The Enemy as Model
Patronage as a Crisis Factor
in Constructing Opposition in Mozambique

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Abstract

Renamo has been the subject of controversy since it was created, no doubt by the Rhodesian secret services, and, afterwards, supported by apartheid South Africa to counter the “Marxist-Leninist” Frelimo single-party regime. Nevertheless, by winning more than one-third of the votes in the first pluralist elections of 1994, Renamo proved that it had a social base. After a huge increase in 1999, Renamo was harshly defeated in the 2004 and 2009 elections. Few studies have been produced from field research within Renamo, which is the case of this article based on former field research in 1994, 2000, and more recently 2006, 2007 and 2009. It aims to study the main reasons behind this inability to build an opposition political party capable of mobilizing people against the arbitrary rule of State neo-patrimonialism. Two main reasons are identified: first, in spite of becoming a civilian party, Renamo has maintained a military-style internal rule, in which nobody can develop their own agency; second, Renamo tries to mimic Frelimo, developing a poor form of clientelism when Frelimo is able to develop a rich one, closely linked with State patronage. Renamo has not been able to develop through day-to-day activity of a “trade-unionism” kind, mobilizing people to demand rights within the Republic rather than favours from the Master.

Work in Progress

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After winning their legitimacy in 1994’s first pluralist elections\(^1\) and a huge increase in the second elections of 1999 (Cahen 2000), the former “apartheid-backed bandits” of civil war days (1977-1992) and their party, the Resistência Nacional de Moçambique (Mozambique National Resistance), were harshly defeated in 2004 and, after winning five city councils in the 2003 local elections (Rosário 2009), lost them all in 2008. A serious split occurred within the party in March 2009, with the birth of the Movimento democrático de Moçambique (MDM, Democratic Movement of Mozambique) led by the Mayor of Beira, the country’s second city (Chichava 2010a, 2010b). Renamo again lost the provincial, legislative and presidential elections of October 2009 in devastating manner, losing half its electorate. More than ever before, the former single party, Frelimo (Frente de libertação de Moçambique, Mozambique Liberation Front) has become an ultra-hegemonic party, merging state and party quite shamelessly. There are several reasons for this deep crisis in Renamo and I will focus only on a couple of them here,\(^2\) relating to patronage and neopatrimonialism (Bratton & van de Walle 1994; Médard 1991; van de Walle 2003).

After some general considerations, I will focus on the historical roots of Renamo’s Frelimo model, then on the uneven competition between the clientelism of Frelimo and that of Renamo, and finally on the question of the political weight of nostalgia for vertical relationships of solidarity, meaning in fact the desire for a Master.

**“Marxism-Leninism”, neopatrimonialism and patronage**

As Mozambique’s ruling party officially claimed to be “Marxist-Leninist” from 1977 until 1989, a focus is necessary on an issue that would seem far removed from our topic: what is the relationship between the so-called “Marxist-Leninist” one-party regime, neopatrimonialism and patronage? First, however, what is the link between neopatrimonialism and patronage? In just a few words, I consider patronage to be the symbolic and cultural dimension of clientelism, and clientelism the economic and social dimension of patronage: in hard conditions of subalternity, people need a Master who will be feared and loved (Geffray 1997) (Médard 1987, 1992 because they cannot live without vertical links of solidarity. In contrast, although dominant, the bourgeois in modern European history is not a master: he is a dominant figure from another social class but without that link of vertical solidarity between classes. The bourgeois is a dominant figure who can be hated, a non-master dominant figure. Obviously, these figures are ideal-types: some bourgeois have developed paternalistic relationships with their workers and some masters are becoming increasingly bourgeois big men (Médard 1987, 1992),\(^3\) but historically speaking, the relationship between master and clients or obliged persons is not a capitalist social relationship.

Patronage and clientelism are two aspects of the same reality, while neopatrimonialism is the tendency towards clientelism when it enters the State apparatus. The great majority of today’s states are Weberian in their official principles, perhaps with the exception of some monarchies in the Gulf. On the periphery of capitalism, they are officially Weberian states despite Weberian principles being betrayed there daily, because the historical context of their birth and their functions for “managing” the link between local society and world economy make Weberian principles more efficient – what historian Frederick Cooper has called the “gate-keeper state” (Cooper 2002). Given the absence or structural weakness of any historically-produced bourgeoisie, however, neopatrimonialism and one of its more spectacular effects, corruption, are necessary to fund the elite and provide them with the social basis for “managing” the population.

I agree with the frequent explanations by which neopatrimonialism exists when there is no clear distinction between state and society, but we must be more precise for there can be two forms of “no clear distinction” between state and society. For example, in the Stalinist state there is no such distinction, but it is not the private sphere which invades the state, but the state sphere


\(^2\) For a general analysis of this crisis, see Cahen 2009, 2010c.

\(^3\) On Jean-François Médard’s approach of African big man problematic, see Daloz 2003, 2006.
that invades the private one. Stalinism may be viewed as a highly authoritarian form of paternalism, but it is not a neopatrimonial state at all.

In our so-called Marxist-Leninist states in Africa, and particularly in the officially Portuguese-speaking ones, there was a tendency towards that non-neopatrimonial form of authoritarian paternalism, at least during the “purest” period prior to neoliberal economic shifts (from 1975-77 to 1983 in Angola4, from 1975-77 to 1987 in Mozambique (Cahen 1985, Mosca 1999), with less clear situations in Cape Verde and São Tomé (Seibert 2006) from 1975 to 1985 and in Guinea-Bissau from 1974 to 1980). I repeat that this is a tendency and only that, because Portuguese-speaking African states were not Stalinist states and I absolutely reject the idea of what some authors have called “afro-communist” or even “afro-stalinist” states.5 These states remained states of capitalist periphery and “Marxism-Leninism” was simply the form their elites found, in a specific context, to express their desire for a modern, European-style nation and succeed in their subaltern westernization. I cannot go into details here, but these statements are needed for the rest of my explanation.6 The archetype is Mozambique, where civil war did not begin immediately (unlike in Angola) and where there was a very dominant historical expression of anticolonialism in the form of Frelimo.7 In independent Mozambique under the charismatic presidency of Samora Machel, there was no (or very little) corruption, but there were privileges for leaders. This is not the same thing at all. Frelimo had a clear project of “managing”, integrating the whole population in order to modernize it and produce a nation quickly within the colonial space called “Mozambique”. It was a paternalist paradigm of authoritarian modernization in which Samora Machel was a dictator and the Frelimo regime a dictatorship,8 but the Frelimo state was a real functional body and not (yet...) an economic enterprise. I have no doubt that the “Marxist-Leninist” period in Portuguese-speaking Africa was the “most Weberian” period of their state history.

So, even when we speak only of the state, paternalism and neopatrimonialism are different phenomena. There may be paternalism without neopatrimonialism, but there cannot be neopatrimonialism without paternalism and, obviously, neopatrimonialism relates only to the state, while paternalism, like clientelism, is a more general tendency in society.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that when the MPLA, Frelimo, PAIGC, PAICV and MLSTP9 turned to neoliberal economic policies from 1983 to 1987, the existence of this established paternalism created a favourable context for the fast expansion of neopatrimonialism. In other words, marrying authoritarian paternalism with neoliberalism soon produced neopatrimonialism. The same persons (at least, the same social elite) remained in power with a different policy. The more-or-less constrained masters of the more-or-less Weberian period became happy masters of the neoliberal period – but that does not mean they succeeded in becoming bourgeois, even though they were very rich.10 In Angola more than in Mozambique, civil war was the tool of this transformation, guaranteeing the huge concentration of wealth and power among a very small number of persons (Messiant 2008-2009, Péclard 2008).

In Marxist-Leninist times, neopatrimonialism did not exist or was very weak, within authoritarian paternalism. Today, in particular in Mozambique, the will to create a homogeneous

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5 For example Ottaway with their Afrocommunism (1981), or even Hodges with his Angola From Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism (2001).
6 For a discussion of neo-colonial African neopatrimonialism, see Cahen 2010b.
7 See acronyms in footnote 9.
8 For a recent study on Frelimo’s use of violence, see Igreja 2010.
9 MPLA: Movimento popular de libertação de Angola (People’s Movement for Angolan Revolution); Frelimo, Frente de libertação de Moçambique (Mozambique Liberation Front); PAIGC, Partido africano da independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde), PAICV, Partido africano da independência de Cabo Verde (African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde); MLSTP: Movimento de libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe (Liberation Movement of São Tomé and Principe).
10 About the hypothetical new Angolan “bourgeoisie”, see Vallée 2008.
and European-style nation remains and it is still necessary to “change the people” (Macagno 2009), but the tools for producing the “New Man” are now different (Cahen 2010a). Henceforth, neopatrimonialism combines with authoritarian paternalism to produce the allegiance of the people. The recent Angolan elections (September 2008) were an expression of that with the triumphal victory of the MPLA with 83% of votes (Roque 2009), and Armando Guebuza’s presidency in Mozambique since 2004 is playing this game very well.11

The Joaquim Chissano period in Mozambique (from the death of Machel through to the third pluralist elections, 1986-2004) was one of fast-growing corruption. The party remained important, but the real location of power was the state. Even if Renamo’s results in 1994 expressed the desire for a more balanced spread of the benefits of the modern Wealth State, the State did not open up socially, remaining the “southernist” state of Maputo and Gaza elites: in the eyes of Renamo, the “communists” had remained in power. In 1999, Renamo nearly won the election, marking the beginning of the end for Chissano. The Frelimo apparatus took fright and looked for a new leader capable of winning. Armando Guebuza, well known for having always been an authoritarian politician, and not a Changane but a Ronga (another southern group, but different from the Changane group of Presidents Mondlane, Machel and Chissano), born in the North of the country, appeared to be the right man at the right time. It is quite true that, while applying completely neoliberal policies, Guebuza has very much revitalized the party, paying far more attention to Northerners than in Chissano’s time, using now surrealistic slogans from Machel’s time such as “the fight continues”, “victory or death”, and recentralizing through the party all the things that the state was officially decentralizing para inglês ver.12 Such was the case of the municipalities elected in a small, but growing number of towns and cities since 1998, and the local councils created in 2003 as advisory bodies for the local development plans, and since 2006 to manage the new local budget of districts, the famous “7 millions meticais” (Forquilha 2009a, 2009b).13 The way of recentralizing is by newly-growing merging of the state and party, and the tool is neopatrimonialism: being a member of the party is necessary, at any level, to obtain privatized enterprises, charges, benefits, credit, commercial licenses, and even very often to be a civil servant.

But there is also a specific aspect of neopatrimonialism that can be called “statist clientelism,” where what is at stake is not the merging of private and state spheres within the state (for instance, a minister who allows privatization in favour of a relative), but where the state helps to develop the Frelimo party in Renamo strongholds or during election campaigns, etc. Salvador Cadete Forquilha gives us this very simple example of the Renamo Delegate in the Gorongosa district, who left for Frelimo after years of hard political work for the former rebellion:

“The [Gorongosa] administrator brought five litres of oil and two rice sacks for my family, I saw the difference with Renamo [which had told to me] it hasn’t anything.”14

There is no ideal-typical neopatrimonialism here, since the local state administrator will not gain any personal benefit with this gift, other than thanks from higher levels of the state for his success in building the Frelimo party in this remote Renamo area. In this case, at the same time, it is statist clientelism towards the former Renamo delegate who receives “rice and oil”, and neopatrimonialism towards Frelimo which receives the means from the state to take over the former Delegate: if not a person, a private body (the Frelimo party) is deeply integrated within the state and uses its benefit to develop. It is not the same thing as in a one-party state where party and state are officially merged. In reality, there is no party in a single-party regime, but only a wide, totalitarian state apparatus which integrates the whole population, and a specialized body

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11 See the two chapters by L. de Brito (2009) and S. Chichava (2009, in Luís de Brito et al 2009).
12 Typical Portuguese expression, deeply rooted in the modern history of Portugal, literally translatable by “For the English to see”, that’s to say, to try to impress, to dazzle (while actually not changing anything).
13 Metical (plural, meticais) is the local currency.
14 Interview in Vanduzi, Gorongosa, February 2009, by Forquilha 2009b.
within this state, named government. In “democracy”, it is necessary to keep all this unofficial and deal in different ways in the big cities and in remote rural areas like in Gorongosa. NGOs are also widely manipulated, appearing to be sent by government and the party in order to solve local problems.

Frelimo has done a very good job in recovering the support of traditional chiefs, accustomed since colonial times to “working with the state,” and who had been pushed into Renamo’s arms by Frelimo’s modernist denial of their very existence. All over the country, the huge majority of so-called “community authorities” are members of the party and, more recently, the components of the advisory local councils which deal with the local budgets of “7 millions of meticais” are closely controlled and composed by state and party members. In the past, the communal village was the way of creating the state apparatus in the country and the bush (Geffray 1990, Casal 1996). Now it is neopatrimonialism and state clientelism (Brito 2010a).

What is the situation of Renamo in the face of this new merging of state and Frelimo? What are the historical roots of Frelimo’s Renamo model?

**Frelimo’s Renamo model**

Renamo “shaped” itself during the “Marxist-Leninist” period we have briefly described. As is well known, the origins of Renamo are rooted not in a political phenomenon but in a military one – although it can be said that there was a political dimension from the very beginning. Saying that the origin of Renamo is military does not at all mean that I agree with the “externalist” thesis which explains the growth of Renamo only by the action of its foreigner supporters, and therefore considers it to be a “bandit group” at the service of the regional interests of the apartheid regime. The social base of Renamo grew insofar as the dynamics of the military conflict allowed segments of society to protect themselves against the state and its authoritarian modernization process (Cahen 1990 and 2002, Geffray 1990). Renamo was not a project; initially a small group of warriors, it became a political phenomenon and created itself fighting against the Frelimo state. Renamo leaders were well aware that their foreign support was infamous because of apartheid and because Rhodesia and South Africa had helped fascist Portugal against the independence of Mozambique. Furthermore, they had the strong feeling they were marginal, people who had not succeeded in “entering the nation” (Cahen 1997), meaning the Frelimo party, at the right moment, or had been expelled from it.

It must also be remembered that in Mozambican history, there had been no place for much plurality in anticolonialism. The colonial space called “Mozambique” was everything but a nation, and had hitherto remained an area constituted only by minorities (in Mozambique, the main ethnic group is the Macua-Lómué, with 30% of the total population at most) and, with very few exceptions, all are present inside and outside the boundaries of Mozambique. The shape of the country, a thin strip of land from North to South, is not an economic space. The old nucleus of Creole societies were in the North East, with close relations with the Swahili area, India and Arabic Gulf, but these elites of the first age of Portuguese colonization were completely marginalized by Lisbon’s decision to plug the Mozambican economy into Witwatersrand capitalism, thus moving the capital from Mozambique Island to Lourenço Marques (today’s Maputo) in the far South in 1897. These old colonial elites have never succeeded in recovering their economic, cultural and political importance. In my opinion, it is one main reason why it has been impossible to have a third force in Mozambique until today: there was the new southern elite, the only elite to form a modernist anticolonial party, Frelimo, in the 1960s, which therefore succeeded in “absorbing” the whole of imagined national community. The fact that Frelimo was

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the sole front of freedom fighters (like in Angola or Guinea-Bissau) does not mean there was any unification of different anticolonial tendencies, but on the contrary that all the other anticolonial movements were very weak. Apart from Frelimo, there were always groups on the margins, socially, ethnically and religiously diverse and incapable of generating an alternative model, but which wanted to enter the Frelimo model, the Frelimo nation and city. These marginal groups may remain like that or may produce some weak political expression, as was seen in the short period between April and September 1974 when several small parties appeared, before being banned soon after by the provisional Frelimo-Portugal government16.

It was no doubt through military dynamics that Renamo succeeded in setting up a huge coalition of heterogeneous marginalities, thanks to the fact that Frelimo’s authoritarian modernization process had transformed the majority of the population into a margin – all those people, in fact, who were unable to establish a stabilized and profitable relationship with modern State.

But this context in the short term and over the longue durée – the military origin of Renamo and historical weakness of non-southern elite nuclei – explains that Renamo leaders were soon feeling a deep need for legitimacy: legitimacy in expressing long-term feelings of suffering, legitimacy in asserting that they were not only apartheid-backed bandits. And legitimacy was Frelimo. In Renamo’s internal documents,17 the desire to speak exactly like Frelimo can be noted very early on. While Frelimo has a Comissário politico, Renamo has Delegados políticos; when Frelimo called itself Partido Frelimo (Frelimo’s party, the party of the Front) from 1977, Renamo called itself Partido Renamo from 1980. When Frelimo, denying that inhabitants who are not “organized” (meaning members of the party or of one of its “mass organizations”) are African rooted societies, is calling them “elementos da população” (elements of population), Renamo calls inhabitants living in the sphere of the modern state “elementos do inimigo” (elements of the enemy). Like Frelimo during the “war of liberation”, Renamo, during the “war for democracy”, set up its Destacamento feminino (female regiment). Like Frelimo, Renamo has its own Veterans League (Associação dos Antigos Combatentes).

Since the end of civil war, Renamo has never published an alternative program, has not asked to change capitals, has not done anything to promote use of African languages in literacy teaching, has not asked for a new definition of the provinces in order to represent ethnic areas18 better, etc. This is not only a case of political weakness – well it is, but Renamo is also incapable of inventing another vision of the nation because its aim is to replace Frelimo in power (or to join it in power), not to change that power; for its leaders, the goal is to enter the Nation from which they have been expelled, not to create another one. Obviously, this gives rise, in turn, to a huge contradiction with its popular social basis. Renamo’s search for legitimacy has thus combined with political weakness to produce an overwhelming tendency to merely mimic Frelimo19.

This was a matter of fact in “Marxist-Leninist” times, but continued in the neoliberal era, thereby ruling out any possibility of new rules for managing the party or of new social claims, etc. Renamo is a political party – which is to say a tool used by some social milieux (or segments of them) to obtain better access to the benefits of the modern state. But it is a politically-weak political party facing a state-party which has never had to lead political campaigns outside those

16 From the April Carnation Revolution to September 1974, Portugal still ruled the colony. During this short pluralist period, a lot of African associations, workers committees and political parties were born. On 7th September, a transitional government was launched, with Portuguese ministries and Frelimo as the only authorized African political expression. Democratic Portugal, which had just ended the one-party system at home, thus helped to enforce it in its former colony, with the blessing of the whole international community (Cahen 1994).
17 ... that is to say documents which were not to be published, expressing a “domestic” effort in convincing itself.
18 Frelimo has maintained unchanged the colonial provincial boundaries, which do not respect the main ethnic areas at all. Obviously, Renamo has expressed criticisms to Frelimo about communal villages when they are no more, against communism when it is surrealistic.it is. More recently, it has begun to criticize Frelimo’s “savage capitalism”, but without any concrete proposals to civilize it.
for state building (such as electoral races). Thus, this mimicking of Renamo is incapable of looking beyond these electoral campaigns and has been totally unable to take any action unrelated to electoral aims. Renamo does not respond to the need of its social base for a kind of “people trade-unionism” to protect itself against the state or – at the same time – to obtain benefits from the state. Last but not least, the military origin of Renamo and the survival of military behaviour within it, again closely mimics the verticality of today’s still “democratically-centralized” Frelimo. Renamo is not a party where people can take initiatives; it is a party where everybody “está à espera de orientações” (“is waiting for orders”). It is the same thing within Frelimo, with the huge difference that Frelimo owns the state and has far more high or medium-level executives than Renamo.

**Opposing poor clientelism to rich clientelism**

Since 1994, as a negative consequence of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (known by its Portuguese acronym Onumoz) (Synge 1997) and its money, it has been accepted that it is not the members who pay for the party, but the party which pays for the members. Subsidies were granted by Onumoz to facilitate the emergence of new political parties and to go some way towards levelling funding between Frelimo and Renamo. But in a society of vertical solidarity relationships in which parties are easily seen as clienteles, the Onumoz trust fund had disastrous effects. Any party functions must be paid for: obviously, within this framework, after the departure of Onumoz in 1995, huge inequality appeared between Frelimo and Renamo. The financial weakness of Renamo, combined with presidential secrecy about all financial matters, provoked a long series of discontent, huge rivalries for positions as MPs (with good state salaries – 26 millions meticais a month in 2004 – instead of the poor party subsidies for the district delegado – one million), intrigues around the President in order to obtain favours, rumours about rivals and so on. In a completely vertical way of running, since the formal structures of the party are not the main places for managing the political activity, Renamo’s President has also been prisoner of these rumours. As he said once to me “I have never wanted to become an MP myself because, with parliamentary activity, I would no longer have enough time to control the party”.

Below the provincial level, a good district delegado or a local delegado is one who can pay for all the needs of the party himself: buying food for local meetings and festivities, or bicycles to visit members, petrol for visiting remote areas by truck, and so on. But after years of “political mobilisation work”, these local or district delegados have obviously asked for financial help from the party and several non-responses or negative responses have had disastrous effects. At the district or provincial levels, the hope of the delegado is to go on to become an MP. But although Renamo draws up the list of candidates in the province, it is the Renamo president who has the final say: I have studied several cases in which the number one chosen by members in a Renamo province was placed in tenth or even in last position. Obviously, each of these cases provokes a local crisis: nobody dares express criticisms of His Excellency the President, but the “victims” do feel marginalized and very often give up their activism or even leave the party. Obviously, Frelimo and SISE pay attention to these problems, offering “rice and oil” at the right moment to the right person, as they do for traditional chiefs...

Another characteristic problem is related to Antigos Combatentes (Veterans). Frelimo has its own Liberation War Veteran League: being recognised as a veteran entitles them to a small state subsidy – which can be very important for peasant families. Obviously, having been a Renamo soldier in the “war for democracy” (1977-1992) does not entitle civil war veterans to anything.

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20 Several examples in Cahen 2009. Demonstrations of November 2000 were in order to protest against the elections of 1999.

21 Interview with A. Dhlakama, Maputo, 12 September 2006.

22 Serviço de informação e segurança do Estado (Intelligence and State security service, the secret service of the Frelimo state). Stemming from the dreaded SNASP (Serviço nacional de acção e segurança popular, National Action Service for People’s Security) of single-party’s time, SISE is no longer a police (it cannot arrest somebody) but remains a surprisingly oversized state body, with a presence in each district. In 2010, the budget of SISE was bigger than that of the Ministry for Agriculture.
They have asked for help from their party for years, but apart from a few dozen guards used for presidential security, they have not received anything. Furthermore, in the process of “civilization”\(^{23}\) of Renamo in 1992-1994, the great majority of them were marginalized politically and very few of them have become MPs. One possible way would have been to develop some economic projects with them, for which help would have been possible from right-wing European Foundations, but almost nothing was done for that. They feel they have been “abandoned” but their view is still that President Dhlakama is OK, but bad guys surround him.\(^{24}\)

They therefore attempt to attract the Master’s attention, rather than criticizing the inability of the party, including the president, to develop social activities. They continue to ask for favours, not for rights. Nevertheless, in 2007, their discontent was so great that Renamo was obliged to organize a special congress in Quelimane to institutionalize the existence of their association. After this meeting, however, nothing else seemed to occur and the association seemed to be paralyzed.

But perhaps the best example of Renamo’s inability to apply the Frelimo model is the question of town councils. The first local elections were held in 1998 in just 33 towns. Renamo boycotted them, officially because democratic conditions were not secured but probably because President Dhlakama\(^{25}\) was afraid of the possible emergence of a new generation of leaders: Renamo could have won several large cities. This decision from the top created some discontent, but at that time Dhlakama was still completely unchallenged. In 2003, Renamo took part in the race and won five of forty-five councils, including Beira, the second city in the country. But Beira is a special case, as a big city with substantial financial resources and its own modernist political tradition since the end of 19\(^{th}\) century. In the other medium-size towns of northern Mozambique (Angoche, Moçambique, Nacala), Renamo won because there was a huge wish among the population to throw out the local Frelimo leadership, very often of southern origin and perceived as a foreign power. But Renamo promised a lot of jobs to its people and was obviously unable to create them. Another problem is that in the Portuguese tradition of municipalities, there is the Mayor and his vereadores da Câmara (Board of Mayor’s assessors), an executive body, on the one hand and the Assembleia Municipal, a kind of local legislative chamber, on the other. Only the mayor and assessors receive a subsidy. In Frelimo days, this was of no importance since almost all town councillors were civil servants in the state with regular salaries. But Renamo people were outside the state apparatus, and those elected thought they would earn their living through this political activity. Seeing only the mayor and assessors with a salary provoked huge rivalries within Renamo municipalities.\(^{26}\)

Furthermore, in this centralized state, municipalities have very limited resources: funding comes from the state, the Frelimo state. Frelimo used two main methods to destroy Renamo municipalities. First, allocating the state budget only after long delays and never approving special local development plans (for example water works in Nacala). Second, and perhaps more importantly, making thorough use of the rivalry between the municipality and district government. In fact, municipalities run only the urban part of the district, with the rural part remaining under the direct rule of the state, without elections. But when it was a Renamo municipality, district governments would retain powers for education, wealth and other social issues in the urban area. In municipalities where there was no rural area, there should no longer have been a district government, since powers were in the hands of the municipalities. But in the three cases where there was no rural area in the district and the municipality had been won by Renamo (Beira, Nacala and Moçambique Island), the Frelimo state maintained the district

\(^{23}\) … that is to say, the process of the military group becoming a civilian party.

\(^{24}\) I have not come back to the field since 2009, so I do not know if the new and devastating defeat during the October 2009 election has had an effect on the relationship between Renamo veterans and its leadership.

\(^{25}\) Afonso Mareta Macaio Dhlakama (born on 1st January 1953) has been president of Renamo since the death of first president and founder of the rebellion group, André Matsangaissa, killed by Mozambican government forces in 1979.

\(^{26}\) See, for example, the Angoche case, where part of Renamo has allied with Frelimo against “official Renamo” and won the council in November 2008 (Rosário 2009).
government, creating a true situation of dual power, Renamo’s poor power and the Frelimo’s rich one. With the exception of Beira, where the new mayor managed to generate his own funds thanks to the importance of the city and port, this rivalry between clientelisms always benefited Frelimo, the author of the main social achievements.

How could such situations be dealt with? Renamo was completely unprepared for mobilizing people outside the clientelist paradigm. I will present two examples, drawn from a field research on Renamo in September and October 2006 (after its first harsh defeat in 2004, but before the loss of all its municipalities in 2008). The first scene is in Lumbo (the mainland part of Moçambique Island municipality won by Renamo in 2003), where there has been a huge problem of unemployment for years, since the World Bank caused the closure of the cashew factories.\textsuperscript{27} They have never opened again, despite the fact the World Bank recognized its “error”. While discussing this issue with the Lumbo Renamo chef de posto (chief of locality), I suggested to him that it could be possible, even easy, to create women’s cooperatives to process the cashew and that European NGOs could be very interested in helping such a gendered initiative. He was very interested, took noted of it, but obviously nothing has happened. More generally speaking, the only way to challenge clientelist state behaviour is by generating a movement in which citizens no longer want favours, but ask for rights.

This “transformation” – asking for rights, not for favours – is certainly one of the most positive effects of “participatory democracy,” as the Workers Party in Brazil has done in some major cities – not pulling off miracles, but transforming subjects into citizens. Here is the second scene, this time in Maputo at the headquarters of the Renamo party. The story is, once again, that I explained to President Dhlakama what participatory democracy was, as organized by the Workers Party in Brazil, still in opposition at the time, and how, with its hundred neighbourhood delegates, it had empowered WP municipalities and helped them to achieve goals or confront the state, building the party at the same time. It was an odd exercise for me, as a French left-wing academic, explaining to the right-wing former rebel why it could be useful to do as the WP did in Brazil: Dhlakama was very interested and wrote a lot of pages very quickly to note all my remarks down… Obviously, no such thing has happened.\textsuperscript{28} Renamo has stagnated, trying to oppose its poor clientelism to the richer and far more efficient clientelism of the state. \textit{But Renamo had no idea of doing anything else.} No doubt also because of fraud, but not only for that reason, Renamo lost all its municipalities in the 2008 local elections. In Beira, the former Renamo Mayor won the race, but had been expelled from the party a few months before, because Dhlakama had tried to replace him by another (and far weaker) candidate… The powerful mayor who leads what is now the only municipality in the country not ruled by Frelimo, had become unbearable for him as Renamo’s necessarily sole Master.

Seeking the master

We have seen the internal crisis that occurred when the Renamo president marginalized a delegado wanting to become an MP. These cases became more numerous in 2004, with the heavy electoral defeat and the reduced number of well-paid positions as MPs. It could be said that the “social base” of Renamo clientelism narrowed deeply from that moment on, and this obviously become worse from 2009 on.

But in other cases, there are situations in which it was the local members who wanted to replace a delegado. The delegado is the only figure who can be substituted, since the assessores [assessors] are appointed by the President in order to “help” the provincial delegado (therefore nobody will ask them to leave). But even if, according to the party Statutes, the members have the right to dismiss a province delegado, they will never do it without the President’s agreement. In several of these cases I studied, a delegado may be criticised, rightly or wrongly, for poor

\textsuperscript{27} The World Bank had asked for the rough cashew to be exported to India, instead of being processed locally, based on a purely financial calculation (according to WB, processing in India was cheaper than in Mozambique).

\textsuperscript{28} Both examples are from Cahen 2009.
mobilization work, or for favouring people from one ethnic group. But one main purpose is always forgotten: there is no debate about political orientation, either national or provincial or local, no debate about which kind of campaigns could be organized between electoral races in order to protect people better against the state or to build the party. The debate, or the argument, is only to seek and find the local, district or provincial right chief, the big man able to do the job and pay for it. It is not a political debate, there is no thinking about possible political roots for problems with a delegado, it is always what I have called the desire for a Master or, failing that, at least for a big man.

Two other cases of discontent can be mentioned. One very early on, in 1996, when some veterans formed a dissident association of former soldiers who had been discriminated against (Associação dos Combatentes desfavorecidos da Renamo, Acodermo). Years later, after taking part in an initial split in Renamo in 2004 which created a small party, PDD of Raúl Domingos (former number 2 in the party), some of them, created a Junta de Salvação da Renamo (Junta for Renamo’s safety) in 2006. But when reading the few documents from these two dissident wings, it is impossible to discern any proposal for a different political positioning or program. They only speak about the situation of former soldiers or problems running the party, without ever asking for the president’s resignation. It is a call to him, once more (Cahen 2009).

The end of the post-civil war period

A major split occurred in Renamo in March 2009, with the Mayor of Beira founding his own party (MDM) and the great majority of the limited number of Renamo intellectuals joining it, along with a majority of lower-level members in central regions. It is too soon to analyse the extent to which this attempt may be successful, but its first steps have been very modest. The results of the MDM in the October 2009 elections were disappointing, in spite of good results in the central neighbourhoods of the main cities, which means that elite milieux, which have never voted for Renamo, have begun to hesitate (Chichava 2010a, 2010b ). Anyway, the MDM can grow only if Renamo falls, because they are competing for the same social base. Will it mean a new political culture? It is difficult to say, for two years after its birth the MDM has yet to produce a political programme and remains completely identified with the person of its founder, Deviz Mbepo Simango, the mayor of the country’s second city crowned in memory of the tragedy of his father, Uria Simango29. It therefore appears to be an attempt to create a new Master, in the place of the former one who has failed, even if one can think that his civilian background within Renamo (he has never been a guerillero) could sooner or later help to overcome the problem.

The elections of October 2009 were devastating for Renamo,30 and obviously not only because of fraud. As the European Union report states,

“Frelimo’s overwhelming victory suggests that the results reflect the choice of a vast majority of Mozambican voters. This stems from its well-planned and executed campaign, a considerable, imbalance between its campaign expenditure and these of the other two main opposition parties, Frelimo’s foothold within local level administration, and the limited alternative choice for voters, in particular at district level”31.

29 Uria Simango, a founding member of Frelimo in 1962, was the deputy-president of the Front, but was later expelled, arrested and killed, without any trial, as a “counter-revolutionary agent” (Neemo 2004, Cahen 2008b).

30 According to the European Union Election Observation Mission in Mozambique, “Armando Guebuza won with 2,974,627 votes (75.01 percent), Frelimo received 2,907,335 votes (74.66 percent) at the legislative elections. In absolute terms, Guebuza increased his share of the vote by approximately 50 percent from 2,804,226 votes in 2004. Dhlakama’s share of the votes continued its steep decline, from 998,059 votes in 2004 to 650,679 in 2009 (16.41 percent). For his first attempt, Simango received 340,579 votes (8.59 percent). Results for the national parliament gave Frelimo 191 Members of Parliament, 51 to Renamo and 8 to the MDM. Consequently, Frelimo managed to secure a two-thirds parliamentary majority while Renamo lost 40 seats as compared to 2004. Turnout was 44.63 percent, to be compared with 36 percent in 2004”. European Union Election Observation Mission 2010.

31 ibid.
In other words, after three more or less free and fair Frelimo victories (1994, 1999, 2004), in a context of high economic growth rates combined with huge and maintained poverty, one can say that in 2009, Mozambicans have now “learnt” the idea that Frelimo and Guebuza are here to stay and that it is therefore far better to have a good relationship with them, in the hope of benefitting a little bit and enjoying a better life. Above all, the vote expresses an allegiance, which does not exclude the possibility of some sudden, desperate uprisings. The allegiance is extensive, but not necessarily sound. For Renamo, nevertheless, it also means a further narrowing of its economic base and patronage capacity, since the state subsidy is calculated on the basis of the number of votes, and it lost more than 56% of its MPs in ten years, as one can see in the figure:

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<tr>
<td>Frelimo</td>
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<td>133</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renamo</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>90</td>
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<td>Others</td>
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Dhlakama no longer even lives in Maputo, having decided, for obscure reasons, to establish his personal quarters in the northern city of Nampula, without ever leaving the city for party work elsewhere. When violent riots occurred in Maputo and a few other cities on 1st, 2nd and 3rd September 2010 (after a first case on 5th February 2008), further to the State’s decision to increase the prices of rice, water, oil and bread, and even in front of violent repression by the police (Granjo 2010), Renamo denounced “both sides” and did not even try to capitalize on the revolt. Perhaps it would not have been easy, since the social aspect of the riot did not produce political demands per se, like in Tunisia or Egypt, but the absence of the opposition during the demonstrations worsened the gap between social anger and political demands and, more generally, prevented the politicization of the relationship between the individual and the state. One mutineer explained this gap well, telling a journalist, in his popular way of speaking Portuguese: “Tamos chorar pra nosso pai” (“We are crying for our Father” [President Guebuza]): the Master was still good, even if he was surrounded by bad counsellors. The September riot was typical of what one could call a social movement within a society of subjects rather than citizens, which still clamours for the favours of the Master rather than for rights within the Republic (Cahen 2011).

Anyway, in a society where political resources almost all come from the state, either directly or indirectly, in which neopatrimonialism and state clientelism are deeply rooted, it is a challenge for any opposition to succeed in mobilizing a large social base among people who need the state, precisely because of their absolute poverty. Often, poverty is not the mother of revolt, but the mother of dependence and the search to be member of a clientele. Social movements within a society of subjects provoke first an appeal for more patronage, but at the same time, the “social gathering” it provokes may mature into the conditions for the emergence of a citizens’ society, by politicization of the relationship with the state.

But how to challenge dependence from within a system of dependence? It is worth noting that what has been explained about Mozambique, and Renamo in particular, is close to what may occur in several other African countries. Is not an opposition party in Africa, more or less, always a party in crisis, since it has lost, or not obtained, access to state resources? But there are also several examples of parties having lost power and being able to survive or even come back and win later elections. Remaining within the officially Portuguese-speaking African countries, Cape Verde’s PAICV was harshly defeated in the first pluralist elections of 1991, but has survived,
won elections ten years after and won them again in February 2011. It seems that the situation of an opposition party is worse when it stems from a warrior group, actually,\textsuperscript{35} that may have been able to produce a political party, but only a politically-weak political party. Indeed, contrary to what is often written, the issues of political programme and political identity are quite important for maintaining and building a party in Africa. Big men are not a guarantee. Renamo appeared and grew as a phenomenon used by part of the population as a tool to express their wish for another kind of state, far from Frelimo’s authoritarian modernization process. Therefore, regardless of what wartime Renamo might have been (which is open to discussion), its “social usefulness” in peacetime has turned it into a political party. It is not because its political weakness has appeared more and more obvious from 1999 that one must in retrospect analyse it as a parasitical body that got votes in the first elections only by fear of a return to war and thus saw its votes decline as war faded into the past.\textsuperscript{36} There are a lot of other reasons, as I have tried to demonstrate, to explain the decline of Renamo. But the warrior origin and subsequent political weakness are factors aggravating the effects of the huge imbalance between the clientelism of Frelimo and that of Renamo.

To contest dependence within dependence would imply a political culture and a political break that Renamo, a civilian political party rooted in a militarist and authoritarian paternalist tradition, is unable to produce.

References


\textsuperscript{35} Let me insist: I am speaking of a warrior group, and not of parties which have led armed struggle but were, from their origin, political movements (like Frelimo, Algerian FNL or Latin-American guerrillas). The history of Renamo is the one of the transformation of a warrior group into a political party, which is a specific process (Messiant & Marchal 1997).

\textsuperscript{36} This thesis is proposed by Luís de Brito (2010b).
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