition of theory and practice of socialism. Perhaps it is this that at all permits movements led by revolutionary leaderships to appear even in societies lacking the "necessary" material and social levels of development. The challenge for the intellectual elite of a rural semi-literate society today is to interpret the significance of international socialist history in terms of the concrete conditions of their own societies. The quality of leadership has certainly been important in any revolutionary process, and both White and Sweezy are undoubtedly right when they give leadership quality a crucial role in Third World socialist development.

The conditions of national liberation and its relation to the world socialist revolution were discussed at some length by Lenin, in his studies of imperialism and developments in the periphery.⁴ Even his conclusions contain the implicit admission of the key role of leadership, given the particular nature of peripheral societies. Lenin was very aware of the dramatic social and economic effects on peripheral societies of an internationally expanding capitalist system. But the effects were felt also in the centre economies; the transfer of surplus from the periphery did affect worker conditions in such a way as to politically reduce the potential for immediate revolutionary change. Thus the focus of revolutionary contradictions had to be global, to incorporate also the peripheral societies.

In Lenin's view, the backward nature of the peripheral economies meant that the transition to a socialist mode of production was only possible with major support from industrially developed nations. Therefore, political revolution in backward countries did not and should not have as an immediate task the realisation of socialism. Instead, the task of the leadership of the revolution was to remove political obstacles to a progressive transformation of economic and social conditions. This would create impediments to further imperialist exploitation, which in turn would reduce the scope of capitalist manoeuvring in the centre and thereby intensify the conflicts with the working class. Political struggles would thus contribute to pave the way for a proletarian take-over of power in the advanced capitalist economies.

To bring the argument full circle, Lenin maintained that socialist transition in the periphery is conditional upon revolutionary change in the centre itself. Only this would open the way for such support to the backward economies as would make possible the necessary development of the productive forces, i.e. industrialisation. Without massive external support, industrialisation
would only be possible through accumulation from agriculture, i.e. from the peasantry. This in turn would require such pressure brought to bear on the peasants, such forms of oppression, that the political alliance between workers and peasants would be seriously weakened. Thereby the revolution itself, in terms of its socialist goals, would be self-defeating.

We have chosen to conclude this study of Mozambique with three questions, derived from Lenin’s analysis. The first refers to the actual historical course of development in the global relationship between capitalist and non-capitalist regimes and its impact on a country such as Mozambique. The second question is, what importance for such a country, in its pre- and post-liberation development, can be attached to the support it has received from advanced socialist nations. Lastly, given the unusual predominance of adverse conditions to any consolidation of a socialist development strategy in this country, what can be said about the real character of the 'socialist project' in Mozambique today?

Global relations and socialist change in the periphery

There has no doubt been a remarkable change in the balance between capitalist and non-capitalist regimes since the days when Lenin put forward his theses about the international links of revolutionary change. The changes in East Europe through World War II, and the Chinese revolution a few years later, drew heavy support from the USSR and in their turn created the conditions for international collaboration and support on a much larger scale. Important if not essential conditions had been created for the popular struggles in poor countries to reach the stage of national liberation and beyond.

These changes should not however overshadow the patterns of interdependence within the capitalist sphere, which still dominate the global perspective. In the Third World, nationalist movements have taken over where colonial empires have fallen apart. USA and other capitalist powers have gained strength among the former colonies, many of whom remain in structurally different but equally strong networks of dependency. However, the variety of development patterns in the Third World is evidence of the very different potential of countries not long ago classified under the common label 'under-developed'. Simultaneously with the emergence of socialist states, other states have developed increasingly viable capitalist economies, capable of international competition not only in the price of their products but also in technological advancement. We may interpret this trend as a reinforcement of capitalism on a global scale, a gradual change away
from the unevenness that characterised the period of colonial under-development.

The implications of these trends are not insignificant. Capitalist economic organisation has proved the more fertile for technological advancement and industrial adaptation. The socialist economies lag behind and are therefore, not least for reasons of military defence, persistently dependent on the capitalist market. As a consequence, poor countries like Mozambique do not really have the option of a 'socialist market' and technology through which to escape from an inherited and deep dependence on the West. On the contrary, they need to secure a continuous flow of foreign exchange in order to maintain their inherited production potential and industrialise in a competitive direction. The situation is certainly not made easier when such a country is the object of external aggression and is forced to invest in military defence.

Some of the technology and the know-how can be acquired through international development assistance or aid. Aid has also contributed to the restructuring of the international dependence of poor countries, rather than to the reduction of it. Aid is undoubtedly one of the means used to influence development policies and pave the way for other external interests. Therefore, for all its altruistic and idealistic connotations, aid is above all an expression of the competition for markets and influence that characterises international capitalist development.

This is why Mozambique, a country desperately needing every dollar, crown or rubel it can get in aid, through its market potential and its strategic position in Southern Africa still maintains a minimum of bargaining power in the international community. Aid is what keeps the country from falling apart today, and aid is forthcoming - from relatively neutral sources like the Nordic countries but not only from them. And aid is flowing particularly to the support of regional economic development in Southern Africa, through the SADCC network. SADCC covers no less than nine countries in the region - all except South Africa - with a total population of between 40 and 70 million people. That is a considerable market, not least on the day when apartheid is replaced by a political system which permits trade and investment in the whole region.

Capitalist development is never without its contradictions. The states which today through aid and credits prepare for a future capitalist expansion in the Southern Africa region, these same states defend the survival of a Pretoria regime whose behaviour in the region not only destroys the material results of that aid but certainly contributes to a political radicalisation in the whole region.
The socialist sector - "our natural allies"

Whatever the amount of actual support given today - no complete picture has ever been published - there is no doubt that the rear-base provided by the advanced socialist states has been absolutely vital for Frelimo's struggle, both before and after Independence. Initially, the support took many different forms and used different channels. The first large-scale military training of Frelimo units, for instance, took place in Algeria. Support was provided by a large number of states, including both China and the Soviet Union. Their role as "natural allies" was the result not only of an ideological consensus, but equally as much of the simple fact that the West, through NATO, was massing its resources in direct support to the Portuguese colonial armies, while offering only a miniscule fraction of the same resources as humanitarian support to the liberation movements.

At Independence, Frelimo remained one of the very few liberation movements which had managed to avoid being drawn into the Sino-Soviet conflict. Chinese foreign policies in the mid-seventies, however, put increasing strains on relations. In particular the Chinese support to counter-revolutionary units in Angola and collaboration with hostile Angolan neighbours like Zaire, made it difficult to maintain relations that would otherwise have been very beneficial to Mozambique. The out-break of the Chinese war with Vietnam in 1979 led to open criticism from the Frelimo government and a significant cooling of relations.

No similar tensions have occurred in relation to the Soviet Union. Contrary to China, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have also steadily increased their support to Frelimo. 'Cooperantes' from these countries appeared early in most sectors of Mozambican society, where they were generally found in higher positions than their colleagues from other countries. Financial support has taken many different forms, though direct donations are likely to have accounted for a minor share. Loans and credits have generally been given on favourable terms of repayment, in cash or in goods produced locally. Credits have been used especially for the purchase of machinery for the agricultural sector and vehicles for transport. Even in the absence of any comprehensive information on the matter, it is evident that a substantial part of the economic collaboration is directed to the agricultural sector - all but one of the very large state-run agricultural projects underway in the early 1980s were to be financed by the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Despite the determination of the Frelimo government to maintain its autonomy in relation to the Sino-Soviet conflict, it is the collaboration with the USSR and East Europe which has come to dominate political life as well as economic development. This collaboration and its impact on Mozambique...
after Independence deserves reflection. Gordon White's hypothesis on the long-term impact of a period of 'Soviet tutelage' can be used as a point of departure. Concretely, it stipulates that the important effects on Third World socialist countries are not so much through economic relations or direct political intervention, but "through a process of institutional Gleichschaltung, the imprinting of Soviet-type patterns of behavior and attitude in the crucial genetic years of new socialist regimes."5

This 'Soviet tutelage' - Eastern Europe included - might help explain why the modernisation ideology dominating especially agricultural policy in Mozambique, has taken what Phil Raikes characteristically calls "a more than unusually 'pure' form."6 Eastern European advisers went into action immediately in the transitional period before Independence, carrying out studies of the Mozambican economy and preparing outlines of economic development. At Independence, they moved into important positions especially in central economic planning. Besides a few Latin American 'cooperantes', the Planning Commission was dominated by staff from Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and Cuba. Economic advisers participated in deliberations in the highest levels of government, and the new planning system proposed for the central government in 1978 bore strong imprint of Cuban computerised feedback planning.

How far the "institutional Gleichschaltung" goes is not only a matter of volume of technical and other collaboration. The cultural-political context may be receptive, or it may provide resistance. Mozambique was as a colony run by a fascist corporatist state. The colonial state administration not only had well developed instruments of oppression, its own primary function was that of administration and control. An authoritarian, hierarchic and bureaucratic structure was the main experience of those who tried to maintain the workings of the state apparatus under the new regime. This climate was hardly unknown or even alien to many of the Eastern European 'cooperantes', used to a socialist state model which in theory at least overlaps with the organisational structure of the corporatist state?

The two main trends after Independence were, as we have shown, that of democratic organisation and that of centralised authority. Both had their roots in the experiences and practices of Frelimo during the armed struggle. Whether or not centralism was 'necessary' in the political practice of rebuilding Mozambique, it is worth reflecting on how far its growing predominance was nurtured by a de facto symbiosis of colonial heritage and state socialist practice in Eastern Europe. Centralist and bureaucratic methods of work, to the detriment of debate, critique and creative initiative, are the negative aspects of efforts to implement clear principles of leadership, order and efficiency in an initially extremely weakened state administration. A
similar development of bureaucratic hierarchisation has characterised the party structure and at least the central bodies of other political organisations.

In summary, the main political contradiction in Mozambique during the first decade of Independence was the contradiction between the Eastern European model of socialism through the development of the forces of production, with its emphasis on centralised planning and state authority, and the popularly stated political goals and mandates of institutions in Mozambican society. In the economic and political crisis of Mozambique during the 1980s, these contradictions have shown up with greater force, in clearer signs of state oppression and bureaucratic solutions. The apparently distinct character of Frelimo's 'socialist project' is no longer there, or so it seems.

Socialism and political practice in Mozambique

- The ideological and cultural transformation of man is a slower process than the socialist transformation of the material base of society.
  
  It is our experience that if advances are not made in the subjective conditions, this may lead to setbacks. (Fourth Congress of Frelimo)

A closer study of the conditions under which socialist revolutions are carried out in the Third World seems almost inevitably to lead to the conclusion, that such radical transformations are not possible, at least in the short run. Neither the inherited external dependency structure nor the weak internal human resource base could be overcome with even the best of mobilisation and organisation. Only massive and sympathetic assistance from abroad would give the regime a chance to tackle the obstacles.

Let us look at the immediate and necessary objectives of any new socialist government, here in Paul Sweezy's formulation?

- 1. Abolish the forms of exploitation which have characterised the past. Evident! And, we have to add, without introducing new forms of oppressive exploitation to maintain labour accessibility and discipline.

- 2. Revive production if the economy has been severly damaged in the process of gaining power. A demand which brings up the whole spectrum of problems - how to replace deserting technicians and managers, reestablish international links in input supply and maintain internationally competitive levels of quality and price without the forms of exploitation which used to make the whole system operative.

- 3. Concentrate on the satisfaction of the most urgent needs of the masses. Which, with declining local production and export, means to increase the part of consumption relative to total available funds, in a period where investments are badly required in virtually every sector of society.
Few regimes started their work under more adverse conditions than the Frelimo government. The Mozambican case in fact is a dramatic illustration of Lenin's thesis about the necessity of international support to socialist transformation in the Third World. Unlike Angola with its oil, Mozambique has not been able to count on a steady and solid source of foreign exchange. Unlike Cuba with its sugar, there is not one central product for trade through which the socialist economies could subsidise the Mozambican economy during the years of transition. Any substantial and prolonged support would have to be more diversified, a combination of trade subsidies and technical and other investments in the whole process of production and delivery.

However, there was one sector into which Eastern European technical competence, machinery and other inputs could be fed in larger quantities, and that was the state farm sector. The first years of nationalisations of large-scale farms had provided the state with direct responsibility for the management of a vital sector of the agricultural production. If these early nationalisations were to some degree forced on the government by the fact that farms were abandoned by their owners, there are no similar compelling reasons behind the rapid expansion that followed and went far beyond the capacity of state organs themselves. It did however fit into the needs for Eastern Europe of a sector where they could throw in their resources on a large scale.

Besides, the state farm policy promised to resolve a number of important issues in Mozambique. It offered a solution to the urgent problem of feeding the urban population which had been particularly hit by the collapse of Portuguese city-oriented farming. It held out prospects for a revival and even increase in agricultural exports, to support the necessary industrialisation. Finally, a rapidly recovering agricultural production in the "modern" sector would not only provide large numbers of peasants with continued employment, if only on a seasonal basis, but - even more important - would relieve the state of the need to 'force' a resumption of higher levels of production from a peasant sector exhausted by colonial exploitation and oppression.

The choice - if it could be called one - of the state farm policy was a key choice with many implications. Fundamentally, it meant a break with the whole tradition of the armed struggle. Government decisions to establish a state farm in a certain area often led to direct conflicts with the local peasants over the right to land. On the whole, the role of the peasantry changed. From having been the main actors in the liberation struggle, they were now, as producers, left to take care of themselves. They were required to provide the necessary labour for the state farms, under conditions not significantly different from before Independence. They were asked to move into commu-
nal villages in order for the government to bring health and education services to all peasant households. A good share of public spending was also directed to these sectors. Characteristically, though, in the general climate of scarcity negligible resources were spent on the communal villages as means of increased peasant production. Likewise, the market which is an essential means of exchange between the state and peasant smallholders, did not receive serious attention until after state farm production had persistently failed to provide the expected results.

In its concrete mode of operation, the state farm policy reinforced the urban bias already inherent in price policies and distribution priorities. The democratic organs of Popular Power were in practice given the tasks of mobilising support to this policy from the peasants. The state administration directed a major part of its resources to the functioning of the sectors it did control directly, and thereby failed to develop close links to the peasantry. Frequently, state organs would make demands for increased production from the peasants, without necessarily ensuring that sufficient capacity had been created to buy marketed products, or even trying to provide the necessary tools and implements for smallholder agriculture.

A serious problem with the inherited colonial state apparatus was its overdeveloped "control-bureaucracy" and its virtual absence of an empirical, scientific orientation to developments in society. In general, East European staff and counselling assistance did little to tackle the problem, and what is perhaps best labelled voluntarist solutions have often characterised the government approach to problems with more complex economic and political background. The party, understaffed and for the same reasons void of any real resources to supplement the state in this respect, has either tended to support the solutions or remained on the sidelines.

Among recent instances of this tendency is the directive, issued at the time of the Fourth Party Congress, that peasant households should be ordered to cultivate a certain minimum acreage if they wanted to obtain access to available consumer goods. The degree of enforcement of this directive must have varied, as the state generally lacked the means to check of its implementation. More revealing has been the official position in relation to the growing black market. For some years, the dominant official reaction was to act against individual black market dealers, not only through more severe public legislation but with public attacks culminating in the introduction of xicote or sjambok - flogging with a stick - as a public reprisal added to the normal penalty for economic crimes. The ambiguous nature of this process is clear from the fact that the old colonial means of punishment, the xicote, was introduced while the Fourth Party Congress adopted a number of reforms related to underlying causes of shortages and black marketing, among them over-bureaucratisation and price policies.
An equally flagrant example of a bureaucratic solution to a problem which is both economical and political, was the way authorities tried to solve the problem of overcrowding of the cities. People had, to a certain extent, begun to move into the cities, to avoid the threats of armed banditry and to get within reach of the goods that seemed to be in better supply in urban areas. Maputo with its rationing system for basic necessities is likely to have been particularly affected by the urban flow. When President Machel visited Nampula in 1982, he referred in a speech to measures that would have to be sought to reverse the trend. Symptomatically, local authorities went into action before either a proper plan had been worked out or any instrument created for the identification of people without work or resident rights in Nampula city. Employment cards were not yet in general use, and people who visited the city on business, for instance those bringing products to the market, often had no means of legitimising their presence. Police went into action, picking up anyone without proper identification and dumping them somewhere out of town. When the detention campaign was called off, the effects were there for everyone to see: a deserted marketplace and the virtual disappearance of other valuable small-scale economic activities.

The Nampula experience did not prevent the reproduction, on a much larger scale, of this type of solution to urban overcrowding and unemployment. In mid-1983, not long after the Fourth Congress, "Operation Production" was launched by the central government. Its aims were twofold: to reduce unemployment and pressures on food supplies in the cities, and to help relieve the labour shortages affecting production in the state farms. In a very short period, an organisation was created for the identification and issuing of work cards to those gainfully employed, and to identify those who for other reasons had the right to urban residence. At the same time, unemployed people were offered government support to resettle in rural areas of their own choice; those who did not use this opportunity would later be moved by force.

The rapidity of the whole action and the general lack of preparations on the level of ward or block committees, including the dynamising groups, gave room for arbitrariness and abuse. Apart from the legal and political side of the methodology of the campaign, it cost the urban economies many of their useful self-employed workers, while the total number of people moved to rural areas - some tens of thousands - meant virtually nothing in terms of the food needs of one and a half million urban inhabitants. The regions and districts where the people were sent, often did not have the resources to handle the matter. Disruptions in ordinary work programmes, food shortages and human suffering was commonplace.

That a bureaucratic institution adopts bureaucratic solutions to its problems is of course in no way remarkable. But these incidents point at a significant
lack of political and empirical consciousness in the government, which
despite all efforts retains some basic elements of the old fascist control-
bureaucracy. Despite its impressive appearance, the network of Popular
Power institutions has not managed to make sufficient inroads into the state
bureaucracy, nor has it developed a capacity to resist or block such actions
which are distinctly detrimental. The problem is not necessarily that of
formal mandate or authority of the different organs, rather it is the con-
ditions under which they operate. Mozambique has never experienced
anything even remotely similar to the Cuban "great debate" on development
alternatives in the early years of liberation, nor any of the open criticism
which might have led the Cuban government into the many reforms of the
early 1970s. The Mozambican internal climate has largely been coloured by
a policy of select information and restricted debate. Only in the period of the
Presidential Offensive in 1980 did the mass media engage in more serious
exposures of - local - errors and insufficiencies. Whatever debates have been
carried out in the central organs of party and state have on the whole been
kept secret, and reported debates in people's assemblies or similar fora have
largely concerned matters of implementation and control.

James Mittelman points at the seeming paradox, that Frelimo professes
Marxism-Leninism yet rejects "the key Leninist dictum on the political
party" of open debate and struggle over different positions.\textsuperscript{10} Mittelman
links this issue to that of bureaucratism and the constant threat that "demo-
cratic centralism will degenerate into bureaucratic centralism."\textsuperscript{11} It is this
context that breeds growing state repression, especially in periods of econo-
ic problems. "Then, coercion may be used again, this time against dis-
gruntled labourers, as well as against the bourgeoisie, to ensure the survival
of the new order."\textsuperscript{12} Socialist transition carries a strong element of coercion,
with the state as the main instrument. Therefore, the transition equally
carries the constant problem of how to control and, over time, "disembowel
the repressive apparatus so that democratic socialism can flourish."\textsuperscript{13}

The centralist nature of the Frelimo regime derives from the cohesive
political leadership which emerged from the armed struggle. The alliance
which at Independence was formed between the revolutionary leadership
and the new state bureaucracy, certainly in terms of formal relations and
public appearance was very far from what the armed struggle had required.
Among the early well-functioning parts of the new government was the
protocol, the offices created to handle the formalities of all meetings,
movements or contacts of the state leadership. Protocol development was in
part a self-sustained process, reaching sometimes awkward levels such as in
Beira around 1980 where, whenever a motorised high-level delegation was
passing, all traffic on the streets was halted and pedestrians made to stand to
The late President Samora Machel, surrounded by his successor Joaquim Chissano (right) and Marcelino dos Santos (left) during the Fourth Party Congress in April 1983. (Photo: AIM/Afrikabild)

The enthusiasm with which Congress decisions were received were there for anyone to see. The implementation of the decisions has been seriously hampered by war and economic crisis. (Photo: AIM/Afrikabild)
Socialism in a Poor Country

attendance. Only the then resident minister in Beira had the power to revoke this rule.

Another aspect of the alliance was the level of public consumption of those in higher positions which contrasted sharply not only with leadership before Independence - undoubtedly a factor behind the abortive military uprising in December 1975 - but also with the often repeated official call for austerity in public spending. Samora Machel approached this point at the Fourth Party Congress, when he took up the issue of possible corruption in central organs of the party and the state. Refuting the suggestion, made from the floor, that these organs were the targets of infiltration, Machel focussed on the problem of "mental corruption" caused by the luxury and comfort surrounding the leaders of the people. To illustrate his point, Machel gave a vivid recollection of his first days in the old Portuguese governor's palace, and the "reformed millionaire" behavior expected from him by the palace servants.

A sociological explanation of the relative extravagance which from the outset characterised public leadership spending, would need to refer to the obvious problem of a group of guerrilla leaders, visualised by the bureaucratic upper strata in Mozambique's cities as a band of bearded 'noble bandits', to create not only respect but also confidence in its leadership of a modern state. Respect could be, and in fact also was, achieved through the combination of strict formality and social ritual with high work discipline and moral conduct. Even the material attributes of power and prestige were selected in such a way as to build respect among members of the local 'left-over' elite. But then, how does one avoid the virtues of a life in material comfort from growing and spreading among those close enough to demand a share? The means tend to become an end in itself, which needs to be defended from criticism by those who still live a life of austerity. Formalism and isolation are one way to avoid visibility and potential criticism.

Compared to most Third World regimes, the material consumption among the leadership in Mozambique is still quite low, and should perhaps be noted for this rather than for its appearance at all. It is, however, also a feature characteristic of the ambiguous nature of the alliance between the old leadership of Frelimo and the upholders of state management. In its theoretical analysis the party exposes the contradictory nature of the Mozambican state as the principal depository of ideology and methods of work of colonial-capitalism. Yet this same state is invested with unique powers to lead the economic and social development of the country. When President Machel in 1980 launched the political and organisational offensive, it turned into a powerful instrument to expose the malpractices and values prevailing in the state administration. Yet the most obvious result of the offensive was the reinforcement of the hierarchical power of state leadership.
When professionally educated people are so few that government departments are constantly out man-hunting, then an outright confrontation with the poor conduct of many civil servants would hardly be productive. What in fact came out of the 'Offensive' was a quest for more confidence linked to more personal responsibility from the civil servant. That was an act of balance, whose outcome would depend not least on the strength of political work and organisation within government departments. As it turned out, the result was a strengthening of the state as a centre of power, without significant improvements in administrative or planning efficiency.

There is no doubt, that the war that is carried out against Mozambique under the name of destabilisation is directed and supported by a strong and sophisticated enemy. Its purpose is evident; to undermine the very basis for the construction of a new society in Mozambique. Today the country is the scene of widespread suffering, caused not only by destabilisation agents but by the whole complex of misdirected economic planning and insensitivity to the conditions of the many, the peasants. We need to see the present crisis as a crisis of the whole society and indeed of the state itself. The peasants of Mueda gave expression to their lack of confidence in the government, when asked by the research team in 1983. Open expressions are rare, however. There were therefore many who listened with great attention when, during the Fourth Party Congress in 1983, the illiterate peasant from Niassa, Achieta Zona, rose to speak. In her speech she gave vivid examples of how the local authorities kept the little building material that was available for themselves rather than allocating it to the construction of shelters for the poorest. Mrs Zona concluded:

- At the centre of our problems is, that those who had a good life and ate well during the old times are the same who lead a good life and have food on their tables today.14

The struggle continues

During the ten-year liberation war, it became increasingly evident to Frelimo that the struggle was more than just a matter of military technology or guerrilla tactics. If the poor peasants should be prepared to take the risks and give their support to the struggle, something other than an order or recommendation from visiting guerrilla units was needed. It was through a genuine and growing participation in the decisions as well as in the hard work of the war that the peasants in in the poor backward areas of Mozambique carried the war forward. Progress in the guerrilla struggle was intimately related to popular participation, or Popular Power.

The mobilisation, the widespread participation and the enthusiasm was indeed a uniquely impressive phenomenon of the first five years of the
independent government. Through this mobilisation, not only could the, by many observers feared, economic collapse be avoided, but advances in social organisation, education and health were made that few would have thought possible. The poor, backward country even undertook to offer the Zimbabwe struggle a rear base, material and other support which were to have a decisive effect on the progress towards independence.

The successes were so evident that they overshadowed the less visible but growing problems in the economy, in particular the undermining of the network through which peasant households could maintain and improve their living standards. And the successes no doubt led the 'other side', those threatened by developments in Mozambique, to intensify their search for means by which a wedge could be driven between the people and its government.

The economic retrogression and the creeping war with all its indiscriminate brutality is making deep, perhaps irreparable imprints on society. This cancer of violence is not carried and spread by aliens, it involves Mozambican against Mozambican. The incessant need to defend one's own survival cuts deep into all feelings of collective solidarity and support. The means do not seem to exist today to prevent the further spread of this cancer before a decisive break has been made with the apartheid system of South Africa. Only then can a slow and difficult recovery begin where new social relationships will unfold, perhaps quite different from those envisaged in the first years of Independence. One close observer has called attention to the "silent, almost imperceptible process" of change passing through society, the reduction of central authority and the corresponding growth of local autonomy and self-determination. The potential worth of the process is what it holds out as a long term counterforce to state centralisation and undermined democracy. A revival of Popular Power, in new forms not implanted from above.

It is not easy to judge the validity of such a perspective. Whatever evidence there is of the changes which are now underway points at the growing differentiation, the alliances emerging between the local bureaucracy and private producers, the petty-capitalist accumulation that takes place behind the appearance of cooperative organisation, the profits made on the black market and the inevitable spread in corruption where shortages are as expensive and enduring as in Mozambique.

The achievements of the Frelimo government in the first years of Independence were remarkable in the way the whole society was drawn into reconstruction and development. The future of the Mozambique revolution indeed depends on how deep these efforts took root in the minds of people, for how long the memory of those days will survive as a consciousness of what is possible. The people of Mozambique have certainly learnt the art of
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survival: They were brought up in the school of Portuguese colonialism, a school of unusually harsh and brutal oppression. The roots of their opposition are found on the other side of the Portuguese colonial era; in the resistance which prevented effective colonial occupation well into the present century. In this perspective, ten years of independence is still a short spell in the life of the people and the nation.

The contradictions of today may be more complex and far-reaching than ever before in their history. There is no reason to expect that in this short time of political independence the basic understanding of the nature of their enemy and the inevitability of the struggle should have been lost to the Mozambicans. Nor will resistance, a part of their culture, ever cease.

The struggle will continue. A LUTA CONTINUA.
Notes

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2 (pp. 17–33)

3. F. Ganhão, rector of the University of Eduardo Mondlane in Maputo, on 30 October 1980 told an auditorium in the Faculty of Medicine, how Eduardo Mondlane had to leave for the United States immediately after the first Frelimo congress. He returned only in April or May the year after. A few days after the Congress, vice-president Uria Simango wrote him a letter telling him that "the same night that you left, people came up to me demanding immediate reelections for various posts. All the problems of tribalism and regionalism posed themselves in full force..." (Quoted from memory).

5. See the accounts of W. Burchett (1978) and E. Mondlane (1983).
15. Idem.
16. FPLM means Forças Populares de Moçambique.
24. S. Vicira, "Law in the liberated zones", in Principles of... (1979).
NOTES TO CHAPTER 3 (pp. 3546)

1. The name FRELIMO is an abbreviation of Frente de Libertação de Mozambique. Following the transformation of the Front into a vanguard party in 1977, the name was rewritten Frelimo. For convenience, the latter form is used throughout the present text.

2. For instance, a central Frelimo text on popular power states that "Popular Power has become a reality for about one-third of mankind. The areas where the working masses have seized power are known as the 'Socialist Camp'...". S. Machel (1974), p. 104.


5. See Clive Thomas (1978), who actually gave this interpretation to the concept 'dictatorship of the proletariat'.


12. Ibid., p. 118.

13. Introduction to Government publication of president Machel's address to the Council of Ministers; S. Machel (1980a).


17. For the Cuban experience, see MacEwan (1981) and Carciofi (1983).


NOTES TO CHAPTER 4 (pp. 47–72)

1. See for instance B. Hetme (1984) and his reference to Theda Scocpol's work.


5. Middlemas op. cit.

4. Isaacman and Isaacman op.cit.


10. Ibid.
17. Middlemas op.cit. p. 41.
18. The colonial statistics on international migration of non-Africans showed a positive but declining immigration net up to 1970. In 1971 the emigration had taken over, and by 1973 had given a net loss of over 25,000 persons, nearly three times the 1971 figures.
25. Middlemas op.cit.
33. Ibid.
35. G. de Melo op.cit. p. 481.
36. Ibid.
49. The statutes of the Frelimo front spoke about free discussion, submission of the minority to the majority, collective responsibility, criticism and self-criticism of work and behavior. The 1977 Party statutes define the concept operationally as:
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- democratic elections of all party organs;
- the organs are accountable to their 'electorate';
- decisions of superior organs are obligatory for inferior organs;
- subordination of the minority to the majority;
- on all levels, decisions should be taken collectively.

52. Frelimo *op.cit.*, p. 298.
54. See for instance the Central Committee reports to the Third and Fourth Congresses respectively; Frelimo (1977b) and Frelimo (1983a).
57. *Ibid*.
60. Frelimo (1977b), p. 66.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5 (pp. 73–81)


NOTES TO CHAPTER 6 (pp. 83–107)

23. In February 1979, almost a year after the creation of the National Planning Commis-

sion, I took part in a mission to Cabo Delgado. The team visited the town of
Montepuez simply to see whether a local factory was still in operation, where it
received its raw materials and where the products were sent. In Pemba, the provincial
capital, nobody could answer these questions. Representatives of different departments
had only fragmentated data about the region, often at odds with one another.

26. Ibid. p. 31.
32. Ibid.
33. See the reference in Frelimo (1980a).
34. M. Bhagavan (1986).
35. Frelimo (1980c).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7 (pp. 109–141)

1. See Frelimo (1975); Principles of... (1979).
3. Ibid.
8. See for instance A. Isaacman (1978); People’s Power no’s 10 and 11; African Com-
munist no 74, (1978).
9. During a seven-day meeting with the 'compromised', held in 1982, they were rehabilitated and given their full civil rights back, including that to join the Party Frelimo. See J. Hanlon (1984), p. 170.
15. They were Marcelino dos Santos and Jorge Rebelo, two of the most important Politbureau members and ministers in the government.
23. On Angoche, see B. Egero (1986); on Mueda see below ch. 8.
25. Ibid. p. 25.
32. Ibid.; personal interview with J. N. Carrilho, head of the secretariat of the Popular Assembly. 21.11 1983.
33. See note 31.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Information given at interview, see footnote 32. No corresponding information is available on the party membership of the deputies of national or local assemblies.
42. S. Machel (1976).
44. CNICP (1977a) and (1977b) respectively.
46. CNICP (1983); OTM (1983).
47. Personal communication from Peter Sketchley, cooperator working in CIFEL during the late 1970s.
50. See footnote 46.
52. Personal visits to Texlom in 1980, 1983 and 1985 respectively.
53. Personal interview with J. Hambucane, secretary of the Production Council, 23.11 1983.
54. R. Williams (1983).
56. R. Williams *op.cit.*, p. 29.
58. See TEMPO, 23.10. 1983.
60. Governo de Moçambique (1977c); (1981b).
62. See note 53.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 8 (pp. 143–169)

2. The Centre of African Studies knows of one exception. Already in 1976, a group of people left Namaua village on the road to Mueda and created a new village by the name of Nanenda.
3. The two spellings of 'Maconde' are suggested by Gus Liebenow (1971) in his historical survey of Makonde people in Tanzania.
9. The "slash-and-burn" technique which dominates peasant agriculture requires a natural recuperation period of land of perhaps around twice the period of cultivation. Thus each household requires a much larger tract of land than that which is under cultivation at any one time.
11. The remainder of the section on Ngapa is largely based on the field report by the Ngapa team Yussuf Adam and Lars Rudebeck.
12. Quoted from the Mueda research report published by Centro de Estudos Africanos (1986).
NOTES TO CHAPTER 9 (pp. 171–177)

2. Cf Sweezy's (1976) discussion of socialism in poor countries, and White's (1983) definition of the stage of 'revolutionary socialism'.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 10 (pp. 179–194)

12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.

NOTES TO APPENDIX ON CUBA (PP. 213–230)

7. MacEwan (op.cit.) p. 29f.
10. MacEwan op.cit. p. 70.
11. Quoted in Ibid. p. 40.
12. Sørensen op.cit. p. 31f, 40.
15. Sørensen op.cit. p. 56.
17. MacEwan op.cit. p. 145.
25. See Sørensen *op.cit.* p. 78, and Mesa-Lago *op.cit.*
27. Sørensen *op.cit.* p. 113.
30. Hamecker *op.cit.* p. 124f, from where the mandate description is also quoted.
31. Jørgensen *op.cit.*, Sørensen *op.cit.*, Hamecker *op.cit.*
32. Hamecker *op.cit.* p. 164.
40. *Idem.* p. 125f.
44. *Idem.* p. 1089; personal communication.
45. Sørensen *op.cit.* p. 106.
47. Sørensen *op.cit.* p. 112ff.
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AIM INFORMATION BULLETIN, published monthly by the government information agency Agência de Informação de Moçambique.

BOLETIM DA CÉLULA, published by the department of ideological work, Frelimo, since 1980.

MIO NEWS REVIEW, bi-monthly published by the Mozambique Information Office, London.

MOZAMBIQUE REVOLUTION, organ of FRELIMO published in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, during the armed struggle. Ceased publication soon after independence.

NOTICIAS, daily newspaper, Maputo.

PEOPLE’S POWER, published by the Mozambique, Angola and Guine Information Centre, (MAGIC), London.

TEMPO, weekly journal published in Maputo.

VOZ DA REVOLUÇÃO, organ of the Central Committee of Frelimo since the time of the armed struggle.
Appendix

Cuba's Road to Popular Power -
A Background Analysis to Chapter 9

Although Popular Power has been a pertinent concept in the Cuban political history for many years, few studies are available on how this model for political participation actually works in daily practice. Nor seems much to have been published - in English at least - on the genealogy of the concept and its relation to the Cuban political history before and after the overthrow of Batista.

In order to get a "Cuban perspective" on the Mozambican experiences, it was therefore necessary to probe deeper into Cuban political history itself. The study would have to be limited and based on secondary sources. Still, we judge the results presented in Chapter 9 as so interesting that it would be unfair not to let the readers share our way of reaching them, and so also decide for themselves on the validity of the conclusions.

Cuba, a background

The contacts between Cuba and African liberation movements started with Che Guevara's visits to Congo and Tanzania in the early 1960s. Guevara's foco theory was never accepted as a valid guide for the struggles in Angola and Mozambique. But the dialogue continued and deepened over the years. It is within this context of exchange that the simultaneous appearance of the concept Popular Power in the years around 1970 should be seen.

Cuban society is in many ways radically different from Mozambique. The island is about one seventh of the land area of Mozambique, housing a population which by the time of victory over the Batista regime stood at 7.0 million, not too different from Mozambique's 10.6 million estimated for the Independence year of 1975.1 With its high density levels, Cuba had a high level of urbanisation; less than half of the population lived in rural areas. Poverty reigned, an effect of serious shortage of land and a consequent dependency on employment in the large sugar plantations dominating agricultural production.2 In 1952, of a total agricultural labour force of 818,000, over 500,000 or 64% counted as paid agricultural workers.
The direct foreign penetration of the Cuban economy was advanced. The sugar industry, making Cuba the world's largest producer and exporter of sugar, was completely dominated by American capital. US investments grew also in communications and other services. Towards the end of the Batista government, large investments were made in petroleum and mining. Compared to African conditions, this made Cuba a relatively industrialised and culturally developed country. During the 1950s around 60% of the rural population was estimated to be literate, and the national literacy campaign of the first years of the Castro regime had to deal with a national illiteracy rate of 23% - not much when compared to the Mozambican estimate of 80-85% at Independence.

Behind the Moncada attack of 26 July 1953, and the subsequent growth of a guerrilla war which after two years led to the downfall of the Batista regime, is a long history of party democratic opposition and workers' industrial actions against successive dictatorial regimes. In 1933, President Gerardo Machado was overthrown in a general uprising in which the labour movement played a major role. According to MacEwan, the 1933 struggle created the political antecedents of the Castro-led movement against Batista twenty years later:

- ... that early struggle had created a strong current of revolutionary ideology and action within the Cuban middle class, especially in the student movement. Also, the political disruption of 1933 and, again, the frustration of revolution engineered by the US government established a political context for the emergence of Communist strength in the late 1930s.4

The 1930s saw a continuous struggle between US interests and local political forces, led above all by the officer Fulgencio Batista. Of central importance for the future course of development was a range of reforms decided by the government in response to growing pressure from agricultural workers and trade unions. Among these were the eight hour working day, minimum wages, recognition of trade union rights, and the promise of land reform.5 Batista's way to power was facilitated by a new constitution adopted in 1940, which provided for many of the reforms. All that materialised were, however, tactically successful improvements of the conditions of industrial workers, which gave Batista a certain support from the trade union leadership and a close collaboration with the communist party, the PSP (People's Socialist Party, a new name adopted in 1943).

Frustrated reforms, growing corruption in the political camp and emerging political violence paved the way for a new party, the liberal-progressive Ortodoxo-Party. This party represented a real political threat to Batista, who preferred to forestall a defeat in the 1952 presidential elections through a military coup and the proclamation of himself as the president. Fidel Castro,
then a young Havana lawyer, was one of the candidates of the Ortodoxo Party for the would-be elections. A year later, he was one of the leaders of the attack on the Moncada police barracks in Santiago, whose aim it was to inspire a general uprising against Batista.

The origin of the 26 July Movement, as laid down by Castro in his defence speech before the court in 1953, was a progressive democratic ideology based in the democratic traditions already established in Cuba. The main goal of the movement was to put an end to corruption and political violence, and to bring the 1940 constitution into force in a series of reforms directed towards alleviating the poverty of the majority of Cubans. It was a nationalist movement drawing its inspiration from the 19th century independence movement led by José Marti. No reference was made to socialist models or ideals.

The PSP, weakened by the general climate of anti-communism and by its close collaboration with the Batista government, had no means to resist the 1952 coup. Nor would PSP accept any connection with the Moncada attack. It was only in the Summer of 1958, half a year before the downfall of Batista, that PSP joined the struggle led by Fidel Castro.

From nationalism to socialism

The 26 July Movement was by and large an urban movement, intellectual as well as working-class, which spread in the cities of Cuba in line with the growing struggle in Oriente Province. The support that Castro's Rebel Army gained from the Oriente peasants was closely tied to their land hunger. There developed an association between the Rebel Army and the peasants, in the defence of their physical survival as much as in the struggle for their material interests, which was to give the 26 July Movement a distinctly rural-peasant foundation. The final blow to the Batista regime was, however, the result of a broad anti-Batista front which could count on support from bourgeois and middle strata as much as from workers and peasants, and which therefore represented a variety of motivations and interests. There was little of organised worker participation in the front, a result of the particular historical situation of PSP and its close alliance with the trade union movement.

The peculiar character of the anti-Batista movement leading up to the Castro government gives some keys to an understanding of subsequent political developments. In particular, it is worth noting, that -

- The Cuban revolution, in the immediate sense, was not made by the working class. Thus the working class had not been pulled in and transformed by the struggle. The
combat did not bring forth working-class leaders nor did it contribute to the organisational strength of the working class.

Moreover, the leaders of the revolution, in achieving success without building a mass movement, had not learned to rely on the masses for the articulation and execution of policy.\(^7\)

The first period of the new government did not reveal any new political tendencies in relation to earlier declared intentions. Nevertheless, the determination with which both social reforms and the land reform programme were started did not fail to threaten conservative elements of the broad anti-Batista alliance. The attacks against corruption, the purges of the old army etc. added to their fears. The first land reform, in May 1959, was directed mainly at very large estates and unused agricultural land. The upper limit of a farm was set to 400 ha. Productive farms might however retain as much as 1,300 ha of land in order to maintain their productivity. The owners of nationalised land were offered compensation in state obligations corresponding to the value they had declared to the tax authorities. This basically fair offer could not but offend especially the big foreign land owners who had systematically undervalued their land to avoid taxation.

The threats posed by the reforms against US economic interests in Cuba reinforced US political arguments for actions to contain the new Cuban movement. Cuba's economic dependency on USA was almost total. Up to 1979 roughly three quarters of all its foreign trade, including most spare parts and technology imports, had been with USA. Already within the first year of the revolution, the US government reduced the value of trade to half its earlier level through gradual cuts in the Cuban sugar quota. Cuba's difficulties in finding alternative outlets - most of the potential countries sided with USA in the conflict - led to the first trade agreement with USSR, covering not only most of the sugar export for a five-year period, but also imports of crude oil, iron and other essential products, plus a loan of $100 million to cover social reforms.

The trade agreement brought an immediate escalation of US aggressions. Increased support was given to internal counterrevolutionary forces, and preparations started for the Bay of Pigs invasion to be launched in 1961. In the Summer of 1960, a few months after the trade agreement, the big American oil companies announced their refusal to refine Soviet crude oil in their Cuban refineries. For Cuba to concede at this time would in practice have meant the beginning of a series of retreats which would have rendered impossible the whole reform package destined to improve the conditions of life of the poor Cuban majority. Instead, the Cuban government undertook a rapid nationalisation of the properties of three of the largest oil companies. The result was further cuts in American sugar imports, followed by further Cuban nationalisation of American property. This led to a total trade em-
bargo from USA, which gained wide adherence also among its Western allies, and political isolation through the expulsion of Cuba from the Organisation of American States, OAS.

The internal effects of the confrontation were to move the government away from a politically modest to a more radical position. Firstly, the rapid nationalisations carried a need both for a restructuring of the state to assume its new tasks in the economy, and for a closer integration of workers and their organisations in the management of the economy. Secondly, the strong counter-revolutionary forces within and outside Cuba led the government to reconsider its earlier position concerning the reestablishment of the party democratic system. The elections which were to be held within two years of the victory over Batista, were now put off indefinitely. Instead, negotiations were started between the three organisations which supported the government's actions against counter-revolutionary interest; the 26 July Movement, the PSP and the Revolutionary Directorate - the organisation of revolutionary students. It was in this context that, in April 1961, Castro for the first time declared that the Cuban revolution was socialist.

In this climate of intensive confrontation with counter-revolutionary forces, reaching its climax with the American invasion of the Bay of Pigs, the government embarked on a programme of creation of mass organisations through which all the people should become part of the revolutionary process. Most important of these were the Committees for the Defence of the Revolution, the CDR's, which rapidly spread over the whole of Cuba in the struggle against economic sabotage and destruction. Once counter-revolution had been defeated, the CDR's turned their attention to civilian tasks in the local context. Next to the CDR's, the Federation of Cuban Women, FMC, created in 1960, grew to become the largest of the mass organisations.

A decade of foundation and experimentation

Mesa-Lago has characterised the 1960s as a period of experimentation, debate and confrontation between different ideas, before the heavy economic problems around 1970 brought a return to a more pragmatic orientation and reconciliation with the Soviet Union. It is equally important, however, to point at the consolidation of the revolution that took place during the period, in the search for economic strategies that would permanently reduce the former external dependence as well as in the organisation of state and people in the tasks of the new society.

The nationalisation of different sectors of society proceeded at a comparatively high speed. By 1961, a large part of industry, construction and
transport, all large and external trade, all banking and the educational system was under state control. Two years later, the first sectors were all but completely nationalised and agriculture had grown from 37 to 70% nationalisation. By 1968, what remained of private economic activity was found largely within agriculture.  

The experiences from the Sierra Maestra no doubt contributed to the care with which the government embarked on agricultural reform. The first land reform, carried out only a few months after the revolution, was directed at large land holders. Its execution was entrusted to a new institute of agrarian reform, INRA. In this reform, a distinction was made between the "small farmers" with a maximum of 67 ha, and the middle-level and large farmers. The choice of 67 ha was defended on the grounds that farm income varied extensively, depending on the quality of land and type of crops. It was better, therefore, to ensure the inclusion of all small farmers (in income) and accept "the possibility that among the small peasants generally a few really rich peasants might slip through", as argued by INRA.  

Government support to the small farmers was organised by ANAP, a national association of small farmers created through the merger of a number of earlier agricultural associations. ANAP worked with credits, purchase of agricultural products, supply of agricultural inputs, and the organisation of cooperative associations. Thus the needs of small farmers were dealt with early and with apparent efficiency. The middle farmers which numbered approximately 10,000 were not allowed into ANAP, and responded to their ambiguous situation with non-cooperation. Hostility grew, among others in the competition between the farmers and the state agricultural sector over available farm labour. The existence of capitalist farmers also inhibited the effective organisation of the small farmers into an agricultural development plan, and incentives could not be provided to the latter at the complete exclusion of the big farmers.  

In the second agrarian reform, promulgated in October 1963, the government expropriated all farm land exceeding 67 ha, which was nearly half of the remaining private land. All this land was incorporated into the state farm system. The total effect of the land reform was that state farm land now came to include up to three quarters of all land and two thirds of the land under cultivation. The small farmers were assured that no measures would be taken against their land holdings, and that the state would create a favourable framework for cooperation between private and state agricultural systems.  

While the small farmers were thus integrated in the new economy in such a way as to preserve their interests and give them the means to improve at least their auto-consumption, other sectors of the economy were considerably shaken by the transition. Difficult weather conditions added to the
effects of the US-directed trade embargo in forcing a reduction of imports. As real incomes increased, shortages of both food stuffs and other consumer goods were increasingly felt all over society. Rationing had to be introduced, which inevitably led to the appearance of a black market.

Economic planning was in the first part of the 1960s seriously hampered by the emigration of about half a million Cubans, many of them trained and specialised in their professions. But there were also problems in the high aspirations attached to the planning process itself, by Cubans and by their mainly East European advisors. Despite a serious lack of reliable statistical information on the economy and a general shortage of planners in the departments and enterprises, targets of annual growth were early set as high as between 13 and 15%. These should be achieved through the mechanisation of sugar production, which would release labour for the production of foodstuffs as well as for industrial production. Although sugar remained the base, the plans essentially represented attempts at diversification away from the near-monopoly of sugar.

The diversification policy soon proved too costly. Heavy industrialisation was postponed while sugar production was given renewed emphasis. The target was set for a ten million record harvest in 1970 - far above any earlier result. The planning process remained highly centralised, but the structure of planning changed during the period under the influence of recurrent debates and, in particular, frequently recurring disturbances and productivity problems. Halfway though the decade, the Central Planning Board JUCEPLAN had its power and functions significantly reduced. The sophisticated system of computerised planning techniques intended to completely replace market mechanisms was shelved at least temporarily. Annual and medium-range plans were replaced by a series of special or 'mini' plans, each one "designed to tackle a particular aspect of the economy".

The basic orientation remained, however, to eliminate the market economy and all relationships based on prices and profits. This position was linked to the overall concept of the revolution, the creation of the new socialist man free from material and profit motives as his central driving force. In the general development towards greater equality, the main motor force should be moral or - in the terminology used by among others MacEwan - collective incentives. MacEwan points at the contradiction between the ideology of a New Socialist Man and "a system of economic coordination which relied on prices as a guide and which measured the success of enterprises in terms of their own profits. Using prices and profits was seen as necessarily bound up with both individual motivation and the dominance of market relations. Individual motivation and market relations, in turn, were seen as necessarily connected to inequality."
During the 1960s, the orientation towards moral incentives and socialist consciousness was deepened. The system of work quotas or labour norms introduced during the first years gradually went out of use, and moral or non-material incentives took their place in the mobilisation of labour. In consequence, the trade union organisations with their traditional mandates increasingly lost ground. Instead, a kind of workers' avantgarde organisations were created, whose task it was to reinforce a collective consciousness or moral incentive to work for the revolution. As a corollary, the new communist party, the PCC, increased its influence over - or merger with - the state apparatus through the recruitment of leading PCC members to high positions in both central and local government. This move was justified as a necessary step to improve the control over a growing and inefficient bureaucracy.

Gradually, the effects began to permeate the workers' ranks, affecting production and productivity. Trade unions lost their role as centres of discussion of work conditions and economic plans. At the end of the decade they seemed to have virtually ceased to exist. Work discipline was undermined by a policy of ensuring full employment, together with a reliance on an abstract 'consciousness' in the place of systematic controls of work performance.

When the workers' organisations are weakened and unable to attack disorganisation in the supply of spares and raw materials, and when no means exist to deal with workers who stay away or do not exert themselves, but who still share the results of the collective effort, then unavoidably the morale of the work-place is undermined.

Absenteeism was becoming a common problem in Cuba. A study in 1968 of more than 200 enterprises showed that "from one-fourth to one-half of the work-day was wasted." Later studies confirmed these findings, showing that the main problem was absenteeism. In 1970 this was recognised as a serious problem: "At the height of the 1970 zafra /sugar harvest/, the rate of absenteeism - justified and unjustified - was found to be almost 29%. There are no reasons to believe that this was limited only to workers, although reported findings say nothing about 'White-collar' categories, Absenteeism was a problem affecting the whole economy. It was a result of the factors just discussed, and was stimulated by the deteriorating exchange value of work, i.e. the declining value of salaries and wages in relation to the supply of goods for sale.

The whole reform package which was meant to guarantee people full employment, steady incomes and free or next-to free access to services, had since 1961 generated a growing gap between the aggregate purchasing power and the existing supply of consumer goods. In 1962 the government reacted to this 'socialist inflation' by introducing a system of rationing of all
consumer goods. The amount of excess money continued to grow however, and in 1970 corresponded to the total value of one year's available supplies. The Cubans could have spent a whole year living of their savings before they would run out of money. The black market flourished, with high prices and workers spending their time hunting around for its products. The government responded with criticism not only of the private traders suspected of black market dealings, but also of the growing number of 'loafers' making their living outside the regular sector of employment.

In sum, by the end of the first decade of the revolution, the government was faced with widespread and growing demoralisation. The effects were seen not only in the economic spheres but equally well in the situation of the mass organisations, which "by 1968 ... had ceased to exist except on paper," according to one of the external observers of the time. Both material factors - lack of consumer goods - and political factors - lack of trade unions or party units capable of carrying the demands of the workers - began to make inroads on the pillars of the whole strategy; the New Man and the motor force of socialist consciousness. The state apparatus suffered from excessive bureaucratisation affecting not only the conditions of production but also local services and supplies of consumer goods.

The new Communist Party of Cuba, PCC formed in name in 1965, had yet to meet in congress to define its role in Cuban society. Party leadership overlapped so extensively with state leadership, that no independent control of the state was possible that way. JUCEPLAN underwent a gradual reorganisation, but planning remained highly centralised and relied more on the special or mini plans than on overall economic planning. That the leadership was increasingly isolated and inaccessible to criticism was made clear not only from the writings of a number of leading (ex-)sympathisers such as Sweezy, Huberman, Dumont and Bettelheim, but also from the response of the government to the mounting crisis. Measures were taken to reduce debate and criticism within Cuba, both on the level of political debate as such and in the field of literature and art. Trade union activities were curbed further. A group of leading PCC members, all from the old PSP, were arrested and accused of collaboration with the Soviet Union and other socialist states to prevent a continuation of the economic policy of the government.

The arrests took place at the beginning of 1968, at the time a "revolutionary offensive" was being launched by the central political leadership. The first target of the offensive was the black market, or "the parasitic forces" in Castro's words. About 55,000 private entrepreneurs in retail trade and artisan trade were identified and brought under direct state control as the main agents in black market affairs. The move represented a desire to bring in even this sector under central state planning. From there on, the offensive
concentrated on the mobilisation of all resources towards the fulfillment of the 1970 sugar harvest target, 10 million tons. Discussions were curtailed, working brigades were formed, and workers were drawn from other sectors of the economy and society to contribute to "la gran zafra".

Institutionalising the revolution

There is a general agreement that the failure of the 1970 sugar harvest in many respects also marked the beginning of a new phase in the Cuban revolution. The 8.5 million ton harvested was a record harvest in the history of Cuba. Its achievement had interrupted or disturbed production in other fields and, more seriously, there was no chance of maintaining this level in the years thereafter. The great efforts of the Cuban people had not established the base for industrialisation which was the purpose of the whole campaign.

The failure of the sugar campaign marked the end of an era of trials and experimentation. Important experience had been gained, when the Castro government turned to a reappraisal of the period. The ad hoc system of state planning was again replaced by more systematic methods of economic planning, which opened the way for increasing cooperation with the Soviet Union. The recuperation of the economy was significant, if measured in the rates of annual growth. There were many reasons behind the advances, many reforms and initiatives which together made for increased production. Mesa-Lago reports on the gradual reintroduction of work quotas or labour norms. Other measures were "...the recently introduced stimuli for workers to raise their skills, mechanisation of certain operations, and improvements in labour organisation and conditions. ...The above measures generated in 1972 an overall increase of 21 percent in labour productivity."\(^\text{21}\)

In fact, 1970 saw a profound reevaluation of the principles which had hitherto been guiding the revolution. The introduction of labour norms was equal to the abandonment of moral or collective incentives as the main source of motivation. The new trend was perhaps most visible in the actions taken to fight the "socialist inflation" and black market. The amount of money in circulation had to be reduced. Higher prices were set for certain services and important consumer goods. Stricter policies were introduced on salaries and retirement benefits. Most significant, financial resources were made available for consumer goods production, which led to increased supplies and relaxed rations or even the removal of a number of items from ration control.\(^\text{22}\)

Another profound change in policies is reflected in the efforts made by the Castro government to diffuse and decentralise power, away from the central
leadership and from the state bureaucracy as a whole. During the 1960s, the problem of political institutions and organised participation had on the whole been left unresolved. In 1965, Che Guevara had formulated the official position in the following way:

- The institutionalisation of the Revolution has still not been achieved. We are seeking something new which will allow a perfect identification between the government and the community as a whole, adapted to the special conditions of the building of socialism and avoiding to the utmost the commonplaces of bourgeois democracy transplanted to the society in transformation. Some experiments have been carried out with the aim of gradually creating the institutionalisation of the Revolution but without too much hurry.23

Ten years later, Fidel Castro spoke about the "provisional structure" of the state in the first decade, and restated the importance of avoiding premature solutions:

- The Revolution was not in a hurry to endow the country with definitive state forms. We didn't want to create some temporary expedient but rather to build solid, lasting and well-considered institutions that would respond to the realities in the country...24

By 1970 conditions not only permitted but certainly demanded reforms which would allow a wider participation of the people in regulated institutionalised forms. The trade union movement started a process of democratisation and revitalisation. Free union elections were held on all levels in 1971, and the responsibility of unions as defenders of the rights of workers was restated. In the enterprises, trade unions returned to take part in the elaboration of production plans. In 1973, the trade union congress passed resolutions on a number of issues, such as the substitution of material for moral incentives and the reinstatement of labour norms and differential wages. Officially, the trade unions retained the central task assigned to them in the Cuban revolution, which was to work for increased production. They could therefore still be related to as "transmission belts" for the implementation of government plans, rather than as independent workers' organisations.25 To the extent that workers had access to democratic means to influence planning or uphold their rights in relation to management or government, in practical terms this would no longer present a contradiction.

The PCC had remained a small party during the 1950s, passive in membership recruitment and without representation at many places of work and living. From 1970 the party became the object of increased attention. A membership campaign was launched, where people were invited to take part in open and democratic discussions about the candidates, who ought to be 'exemplary workers' enjoying the respect of their fellow workers.
Party membership grew fast. By the time of the first congress in 1975, it stood at 203,000. Five years later, at the second congress, membership had reached 430,000. To this increase contributed no doubt the intensive debates leading up to the congresses and the efforts to democratisate methods of work within the party. The relations between state and party were straightened out, and the party was formally removed from direct participation in planning and implementation. PCC's constitutional role as 'the supreme directive force of society and the Cuban state' added weight to party resolutions in congress and its day-to-day work in electoral bodies, work places and organs of Popular Power. Gradually membership changed in favour of workers and women, who in 1980 were 47% and 19% respectively of the members.*

Perhaps the most significant reform of the early 1970s is the institutionalisation of Popular Power at different levels of society. The reform coincided with a new administrative and political division of the country and steps towards a decentralisation of the functions of the state. Thus, the new provincial and municipal authorities became responsible for all health and educational services, and for certain other services such as transport, housing, sport and tourism. Popular Power was to take the form of elected assemblies to work together with and control the activities of the local government. Their creation was initiated in 1974 through the elaboration of a new constitution, at the same time as trial elections were held in the Matanzas Province.

A new constitution was needed to replace the old, largely irrelevant constitution from 1940, which with certain amendments was still in force. A draft was drawn up by a mixed commission and then given maximum circulation in order to permit everyone capable of understanding the document to take part in the discussions. 16,000 proposals for amendments were sent to the commission, elaborated in numerous local meetings where over 600,000 people participated. In all, over six million people were said to have taken direct part in the study of the draft. The campaign was followed by a period of publication of proposed amendments, whereafter the constitution was presented before the first congress of the PCC in 1975, and ratified in a public referendum in early 1976.

The Matanzas experiment was a full-scale provincial realisation of all the steps to be taken in an electoral process: the creation of constituencies and registers of electors, the nomination of candidates, the actual elections and the necessary preparations of the electorate to enable full and aware participation. There were on average over four candidates to every seat in the municipal assemblies. To put one's vote on the right candidate was important not least because elections to assemblies on higher levels in part were made from among the assembly delegates themselves.
Two years after the start of the Matanzas experiment, elections were held all over Cuba. 10,700 delegates to municipal assemblies were elected in October 1976, and during November the new assemblies elected deputies to higher levels. Special commissions nominated candidates to the latter elections, and these did not have to be municipal delegates. However, according to central directives at least half of those finally elected should be delegates. In this first round of national elections, 43% of the provincial and 55% of the National Assembly deputies were directly elected delegates to local assemblies.29

Every municipal assembly should within itself choose an executive committee of between five and fifteen members. The committee had three full-time workers, namely the president, the vice-president and the secretary. In addition, "Among the committee members there are professionals, that is, those who head the various departments, bureaus, offices; and nonprofessionals, that is, those who devote time to Popular Power only after their regular working hours."30 The formal mandate of the municipal assembly is indeed far-reaching:

1. Debate and decide upon all aspects of economic planning for the province and municipality;
2. Supervise the administrative departments and their performance in carrying out assigned duties. Transfer units from one department to another, when such a step is deemed advisable to improve performance. Appoint administrators and managers and other leading personnel in Popular Power;
3. Set up permanent and ad hoc commissions to inspect and supervise production and service units under jurisdiction. These commissions can assist the assembly in policy-making, in order to optimise the use of material and human resources;
4. Organise delegates' accountability procedures to their constituents, and the mechanism to effect recalls;
5. Elect and recall judges according to the jurisdictional authority, municipal or provincial.

The presence of professionals in the assemblies, with their technical competence combined with a natural reluctance to stimulate public criticism, holds the risk of making the assemblies less efficient as watchdogs on the administration. The empirical evidence that exists, notably an interesting local study by Jørgensen in 1979, does however support Harnecker's important findings about a real and functioning separation between the assembly and the local administration and management offices.31 Assembly delegates appear to play an active role in a number of activities whose
supervision has been entrusted to the municipality, for instance local industry, small business, artisan services, food services, community services, health and educational facilities.\textsuperscript{32} A very high proportion of these activities has been brought under the direct jurisdiction of the local assemblies.\textsuperscript{33} The relative success is evident not only from the frequency of assembly debates on such local services and facilities, but also from the apparent local satisfaction with the results: \textit{Jørgensen} could report that in the Camagüey Province virtually everyone found that most services had improved considerably since they were transferred to the local authorities.\textsuperscript{34}

If the assemblies appear to be functioning as organs of direct people's participation in the control of local administration, their relation to the party is certainly more complex. The extent of party presence is high - the party participates closely in the electoral process and the nomination of candidates. The majority of those elected are party members. It would seem like a clearcut case of party bureaucratic control, but then it would be equally possible to argue that this shows the party to be an instrument of the people themselves. Party members are found to be among the most active in the local community, whether in the mass organisations, the trade union branches or the CDRs. Quite a few of the service activities which were transferred to assembly departments had until then been kept going by CDRs.

\textit{The} national electoral commission has published data about party membership among those elected (App. Table 1). Nine out of ten deputies to national and provincial assemblies are party members. In municipal assemblies, their proportion as down to 65\%, although again the assembly executive committees have a very high proportion of party members. In his own local investigation of \textit{Popular Power}, \textit{Jørgensen} does however not find that the results justify any unequivocal conclusion:

\begin{quote}
- In the perspective of European democratic traditions, this close connection between party and government is in general seen as something negative. It is seen as a possible cause of contradictions between a ruling elite and the rest of the people, where the power of the party will function in an oppressive way. The Cubans themselves, on the contrary, do not appear to see this as a problem or as the cause of contradictions. They look puzzled over the idea that the party would not represent the interests of the people. Whether this is so or not can only be a matter of speculation. There are of course political contradictions and problems...\textsuperscript{35}
\end{quote}

In his study of Cuban development after 1959, \textit{MacEwan} tackles the issue on a more general level. First, he presents evidence that the election of party members is in fact a matter of common popular decision and "not simply rubberstamp procedures". \textit{MacEwan} continues:
App Table 1 Cuba: composition of elected assemblies, 1976 elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Nation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Exec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ass</td>
<td>Ctee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>86.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party Membership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCC member or candidate</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>90.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UJC member*</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No membership</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin cadre</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technician</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker, peasant</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Comision Electoral Nacional, quoted in Jørgensen, 1980

*Party Youth Wing

- Second, regardless of formal authority, elections to the Party and so forth, the hegemony of the Communist Party remains a mechanism or a procedure. If workers are deprived of power by the nature of the organisation of the economy, the Party will exacerbate that condition. If, however, the economy is organised along lines that tend to enhance worker's power, the Party might well serve the purpose it claims for itself -the purpose of leading the masses and of administering power on their behalf.36

Judging from the results of the first re-elections, the assemblies do not seem to function as just another platform for the entrenchment of political elite power. In the Matanzas re-elections of 1976, less than half of the delegates of the provincial assemblies from 1974 were re-nominated.37 Similarly, in the 1979 round of re-elections of local assemblies, electoral participation increased by a few percent up to 97% of all eligible voters, while approximately half of the elected delegates were new.38 Locally the turnover could be still higher. Interpretations of these figures may vary. It bears however keeping in mind that the work of a delegate consists in actually solving local problems more than of ‘explaining’ them to the popu-
The delegates have concrete and demanding tasks on their hands, and there are no indications that they are allowed to sit back in their bureaucratic chairs and give directives.

Jørgensen's analysis of the relationships between local and higher levels of government make him reluctant to call the organs of Popular Power an expression of local autonomy or self-government. There are examples of local assemblies opposing the decisions taken on higher levels, or demanding more participation in decisions which affect the local constituency. Local authorities may also dispose of parts of the gains from various economic activities. But general planning and financing remains under central control, while local organs have taken over responsibility for the concrete implementation of the plans. Or, in the words of one of those interviewed by Jørgensen: "Direction and planning, well that is still done by Havana. The difference from before is rather that we nowadays don't need to ask Havana about what ought to be done in our own town."^39

On the other hand, Popular Power means a more efficient and responsible local administration, with considerable improvements for the local community. Jørgensen summarises:

- **Popular Power** is an important instrument to improve the local system of service and distribution. It seems to have resulted in a better channeling of people's resources towards the solution of daily problems. At the same time, the local organs of power have better means for the control and distribution of existing resources in a more just way than before...
- **Popular Power** is an expression of "*horizontal democracy*". By this I mean that local administration does function well within the framework and limits already mentioned...
- The system of **Popular Power** has facilitated the implementation of one of the most important goals in the Cuban development strategy: *An even distribution of social goods and a satisfaction of the fundamental needs of the people.*^40

**Cuba in the 1980s**

- It is easier to change structures than to change the conscientiousness of man.
  (Castro 1971)^41

In April 1980, a group of young Cubans forced their way into the Peruvian embassy in Havana, asking for asylum. The action paved the way for what looked like a mass exodus from Cuba, in particular to the USA. In all about 125,000 Cubans left in a period of a few months. Was this an expression of political opposition, of deep discontent? Or was it an indication of material suffering and political oppression?

Brundenius' study of economic achievements up to the late 1970s provides some important insights into the material situation. "**Firstly, in spite**
of rationalisation, mechanisation and curbs on overemployment in the early 1970s, open unemployment has been kept at a low level. This has been achieved partly through a progressive retirement law, which has contributed to a tripling of the proportion of pensioners among the population and a six-fold increase in state expenses for social security in the period from 1958 to 1978. Secondly, while access to clothing and housing has improved only slightly, distinct achievements have been made in food and beverages, and in health services. The health network has been extended into the rural areas and services are free of charge. Remarkable advancements have been made in the field of education, starting with the historic literacy campaign in 1961, proceeding with the rapid expansion of the primary school system and, in the 1970s, an even faster growth in secondary school education. By 1978 overall school enrollment stood at 3.3 million or one third of the total population.43

Brundenius offers some data about the redistribution of incomes and assets since the late 1950s. The average real income (or GDP) per capita had gone up by about 85% from 1953 to 1973. During this period, the top level incomes had remained constant while lower-level incomes had shown a manifold increase. As a result, the average income of the top fifth which in 1953 was 30 times higher than that of the lowest fifth, in 1973 was only 4.5 times higher.

Behind this dramatic reversal of current trends - data from for instance Brazil and Peru suggest *increasing* differentiation as the general trend of the period - are the two land reforms of the early 1960s, substantial reforms to reduce the cost of living of the poorest, increased minimum salary levels and general wage increases in the low-paid agricultural sector. The poor have been the first to gain: in 1953 the poorest forty percent received just over 6% of total incomes in society, in 1962 the proportion was 17, in 1973 20 and in 1979 25%.a

There is no doubt that, in terms of general welfare and basic needs satisfaction, the Cuban development strategy has been eminently successful. It is also to be credited for continued redistribution during the 1970s, in spite of a number of difficulties in livestock and agricultural production, plus drastic reversals in the world market price of sugar. Neither the economic policies nor the development of Popular Power did however prevent an upsurge of criminality and counter-revolutionary tendencies among the Cuban youth during the latter part of the 1970s. In addition, there were "tendencies to bureaucratism and corruption in parts of the state apparatus, combined with a weakening work discipline; all of these signs pointing in the direction of a general ideological impairment in socialist Cuba."45 The liberal Cuban emigration policies of the 1960s (and the corresponding US immigration policies) which had allowed discontented individuals to leave, had been
considerably tightened during the 1970s, which probably in part accounts for the difficulties.

Another factor whose importance should not be underestimated, is what Brundenius calls the 'demonstration effect' of US affluence, when from 1977 tens of thousands of Cubans in exile in USA were again allowed to visit the island. "Although the main reason for this opening no doubt was to get foreign currency it seems that, on balance, the experience might have been a boomerang for the Cuban government..."46 The resulting exodus in 1980 in its turn gave a strong push to the ideological revitalisation that had already been started before the events at the Peruvian embassy, and which was a central issue at the second party congress in 1980.

The events of 1980 do not support the thesis that general, popular participation is on the way down in Cuba. On the contrary, the demonstrations surrounding the emigration spectacle were massive, to say the least. They were followed by a general upswing in collective forms of voluntary work and wide-ranging participation in the public discussions of the draft second five-year plan 1981-85. In the October 1981 elections, five years after the first general elections, the registered participation was the highest so far reported; over 97% of the electorate.47
Mozambique:  
A Dream Undone

When Mozambique became independent in 1975, after ten years of guemlla struggle, large NATO-supported Portuguese army forces had proved unable to hold out against the much smaller peasant units led by FRELIMO. Perhaps the prime secret behind this outstanding success was Poder Popular or Popular Power—democratic forms of participation in both civil and military life. These experiences from the struggle were to make a forceful imprint on the political organisation of the new society.

The dream of national independence, which guided the formation of FRELIMO in 1962 and the start of the guerrilla struggle two years later—this dream came true. But the dream of growing prosperity in a democratic society—this dream is no longer talked of in a Mozambique now plagued by hunger and widespread banditry. Still, it may be this very legacy which today holds the country together. A DREAM UNDONE is a penetrating insight into the historical process of formation of a new state; the seeps taken to create the basis for a democratic development, and the forces working for economic modernisation through centralisation and advanced technology. The study centers on the inevitable conflicts between these two approaches in a poor and illiterate society. It connects the pre-independence processes with the politically dynamic period up to the Party Congress of 1983 and the Nkomati Agreement with South Africa. It links the macro-perspective of Maputo to the efforts and frustrations of the simple peasants in the north. Many new insights and much new data are offered in this exposé of the political problems of one of the key countries in Southern Africa today.

Bertil Egero is a social scientist, whose contacts with FRELIMO date back to the 1960s. He worked as a coopérante with the new government during 1978-80. The work led to extensive contacts with the democratic organs created after independence, and to visits to most parts of the country. During the 1980s, he has returned frequently for shorter or longer periods.

Bertil Egero is the author of several shorter publications on development in Mozambique and Southern Africa.