Multiple Sovereignties and Summary Justice in Mozambique
A Critique of Some Legal Anthropological Terms

Bjørn Enge Bertelsen

Abstract: Mozambique has echoed developments in other sub-Saharan countries by recently 'recognizing' its traditional authorities and extending their powers. Some celebrate this as 'legal pluralism' and what Boaventura de Sousa Santos calls a 'heterogeneous state'. I question such assessments on the basis of case material collected in Chimoio, Mozambique, from 2007 to 2008. The two cases presented here explore the 2008 spate of the burning of alleged thieves and an individual's search for protection in a poor neighborhood. Overall, the article aims to suggest a reformulation of some political and legal anthropology developed in the context of Africa and, especially, to avoid some of the universalizing typologies and individuating features of such anthropology.

Keywords: heterogeneous state, legal anthropology, legal pluralism, Mozambique, multiple sovereignties, state, summary justice, violence

Recent reforms within the legal, administrative, and political sectors of Mozambique have exposed the complexity of its legal and political landscape.[1] From the perspective of those living in the impoverished and frequently dangerous and violent urban and peri-urban communities (*bairros*), a great variety of agencies and authorities can be approached at times of difficulty or trouble. These range from traditional healers (*n'angas*), police, and government bureaucrats to political party secretaries, among others.

I explore here the general situation in which marginalized and threatened communities take it into their own hands to administer summary justice without direct reference to any state or other relatively independent agency. I also examine the complex relations between state institutions and agents, on the one hand, and other non-state and more traditional arbiters, on the other hand, along with the socio-moral orders that are relevant to their practice.

What I refer to as the traditional field is more encompassing than is often assumed by analysts of the situation in Mozambique. The importance of traditional authorities reaches into what are often conceived of as the more dominant and official domains of state and government practice, such as that of protection. I aim to demonstrate this position by examining a specific event, whereby summary popular justice threatened but was ultimately resolved by the accused, whose life was in the balance, through recourse to traditional agencies and faculties.

The ethnography presented throws into question the worth of such long-standing notions as 'legal pluralism' in accounting for the kind of processes I describe. The argument I develop also has relevance for other concepts, such as Boaventura de Sousa Santos's (2006a) notion of the 'heterogeneous state'. I replace such concepts with the idea of 'multiple sovereignties', which I consider addresses more adequately the ethnographic material presented.

A Historical Sedimentation of Conflicting Authority Structures

Portuguese colonial domination of Mozambique came to an end in 1975 with the success of the liberation struggle led by FRELIMO (the Liberation Front of Mozambique), which had begun in 1964. But peace was short-lived. In 1977, a devastating civil war gripped the country in which FRELIMO became locked in fighting with the insurgent group RENAMO (the Mozambican National Resistance), which was initially supported by South African and Rhodesian colonial powers. A negotiated peace between the rival parties was finally settled in 1992. Successive general elections (in 1994, 1999, 2004) were all narrowly won by FRELIMO, thus underscoring the party's long-standing dominance of government and state structures.[2]

A recent process of official 'recognition' of so-called traditional authorities has complicated the image of FRELIMO and the one-party state.[3] This recognition has meant that traditional authorities (*régulos*)—at one point imperative for Portuguese colonial administration—have once again become important politically, legally, and administratively (Buur and Kyed 2006; Buur, Silva, and Kyed 2007; Florêncio 2005).[4] However, recognition in the Mozambican context is neither straightforward nor politically self-evident. FRELIMO, as part of its struggle against colonial rule, sought to eliminate what it defined as traditional authorities and influence. This was most apparent well into the 1980s. Those whom FRELIMO defined as *régulos*, or persons who controlled what might be termed 'ritual authority' and who manipulated the cosmologies integral to the moral order of local populations, were to be denied their authority and influence, as this was based on 'obscurantism' (*obscurantismo*). These positions were instead to be assumed by party secretaries and party committees (*grupos dinamizadores*) (Santos 1984). New institutional arrangements in the form of popular courts (*tribunais populares*) were introduced to replace, for example, chiefs' courts, which had functioned in the interests of the colonial administration (Isaacman and Isaacman 1982; Sachs and Welch 1990).

FRELIMO's radical project of post-independence state building and societal transformation was deeply antipathetic to a considerable array of traditional agencies, and not just those that were obviously integral to the former colonial administration. This attack on the traditional field and the construction of a state-ordered social polity conform well with Clastres' critique of state formation being necessarily 'ethnocidal' (*ethnocidaire*) in its unifying aspects (1974: 107). Clastres' vision of the state is essentially one of a machinery of governance that is antagonistic to multiplicity and oriented toward creating an order of 'the One'—alluding to singularity, a monopoly over violence, and the figure of the sovereign (Clastres [1974] 1987: 215–218). These dynamics of state as violently creating oneness resonates with the rhetoric of a necessary national 'ethnocide' by Samora Machel (1974: 39), who shortly after became Mozambique's first president: "To unite all Mozambicans, transcending traditions and different languages, requires that the tribe must die in our consciousness so that the nation may be born."

Machel's vision, implemented in FRELIMO's post-independence societal cleansing, was seen as imperative to realize the full potential of the new political order of Mozambique (Dinerman 2006: 48).[5] This transformation, however, was incomplete as the country became embroiled in the civil war (1977–1992) between a FRELIMO-dominated state and the RENAMO guerrilla movement. During the civil war, RENAMO targeted those who were conceived to be instruments of the state, such as teachers, nurses, and party secretaries, and systematically killed them. State infrastructure, such as schools, health posts, bridges, and telephone lines, was also destroyed (Wilson 1992). RENAMO also capitalized on popular antipathy with FRELIMO's anti-tradition politics by declaring itself to be the 'protector of tradition' and waging what it called 'a war of the spirits' against the FRELIMO state. Crucially, during the war, RENAMO appropriated and redefined key elements of the traditional field. It did so by installing chiefs in the areas it controlled and by, effectively, re-creating or reaffirming ritual authority in its domains (Geffray 1990).[6] The thwarting of FRELIMO's radical project by the civil war and RENAMO's war-time appropriation and redefinition of the traditional field created highly ambivalent and often antagonistic relations between it and the state order—not merely between state agents and *régulos*.

The current attempts at state deregulation and efforts to bring the authority of the state and that of the traditional field into greater conjunction must be understood against this backdrop of post-independence politics and the civil war (see Bertelsen 2002, 2003; West and Kloeck-Jenson 1999).[7] This process can be exemplified by the creation of so-called community authorities (*autoridades comunitárias*) through an official decree from 2000 (Boletim da República 2000). Community authorities are meant to be local-level representatives vis-à-vis the state apparatus, and the decree mentions party secretaries, traditional chiefs, or 'other legitimate leaders' as to whom these might be.[8] At the same time, the decree does *not* revoke any powers vested to authorities of the formal state apparatus, such as party secretaries. Therefore, the seemingly straightforward process of 'recognition' of de facto authorities may rather be described as a process of 'sedimentation', where an increasing number of overlapping and structurally

adverse authorities derive potency from present as well as past political structures, cosmologies, and violent conflicts (Bertelsen 2004, 2007a).

This situation—in which the old cleavages and, therefore, ambivalences are being sustained by current state deregulation—is further complicated by a resource-strapped, inefficient, and often corrupt public bureaucracy, and by police with a presence often limited to town centers—the so-called *bairro cimento*. In the *bairros* outside these centers, the agents and institutions of the state frequently operate virtually autonomously or independently of the bureaucratic authority in which they are formally embedded. Rather, their official positions within the state order form the basis for novel forms of control that are entirely outside the rules of bureaucratic hierarchy and legitimacy (see also Baker 2003).[9] These forms of control are often oriented around violently supported profit making in the formal, informal, and illicit economies—a fact that has led analysts to claim that the Mozambican state itself is threatened by influential criminal networks that have "parallel power base[s] from which to challenge the structures and capacities of the state" (Gastrow and Mosse 2002: 18).[10]

The ambivalence and uncertainties as to who holds authority and power after the recent restructuring of authority is particularly problematic at the grass roots, in the everyday world of often dangerous *bairros*. For example, in several Chimoio *bairros* the community authorities are understood by many as being integral to the FRELIMO-dominated state apparatus. As a consequence of its perceived FRELIMO link, a great number of inhabitants neither consult nor trust these purportedly community representatives. Instead, they may address representatives of the opposition RENAMO party, criminal networks, traditional authorities, or other formations of authority with their diverse problems and preoccupations. For the inhabitants of the *bairros*, these complex sediments of overlapping and conflicting state and non-state authority structures create dramatic situations of insecurity in circumstances when fundamental needs for protection, justice, and conflict resolution are at stake. This situation is experienced as life-threatening—one in which the line between life and death is fragile, narrow, and crucial.

The 2008 Burning of Thieves in Chimoio: Popular Justice Invoked and Reorganized

The majority of the inhabitants of Chimoio, the capital of Manica province in central Mozambique, live in its impoverished *bairros*. As elsewhere in Mozambique, crucial elements of day-to-day life are bound up in the struggle to establish order and certainty in a reality where many feel vulnerable or powerless against criminals and other agents of violence and predation. In this struggle, the conflicts between, and partial nature of, the various authority structures—from the national police force to the community authorities—fail to adequately resolve people's concerns. As a way of administering justice in the face of these dangers, a common, long-standing practice has been the popular beating of

thieves. However, during the first months of 2008, this practice rapidly developed into a lethal form when around 12 alleged thieves were not only beaten but also burned to death. Relative to the considerably larger cities of Beira and Maputo, Chimoio's much higher rate of summary justice is telling of its intensity.[11] In this period, the immediate justice carried out by burnings usually developed along the following pattern. Once the shout "Mbava" (Thief) is heard in a marketplace or a street, many will participate in a chase to catch him. Once the thief is apprehended, a crowd will beat him senseless with fists, sticks, and stones. After a brief period, someone will yell "Kupisa munhu" (Burn the person) or "Kupisa mbava" (Burn the thief), followed by a more or less collaborative effort to provide dry grass, wood, petrol, and preferably a tire. The collected flammables are then heaped upon the more or less unconscious person, and, when lighted, the flames consume the life of the alleged *mbava*. After a short period of time, when death is confirmed, people will move away and leave the charred and smoking remains of the *mbava* in the same place that he was killed.

During an afternoon in a Chimoio *bairro* in May 2008, I followed the case of an *mbava* who, when breaking into a house, had been caught *in flagrante* by neighbors. The neighbors as well as the house owner prepared for his burning. This act was, however, aborted after someone telephoned the police, who, rather surprisingly, showed up. Upon their arrival and very reluctantly, the police officers dragged the severely beaten thief onto their truck and took him to the hospital. On the truck en route to Chimoio's central hospital, the police officers all agreed that it would have been better if the *mbava* was now dead. "Why did you not burn him? You should end these things here [i.e., in the *bairros*]," one of the officers half-accused and half-asked my friend, whose house the *mbava* had broken into. "He was a thief and even carried *tchitumwa*," the officer added. *Tchitumwa* is a small, magical bundle that the thief carried on his person. Made from nebulous liquids, such as the blood or liquid of a corpse, and procured from a *n'anga* (traditional healer), it is used to protect the thieves' work but is also associated with *uroi* (sorcery). For all involved, the *tchitumwa* was akin to a smoking gun.

After having accompanied the police truck with the thief to the hospital, my friend and I visited the thief's family, as he wished to notify them of what had occurred. With the exception of the thief's mother, all expressed the view, including others of the thief's kin, that the culprit should have been killed then and there. The thief's brother said: "It would have been better if you had come here to say that 'you know, the *mbava* ended his life there with the population, and I came afterwards.' That way, his mother could not do anything about it." Indeed, the thief's mother mustered all kinds of moral force. What followed the aborted burning were two days in which my friend was coerced to accompany the mother in her attempts to set her son free by visiting police stations, local court administration, and so forth. As the two men were related and as she was a well-known *profete* (prophet healer) (see, e.g., Luedke 2006), she combined, to coercive effect, threats of using *uroi* (sorcery) to kill or hurt my friend with arguments about the obligations of kinship.[12]

Evident in the case above are crucial social, territorial, and political dimensions of this form of summary justice. Firstly, the finiteness of burning is linked to crucial dimensions of sociality. For one, the circumstances of the *mbava*'s death—caught in the act and thus justly killed by a collective agent—will avert the basis for potentially retributive acts against the killers by both the thief's kin as well as the state's apparatus of justice. The moral authority of the collective public is, as a consequence, generally accepted by various forms of authority and agency. Such moral authority is also reflected in the popular experiences of no harmful or vengeful spirits (*tchikwambo*) being created from a person justly killed. The anti-human and anti-social character of the thief is also underlined discursively, as epitomized in the phrase "Não é pessoa isto" (this is not a person). This comment is frequently uttered by bystanders to burnings and in post hoc conversations. As the killing of an *mbava* in such a way is not met by immediate retributive acts, does not elicit any spiritual danger, and will not involve attempts at freeing the *mbava* by bribing the police, the burning "is ended there," as one man put it during an interview. Burning therefore involves a severing of relationality and ruptures the life-cycle transition from bodily to spiritual being upon death. In such a sense, the summary justice of burning is an encompassment of—and an attack on—anti-social matters where the perceived justness of violent death precludes reinsertion into society of the destructive potencies of the *mbava*. Perhaps paradoxically, practices of instant and popular execution can thus be understood as a defense of the social and society rather than being sociality's other.[13]

Evident in the police officers' insistence on confining burnings to the *bairros* are also the dynamics of the ongoing and contested territorial reorganization of the domains of state control. At the time of the burnings and beyond, a police policy was that burnings would not be tolerated in Chimoio's center, and very few instances have been reported. Contrarily, in the *bairros*, as exemplified above, burnings are frequent. This territorial division is seen by *bairro* inhabitants as being endorsed by state agents. In public meetings in the *bairros* in early 2008, the president of Chimoio's city council, many informants told me, wholeheartedly supported burnings. He underlined, however, that this was acceptable only as long as this was done in the *bairros*.[14] This message was very popular among ordinary people. But it was also in correspondence with the viewpoint of many police officers, who complained about being called to the *bairros* when its population should—as we heard above—"end these things here."[15] Effectively, the council president's position exemplifies state involvement and de facto state reordering of territorial arrangements for the execution of summary justice in moments of social upheaval. By condoning and ordering the practice in certain territorial domains, state authority is asserted, and legitimacy is conferred to the practice. This involvement of state agents in the territorial 'zoning' of a death-bringing practice has its corollary in post-mortem practices. Upon death, the thief's bodily remains, my informants claim, are collected by the police or municipality workers and transported to Chimoio's outskirts, where they are unceremoniously dumped. By refraining from burying the scorched remains and instead transferring them to the margins of

sociality—where the city and settlements meet the bush (figuratively, if not factually)—crucial links and boundaries between sociality and the domains of state control are emphasized and created.

These dramatic shifts in both practices of popular justice (from beating to burning) and state territorial organization of justice must be seen against the backdrop of particular dramatic events around 23 February 2008 in Chimoio. At the time, a particularly brutal gang of (alleged) Zimbabweans committed violent robberies and rape in the *bairros.* Consequent upon public outrage, the police arrested gang members only to release them a few days afterward. Unprecedented rioting in the heart of the *bairro cimento* ensued in which some shops were sacked, car traffic was blocked, police vehicles were burned, one police station was sacked, and another police station was under a 14-hour siege by people hurling objects at it. Significantly, two of the alleged Zimbabwean robbers were caught by the rioters and burned to death, initiating a particular intense period of summary justice.[16]

Beyond its material destruction, the riot's broad popular participation and the way that it initiated the execution of summary justice entailed significant changes. Firstly, the direct attack on the apparatus of the state implied a perceived shift in people's relation with the police. "Before, we used to be afraid of the police. Now they are afraid of us," a young man told me. In his opinion, the riot had successfully renegotiated dimensions of both state and police authority to the advantage of the people. This dimension is related to the second change—that of invoking the reappropriation of popular justice. In the context of increased levels of violence and the rising uncertainty as to who are the de facto authorities in the ongoing process of the sedimentation of authority outlined above, the embracing of ideas of popular justice—especially in the face of the state authorities confining themselves to the *bairro cimento*—was argued by several as necessary and was used to inspire slogans by even more.

This crucial appropriation of ideas and practices of popular justice is informed by vivid memories of socialist systems of justice now discarded under the official multi-party democracy policies of Mozambique. Under Machel's presidency (1975–1986), however, FRELIMO introduced the public flogging and beating of thieves as a measure to achieve a socialist legality in the form of popular justice in politically and socially adverse circumstances (Sachs and Welch 1990: 111–116). This form of popular justice continued throughout the civil war, coming to an end only in the immediate post-war period. Nevertheless, with Armando Guebuza's presidency following the 2004 election, Machel's thoughts on justice and thieves were resurrected and became prominent in official rhetoric. For many *bairro* dwellers, this rhetoric was understood as a return to a Machel-style, hard-line stance against *mbava*—a stance also frequently understood in terms of the recent formation of police death squads in Mozambique (for details, see Bertelsen 2007a, 2009).[17]

The 2008 riots and burnings thus point to a reappropriation of popular justice that has been influenced by memories of the Machel era, which have been sustained and informed in part by both the Mozambican president Guebuza and Chimoio's top-level political apparatus. In sum, this novel formation of

summary justice must be seen as having been born out of a situation with a range of partial authority structures, a fragmentation of police authority, and a territorial reorganization of state order and practices of justice.[18] In terms of the domain of legality, the historical dimensions of summary and popular justice exemplify Boaventura de Sousa Santos's (1987: 282) important point about the durability of law, underlining that "legal revocation is not social eradication." However, as the analysis above has made clear, the invocation of popular justice in the development of the burning is also intrinsic to the ongoing reordering of the sovereign and territorial domains of the Mozambican state.

Violence, Law, and Insecurity in the *Bairros*

In these contexts of economic uncertainty and frequent violence, many young men in the *bairros* combine being street peddlers of illegal and legal goods with maintaining kin relations with rural households. These rural-urban kin relations give vital access to land plots for cultivation (*machambas*), especially of maize, which provides basic food security for many households (see also Sheldon 1999). Nonetheless, in the *bairros* material conditions and household and neighborhood constellations and relationships are unstable, characterized by uncertainty regarding social, spiritual, and economic dimensions.[19]

One of my informants, whom I call Paulo, maintains these important kin relations with his attempt to enter the wage labor market. In early January 2007, he and an acquaintance had the good fortune to be hired as bricklayers for putting up a *banca fixa*, a small roadside shop selling dried fish, sugar, oil, and biscuits. However, a week after starting work, Paulo was nearly killed when he was mistaken for a burglar. According to Paulo and witnesses, he was attacked by neighbors, who, ignoring his protests, mobilized, beat him, burned him with sticks, and chopped at his limbs with machetes. Following this violent intervention, they dragged him, unconscious and bleeding, to the police station in the *bairro cimento*, where he was locked up in an overcrowded cell. I arrived to do fieldwork a week after he was imprisoned and was rapidly introduced to his friends' and family's claims of his innocence. When I visited him in prison, he was still seriously injured and unsure of surviving, since diseases, overcrowded cells, and extremely poor food and water dominate prison conditions in Chimoio. A great many prisoners and non-prisoners alike are also certain that the prison's *sadza*, the staple food dish based on maize meal, is deliberately poisoned with cement to kill the prisoners. This viewpoint echoes the belief in sorcerers who poison the food of others, with the poison slowly and destructively eating its way inside the bodies of the sorcerers' victims.

While Paulo was in prison, his family mobilized in different ways. His parents relocated from their rural home to their daughters' homes in the *bairro*. They did so in order to visit Paulo daily and give other forms of support, even though it meant breaking the agricultural cycle during the rainy season. In addition to bringing vital food and water, a host of other resources was used to save their son: prison guards were bribed to bring in medicine for his open wounds,

an extensive network of kin was mobilized to insist on Paulo's innocence, and the family visited and bribed the police in order to obtain information regarding evidence and the pending trial. A literate relative contributed by jotting down Paulo's version of the event to be given the judge in court. Party secretaries, community authorities, and other officials were asked to attempt to stop the trial. Paulo's father and I also contacted the accusing family to reach an understanding in the form of compensation. All these attempts failed, and two weeks later a provincial court sentenced Paulo to two months in prison. The sentence was, however, converted into a fine, and within days he was released.

Nevertheless, neither Paulo nor his family were certain of his survival. Reflecting on the people who wanted to kill him for a robbery that he claimed he did not commit; on the neighbors' hatred, now that he was believed to be an *mbava*; on the bricks and metal sheets stolen from his home while he was incarcerated; on the need to renew the traditional protection of self, body, and house after narrowly escaping death, both within and outside of prison, Paulo told me: "To die here does not cost much. Many people would like to be rich and powerful. That is why one has to protect oneself. You can have somebody killed here for 50 dollars. And it is easy to die. *Chi!* To die here does not cost much." Paulo's expression of existential uncertainty accurately describes a common sense of being at risk—a sense one may appreciate, given the increasingly violent practices of popular justice analyzed above, as well as the violence and danger of life in the *bairros* in general. However, in contrast to the case of the *mbava* caught red-handed above, where only his mother supported his continued life, the murky circumstances around Paulo's near death at the hands of the neighbors meant a broad mobilization of kin and family in order to restore Paulo's personhood and avert new danger for him and his kin. A first measure undertaken with regard to the latter was to consult a *n'anga*, a traditional healer, in order to cleanse his body of danger (*kudusa tchicume*), to protect the body anew (*kufunga muiri*), and to comprehend the wider circumstances of his trouble. Crucially, by consulting a *n'anga*, his immediate kin group, *dzindza*, searched for both causal connections as well as remedies to Paulo's obviously unprotected bodily and spiritual condition. Moreover, this interest reflected that the danger afflicting Paulo was one potentially harmful for the entire *dzindza*. Paulo's condition was therefore of collective concern.

With spiritual guidance, the *n'anga* located several dangerous and harmful forces, the most important of which was Paulo's paternal grandfather, who had been a hunter—a powerful and dangerous figure known across southern Africa.[20] The *n'anga* divulged that this hunter had, on his travels, killed and robbed humans. As opposed to the killing of the *mbava* above, which does not create a harmful and dangerous spirit (*tchikwambo*), since the thief is seen as justly killed, the murders of hapless persons do create a *tchikwambo*.[21] Once created, the *tchikwambo* will, at some point in time, seek revenge or recognition from the killer's *dzindza*, and in this case Paulo was attacked. However, in addition to the *tchikwambo*, the *n'anga* pointed out a female neighbor who had used *uroi* (black magic or sorcery) against him. She envied Paulo the metal sheets of his house, his radio, and other commodities—an envy that Paulo

through the years had discussed with me as "very dangerous."[22] This form of envy is seen as correlating with the use of *uroi* to harm specific others. The dangerous dynamics at work, as pointed out by the *n'anga*, was accepted by Paulo, his father, and his *dzindza*. As a result, ritual measures were generated by the *n'anga* for both the renewed protection of Paulo and the appeasement of the *tchikwambo*.

The case of Paulo underlines both individual and collective dimensions to the apportionment of blame for his unprotected and dangerous condition: individual in the form of Paulo's material accumulation without redistribution, which had created dangerous *uroi*, and collective in the sense of vengeance enacted by the *tchikwambo*, due to Paulo's paternal grandfather's violent acts. Not only had Paulo's paternal grandfather transgressed boundaries for both moral behavior and the hunter's traditional role, but, further, Paulo's own accumulation in a poor *bairro* entails perilous social differentiation by creating an enabling environment for *uroi*. Equally important, conspicuously rapid or other suspect accumulation is understood as evidencing breaches of the socio-moral order and is thus viewed as a sign of attack on the relational basis of sociality.[23] In sum, the causal structures revolve around issues pertaining to past events reactualized in, for example, the *tchikwambo*, as well as to material accumulation as such.

The collective recognition by the *dzindza* of Paulo's dangerously unprotected state therefore transcends his near-fatal experience at the hands of the *banca fixa*'s neighbors, the following imprisonment under lethal conditions, and the final sentencing in court. Further, Paulo's and his kin's quest and need for protection cannot be reduced to being shielded against the violent greediness of others—directly in the form of *uroi* or indirectly in the shape of the vengeful and destructive *tchikwambo* born out of Paulo's grandfather's acts of violence. Rather, the practices and struggles oriented toward renewed protection reflect a sensitivity to the violence shaping and dominating many marginalized and poor post-colonial African areas, where life is experienced as being unprotected against a host of visible and invisible perils. Paulo's experiences and convictions about these perennially tangible and present forces of power and appropriation support similar analyses in other African contexts (Ashforth 2005; Sanders 2003). The recent massive increase in the summary justice of burning would leave the chances much slimmer for Paulo to survive, had his ordeal taken place in 2008.

A Mozambican 'Heterogeneous State'? A Critique of the Legal Pluralist Vision

The complex avenues of protection, justice, and socio-moral order pursued in both ethnographic cases above contrast with the frequently disseminated rosy images of a Mozambican state that has been hailed for its economic growth, post-war political stability, and politics of decentralization and deregulation in terms of, for example, the establishment of community authorities.[24]

Based on the ethnographic material, one could argue instead that the state is effectively involved in a process of transformation in which several of its erstwhile domains of control have been distributed among ostensibly non-state or 'undercover' state functionaries. The brutality of this particular transformation is characterized by degrees of popular appropriation of the state's ultimate capacity to kill its own citizens/subjects, if necessary.

In legal anthropology, the concept 'legal pluralism' was developed precisely to grapple with these complex situations of state and non-state systems and understandings of justice and legality. Empirically, colonialism formed the backdrop for developing legal pluralism as a notion that describes various legal, political, and administrative formations arising from the superimposition by the British and French of their own law onto indigenous legal processes in colonial Africa (Merry 1988: 870). Theoretically, in its most basic sense, legal pluralism is often defined as "the situation in which the 'law' that obtains in a social field consists of more than one set of binding rules, whose behavioral requirements are different and sometimes conflicting" (Griffiths 2004: 8650). This basic understanding, or 'classic legal pluralism', gave prominence to legal bodies and institutions (Merry 1988: 872). However, from the 1970s onward, there was a growing dissatisfaction with established dichotomies (i.e., 'dominant law' versus 'servient law') to address what was increasingly seen as complex situations (Chiba [1989] 1992: 416). The 'new legal pluralism' that arose from this critique also looked to non-colonized, industrialized countries, emphasizing the flaws of systemic dualism since "plural normative orders are part of the same system in any particular social context and are usually intertwined in the same social micro-processes" (Merry 1988: 873). In both Western and non-Western worlds, one merit of new legal pluralism is especially its rejection of ready-made models of (and for) relationships between law, state, and authority. This open-endedness allows for diversity, hybridity, and analyses that privilege actual practice over legal texts, giving it analytical leverage by not privileging formalistic, hierarchical, and Western notions of legality.

Given the above cases, the idea of legal pluralism seems to correspond to some empirical features of the Mozambican situation, with its proliferation of legal mechanisms, diverse distributed authorities (police, community authorities, *n'angas*, etc.), and the quite significant influential criminal networks (Chachiua 2000). However, this complex situation cannot be conceived as one of relatively harmonious co-existence and complementarity, as implied in the usage of the concept of legal pluralism; rather, it is one in which there is considerable ambiguity, tension, and conflict. This basic problem of the legal pluralism approach becomes clearer when examining the analyses of Mozambique by the prominent legal theoretician Boaventura de Sousa Santos.

Often sensitive to Mozambique's historical trajectories, Santos (2006a, 2006b) analyzes numerous dimensions of legal practice, including aspects of Portuguese colonial law that continued after independence in 1975, what he calls 'customary law', religious laws, new post-independence laws, etc. All of these contribute to a state legal order that Santos defines as a 'heterogeneous state' or a system of 'legal hybridization'. His approach assumes importance

in an analysis of several aspects presented above, for example, the community courts and the *n'angas*. However, his presentation of the traditional authorities will be used here to exemplify the problematic aspects of his notions of the heterogeneous state, as Santos's discussion of the role of so-called traditional authorities, another arm of the heterogeneous state, tends to downplay the violent, historical trajectories of their legal role. Santos's (2006a: 41n4) description of the *régulo*, the Portuguese term for the 'traditional' chief, evidences this: "The *régulo*'s position is passed down from generation to generation, according to a hereditary system. Thus, where such a position still exists, its legitimacy derives from family lineages often going back to precolonial times." Although Santos (see 2006a: 60–70) is sensitive to the historical and political transformation of traditional institutions, the view voiced above corresponds neither to the necessarily dynamic and changing nature of the traditional field per se nor to how it was subjected to particularly violent transformations in the colonial and post-colonial period.

Further, the state-centric character of Santos's analysis is problematic. This is apparent in his presentation of the turbulent post-independence period during which the FRELIMO state under Machel—as argued above—sought to eradicate the traditional field. This violent attack is effectively glossed over as Santos claims that traditional structures were merely "legally suspended for a while" (Santos, Trindade, and Menses 2006b: xii). Likewise, the popular courts established in the same period are described by reproducing the contemporary narrative of its official objective, seeing these as "the guarantors of the implementation of popular justice" (Gomes et al. 2006: 203). The double absence of some critical distance to Mozambique's often violent transformations (as shown above in the violence of popular justice under Machel) and of analytical proximity to state processes and rhetoric produces in Santos's writings an image of a heterogeneous and somewhat benevolent state. In Santos's vision, this state is rife with creative instances of legal plurality but largely devoid of the politics and violence permeating society and legality. Hence, in his quest to expose novel formations of legality, Santos's conception of the heterogeneous state romanticizes and depoliticizes past and contemporary stark realities of social life. In this viewpoint, the state is the prime mover, the ultimate ordering authority, or, at least, the entity around which normative orders condense. This state-centrism undermines the analytical worth of such concepts in ethnographic contexts of violent and murky spaces, where different sovereign agents and agencies exact justice and where discarded legal logics, such as that of popular justice, may be popularly invoked, appropriated, and reorganized in novel and complex forms of state order.

The state-centrism is also evident in Santos's (1995) important notion of 'interlegality'—a term that describes the production of a 'hybridified', legal structural framework that is mirrored in practices whereby various legal orders dynamically intersect, in turn creating codes that constitute new legal spaces. This conception of state and non-state legal mechanisms operating simultaneously rests necessarily on the assumption of a benign form of state and non-state complementarity, which is not evident in the ethnographic material above and

is difficult to recognize in Mozambique generally. In this way, Santos's notion of the heterogeneous state underscores the problematic legalo-centric orientation of much legal pluralism, in which even non-legal, normative elements are seen as constitutive parts of—or attached to—the state (Tamanaha 1993: 193).

From Heterogeneous State to Multiple Sovereignties

Santos's work illustrates the more general problem, expressed by Fuller (1994: 10), that legal pluralism came to be "dominated by academic lawyers rather than anthropologists."[25] Fuller might have been right in ascertaining bleak prospects for the anthropology of law in the early 1990s. Now, however, this certainly seems to be changing, due to a broad and renewed interest in state, law, and society. The increasing influence of anthropology in works that probe state, law, violence, and politics (see, e.g., Agamben 1998, 2005; Burke 2007) marks a return to fundamental theoretical issues. The turn toward these processes—in empirical contexts, often characterized by high levels of violence and conflict— is especially evident in the growing anthropology of violence from the 1990s onward, in what some call anthropology's 'statist turn', as well as an increasing preoccupation with the complexities of the global flows, identities, and globalized machineries and regimes of governance.[26] All of these trends underline the relevance of analyses of legal regimes, the politics of globalized discourses on development and human rights, and the dynamics that feed, govern, and structure these trajectories. This renewed theoretical focus on violence, state, and authority in situations of conflict and poverty—such as the one that Paulo barely survived and thieves sometimes die in—makes increasingly relevant an anthropology that is capable of transcending the state-centrism of notions such as the heterogeneous state and, more specifically, legal pluralism.

This return to legality, order, and disorder reflects the complex empirical conjunctions between different regimes of legal systems and processes of mimicry between legal and non-legal bodies of law (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006), as well as new directions within anthropological studies of crime, state, and authority in general (see, e.g., O. Harris 1996; Mattei and Nader 2008; Parnell and Kane 2003). These approaches have contributed to a more theoretically refined and empirically grounded analysis of relationships between ordering, disordering, and governing structures and logics. Informed by these and other recent works, I will here suggest that the term 'multiple sovereignties' may be more helpful analytically for legal anthropology than the term 'heterogeneous state'.

Derived from early theoreticians of state such as Hobbes and Bodin, the notion of sovereignty is often taken to mean "a set of principles that defines appropriate governance structures … [stating that] … there could be one, and only one, source of the law, and that this source, the sovereign, was either in practice or in theory not subject to any higher authority" (Krasner 2004: 14706). Born out of the context of European history, this approach privileges a monist, hierarchical, and absolutist vision of sovereign power—akin to Clastres' vision of the state as 'the One', applied to the Mozambican context of Machel's societal

transformation and attacks on the traditional field. This vision has been critiqued and scrutinized thoroughly by Foucault ([1997] 2003), who rejects the idea of power and domination as springing from a single source. Instead, and in line with his understanding of 'capillary power', he proposes focusing on "the manufacture of subjects rather than the genesis of the sovereign" (ibid.: 46). The Foucauldian analysis, which is prone to the historicization of power and governance, is alert to the pitfalls of the 'overvaluation of the state', as in the lyrical Nietzschean vision of the 'cold monster' or as in analytically "reducing the state to a number of functions" (Foucault [2004] 2007: 109).

Thus, for Foucault and other critics with him, the initial 'absolutist' vision of the sovereign and law-giving monarch under the sole authority of God has given way to a variety of approaches that are sensitive to current global mosaics of power and domination (see, e.g., Duffield 2007; Ong 2006). This challenge to the monolithic, vertical, and absolutist aspects of national sovereignty emphasize instead its uncontrolled and non-finite aspects. In these non-finite spaces, 'wild' forms of sovereignty emerge that create "a domain of bare life upon which the sovereign power or their agents can demonstrate their sovereign power—that instituting, originating power which is outside all constraint" (Kapferer 2004: 7).

This multifarious and unrestrained character of sovereignty is what I have termed 'multiple sovereignties'. As is evident in the cases above, the notion of multiple sovereignties highlights some features of post-colonial realities in which people experience being unprotected against a host of sedimented authority structures. The emphasis on violent and unrestrained sovereignty also finds resonance with Comaroff and Comaroff's (2006: 35) recent work on post-colonial law and (dis-)order, in which aspects of horizontal and partial organization are emphasized: "[W]e take the term 'sovereignty' to connote the more or less effective claim on the part of any agent, community, cadre, or collectivity to exercise autonomous, exclusive control over the lives, deaths, and conditions of existence of those who fall within a given purview, and to extend over them the jurisdiction of some kind of law" (see also Hansen and Stepputat 2005). Such a pluralized notion of sovereignty can encompass partial and contested authority structures without losing sight of legal, political, and violent aspects of state reordering, as in the territorial dimensions of the cases of the burnings.

Understood thus, sovereignty includes—or, better yet, merges—law and politics more effectively than conventional legal pluralism or the Mozambican heterogeneous state in a Santosian sense. In contrast to Santos's emphasis on complementarity and hybridization within a legal-systemic framework, such an analysis may grapple with popular struggles to gain control over lives that are experienced as fragile and unprotected in the type of poor *bairros* that Paulo lives in and thieves die in. Further, it will have the potential to identify formations of multiple sovereignties that are at work: from the corruption of the national police force to the position of the community leaders who are wedged between state and community; from the *régulos*' management of the ambivalent traditional field to criminal gangs' violent extortion; from the force

of *uroi* to the protection provided by *n'angas* against violent attacks, harmful spirits, and occult economies.

Understanding sovereignty in terms of being multiple and 'wild', in the sense of uncontrollable, also helps explain the recent attacks on the Mozambican post-war configuration of legal and justice sectors. As argued above, in the 2008 riots and attacks on police stations and police cars prior to the spate of burnings, the concepts, experiences, and memories of popular justice of the 1980s were reappropriated. The intensity of the physical attacks and the burning of individuals effectively redefined notions and practices of popular justice and also served the purpose of reorganizing spaces and domains of state order.

To this presentist perspective on sovereignties could also be added a diachronic element: Mozambique may be analyzed historically as lacking complete territorial, political, or administrative control. This situation is evident in the historical trajectories from the colonial vesting of sovereign powers to concession companies of the late 1800s and early 1900s (M. Harris 1958; Serra 1980) to Machel's post-independence attempt at erasing the traditional field, which again was challenged during the civil war by RENAMO, a bellicose sovereign formation in its own right. These glimpses of historical dimensions indicate certain advantages of a historically informed and ethnographically based analysis of Mozambican legal and political landscapes, since a significant feature of the two cases is precisely the shifting, antagonist, and historically shaped relations between multiple sovereignties. The historical dimension to Mozambican sovereign formations finds resonance in other analyses of African politics of life, death, and law. Hansen and Stepputat (2005), for example, go far in their critique of what one might call the 'state of the state's alleged sovereignty'. They argue that "[i]n parts of Africa, the territorial sovereignty of the post-colonial states has been eroded … to such an extent that it only exists in a formal sense, devoid of any monopoly of violence and replaced by zones of unsettled sovereignties and loyalties" (ibid.: 27). Although I endorse the general thrust of Hansen and Stepputat's argument, they should not be read in the vein of conceiving the state as failed—as in some recent representations of especially the African (post-colonial) state—or as frail in the sense of being impotent, shrinking, or withdrawing (cf. Strange 1996). Rather, as Mbembe (2000) argues, the new sovereign formations that challenge conventional territorial nation-states point instead to the increased importance of locating, understanding, and relating dynamics of non-state and state sovereign forms that are similar to the kinds at work in the *bairros* of Chimoio.

Donald S. Moore's (2005) brilliant ethnographic work on farmers in Kaerezi, Zimbabwe, is instructive in this regard. Moore exposes how notions of sovereignty—which he dubs 'selective sovereignties'—are integral to cosmological aspects of the traditional field and to non-state authorities alike (ibid.: 219–249). Cosmologies, Moore shows, are related to dynamic interpretations of traditional forms of sovereignties that are varyingly congruent with, antagonistic toward, or overlapping with state structures. Thus, Moore warns against the dominant contemporary argument of global deterritorialization, emphasizing

instead the reterritorializing aspects of sovereignty in the forms of, for example, rainmaking or chiefly rule: "[These form] specific articulations of multiple forms of sovereignty and hybrid spatialities that coexist in the same geographical territory" (ibid.: 223). In the vein of Moore's analysis of sovereign formations based on the rich Kaerezi material, the emphasis in this text is likewise on the multiple nature of historically formed sovereignties within the territory of Mozambique. Moreover, such a view recognizes that sovereignty is characterized by 'unfixed practices' negotiated on the ground *within* states (Howland and White 2009), as well as being integral to ongoing processes of the global reformation *of* states (Kapferer and Bertelsen 2009b).

Conclusion

Through the material from 2007 and 2008, this article suggests that an empirically grounded analysis of summary justice practices in the *bairros* provides an opportunity to map the formation and development of multiple sovereignties. Methodologically speaking, the notion of multiple sovereignties of state and non-state origin can be identified ethnographically by focusing on actual protective practices and understandings of security, blame, and danger, rather than on a legalo-centric point of departure that presupposes the existence of formal institutions or the state's complementarity with non-state institutions. Put differently, such a legal anthropology would tap the theoretical and analytical potential of the notion of sovereignties and would also incorporate logics and dynamics that are often overlooked in conventional legal analysis. For example, *uroi* (sorcery) would be seen as a formation of sovereignty, since it involves the capacity to kill, dominate, and accumulate in ways that are not dissimilar to many state agents. Within this perspective, the use of a *n'anga* (traditional healer) to prevent attacks bears similarities to seeking the support of local community authorities. Further, the invocation and reorganization of popular justice underline, paradoxically, the vitality and force of the social in popular reactions to the repressive capacities of unrestrained and multiple sovereignties. Applied thus, the notion of multiple sovereignties frames and exposes analytically some of the dynamics of power and authority of the *bairros* and how these often doubly connote violence (extortion, muggings, killings, *uroi*) and protection, for example, in the form of the closure and cleansing of the body and community through lynching.

Sovereignty, then, is not exclusively reducible to the state, to territorial entities, or to 'states within the state'. Importantly within the Mozambican context, it cannot be simplified as a dualism of the state versus, for example, *régulos* (chiefs), in terms of influence, authority, and capacity, as in many reductive contemporary analyses of Mozambican past and present dynamics. Rather, by incorporating cosmological, traditional, and socio-moral dynamics, an analysis may be undertaken of concrete circumstances where dimensions of security and protection are crucial, shifting, opaque, and often absent. This situation in which there is no single overarching, dominant, and distinct law-regulated

or rule-bound legal entity from which to seek protection—and no neutral and non-corruptible legal contexts—is the world through which Paulo and his kin navigate and in which thieves frequently die. As argued above, this world is not represented well by Santos's analysis of Mozambique as a legally plural country, in which the state is heterogeneous. Instead, it points to a complex and sometimes chaotic existence where, for example, local tribunals and police units with formal protective capacities must be understood also in terms of plasticity and unpredictability. Importantly, for Paulo and others, this entails that one must necessarily protect oneself, one's body, and one's property by employing ambivalent yet potent traditional resources and by invoking supportive kin networks. However, it also incorporates the reorganization of a form of popular justice involving the burning of thieves in demarcated domains—a logic, and practice, of summary justice that has been shaped by officially discarded visions and practices of legality that are now central to reconfigurations of the current post-colonial state order in Mozambique.

Thus, this text has raised a critique against a strict definition of legal pluralism as merely describing a situation in which multiple legal systems qua systems are seen to be co-existing. In post-colonial contexts such as Mozambique, the unifying potential of the legal pluralism approach in a legal-systemic sense is limited, if it is correct, as the Comaroffs (2006: 35) argue, that plurality is "endemic to the postcolony." On the other hand, the Comaroffs' confining of plurality to "the postcolony" (notice the singular term) may suggest that its opposite—singularity—was a predominant feature of colonial (or pre-colonial and modern) state formations. This is, of course, not the case. As this article has suggested, the sweeping analyses of a vast, singular, and dystopian landscape of post-colonial justice, as in a Comaroffian sense, and the excessively romanticized vision of a heterogeneous state, as in the Santosian notion, are both flawed. Rather, this text has proposed the analytical advantages of historicizing and 'ethnographizing' the continually ongoing constructions, practices, and forms of sovereignty that people are subject to, resist, or appropriate—and thus transform. This article has argued that the concept of multiple sovereignties has significant potential to probe complex dynamics and logics and historically sedimented authority structures, as well as the human beings who are navigating these contexts.

Acknowledgments

Bjørn Enge Bertelsen is currently finishing his PhD in Social Anthropology at the Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen, on the ambivalent relationship between state formation and the traditional field. He has done fieldwork in and around Chimoio, Mozambique, regularly since 1999, focusing on topics such as state, violence, sorcery, politics, and memory. Recent publications include "The Traditional Lion Is Dead: The Ambivalent Presence of Tradition and the Relation between Politics and Violence in Mozambique" (2003) and "It Will Rain Until We Are in Power" (2004), as well as the book *Crisis of the State: War and Social Upheaval* (2009), co-edited with Bruce Kapferer.

Notes

1. Part of the material here has been presented in an earlier version at the workshop "Plural Legalities," held at the Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen, on 1–3 June 2007, hosted by Siri Gloppen and John-Andrew McNeish. It has also been presented in the American Anthropological Association session "Reconstituting Political and Legal Anthropology in Africa," held in Washington, DC, on 28 November–2 December 2007, hosted by Todd Sanders and Knut Christian Myhre. I am grateful for the discussions and valuable input I received in both of these sessions. An earlier version, based exclusively on the 2007 material, was published in Norwegian (Bertelsen 2007b).
2. The dynamics, developments, and roots of the so-called civil war are hotly debated due to the conflict's significant international dimension in the form of the involvement of Rhodesia, South Africa, the Soviet Union, and the United States, among others. For recent discussions, see Bertelsen (2002) and Dinerman (2006).
3. This process of recognition is also prominent in other African contexts and is frequently related to the dynamics of autochthony, rights struggles, identity politics, and territorial disputes. For some examples, see Englund and Nyamnjoh (2004), Geschiere and Nyamnjoh (2000), Hinz (2006), and Perrot and Fauvelle-Aymar (2003).
4. A note on language. Most local terms in this text are written in the official language of Portuguese (as in *bairro*) or in Mozambican Portuguese (as in *machamba*, or plot of land). In the fieldwork context, the language spoken varies between Portuguese and the Shona-related local language chiTewe. For this reason, some terms (as *uroi*, or sorcery) are written in chiTewe.
5. The occurrence of post-independence African states attacking 'superstition' or 'colonial relics' is not confined to Mozambique, as is evident in Donham's (1999) analysis of 'Marxist modernism' in Ethiopia, in Sanders's (2008: 96) description of the post-independence abolishment of chiefdoms in Tanzania, or in Guedes's (2006) account of the uneasy relationships between Angola's *sobas* (chiefs) and the post-independence state. However, the post-independency was not uniform even among presumably politically related movements, such as, for example, FRELIMO and ZANLA of neighboring Zimbabwe. Contrasting Mozambique and as Lan (1985) has beautifully analyzed, in Zimbabwe, traditional dimensions were integrated and related to, rather than attacked, both during war and by the post-liberation state.
6. My ongoing PhD project, with the tentative title "Violent Becomings: State Formation and the Traditional Field in Colonial and Post-colonial Mozambique," focuses on the traditional field and its (often) violently articulated relationship with the state.
7. For further works exploring this relationship, see also Alexander (1997), Bertelsen (2007a, 2007b), Buur and Kyed (2006), Fernando (1996), Guedes and Lopes (2006), and Harrison (2002).

8. Article 1 in the decree 15/2000 (Boletim da República 2000) reads: "Para os efeitos do presente decreto são autoridades comunitárias os chefes tradicionais, os secretários de bairro ou aldeia e outros líderes legitimados como tais pelas respectivas communidades locais [Effective from the present decree, community authorities are traditional chiefs, secretaries of *bairros* or villages, or other legitimate leaders recognized as such by their respective local communities.]."

9. My claim directly challenges a recent report published by the UN (Naudé, Prinsloo, and Ladikos 2006: 65) that states that 90.5 percent of Mozambican respondents have 'high levels of appreciation' for police performance. However, undermining the positive number and, contrastingly, underscoring Baker's point which I endorse, is the fact that according to the same report (ibid.: 118) a whopping 96.4 percent respond that they chose *not* to report corruption cases to the police.

10. Likewise, Cramer (2007: 269) recently acknowledges that despite its peaceful post-war development, Mozambique is "a gangster democracy characterized by sharp inequalities." For a comparatively interestingly analysis of criminal gangs as states in Nicaragua, see Rodgers (2006).

11. Informants in Chimoio's media and justice sector in May 2008 argued that the actual number of burnings is significantly higher than the official number, due to these instances being very unpopular among donors and politicians in Maputo. However, the national estimate of 50 in total by October 2008 is based on the findings of Carlos Serra (2008: 9), a Mozambican sociologist with a research and monitoring project on lynchings.

12. In June 2008, the thief was set free, thus illustrating, perhaps, aspects of the rationale behind protests against how the whole legal and justice system may be manipulated.

13. As Serra (2008) argues, lynchings may also be seen as a protest against disorder.

14. Some also claim that there are economic dimensions to vigilantism. For example, based on fieldwork in Cochabamba, Bolivia, Goldstein (2007: 248) argues for seeing lynchings in the context of neo-liberal structural reform, where lynching "fulfils the highest mandate of neoliberal rationality" and takes up the gaps of a receding state (for a state withdrawal argument, see also Strange 1996). However, although Mozambique has, since the mid-1980s, suffered the neo-liberal onslaught in the form of the Bretton Woods institutions (see Jones 2002; Pitcher 2002), it is difficult to explain the rise of lynchings at this particular moment in time mainly as the end result of over 20 years of economic policy. Also, there have been earlier periods of lynchings: for example, in August and September 1992, 20 were beaten or burned to death in Maputo (Agencia de Informação de Moçambique 1992), further undermining a strictly economic argument.

15. Depending on who was asked, some people would also attribute the lynchings to either FRELIMO orchestration or to RENAMO. In the latter case, lynching was explained as a political protest against Maputo and FRELIMO. As one informant said: "It is not the president who orders these killings. But FRELIMO is eating with the *mbava* [thieves]. And for this the people [*a população*] decide to kill *mbava*." In the former, the lynchings were related to a narrative of criminals being sent to Mozambique to 'destroy' and 'destabilise', bringing forth memories of the 'war of destabilization' as the civil war was often called. This latter narrative is also related to a rumor of the thieves being German, which can be understood within local contexts of failed development projects, rumors of child-snatching and historical trajectories of colonialism in which German farmers were important in some areas around Chimoio. In the context of this article, however, there is no room to explore these significant dimensions of the killings.

16. These events in Chimoio coincided with rioting in Maputo following the government's suggested hike in the cost of public transport due to the rise in global fuel prices. After days of extensive and likewise unprecedented rioting, the government withdrew its decision to raise prices. The Maputo protests spread to other cities and developed according to local contexts and concerns. Thus, the demonstrations and clashes with the police in Chimoio may have been facilitated by the foregoing events in Maputo, especially by way of example. For news coverage of the riots, see Hanes (2008).

17. Although circumstances concerning the death squads remain murky, people portrayed them as being made up of motorcycle police who executed criminals. In 2006, a piece of evidence for the existence of these death squads surfaced when eight police officers were sentenced to prison for having, in the period 2001–2005, abducted and killed eight prisoners from prison, executing them on Chimoio's outskirts (Agencia de Informação de Moçambique 2008). The tendency here to remove people from the center to the periphery—in the sense of both the state and the urban grid—correlates well with the logic of lynching and the disposal of charred bodily remains.

18. As Sen and Pratten point out (2007: 13), "[C]ontemporary vigilantism relates both to the fragmentation of the sovereignty of nation-states and to the dependence that states have on the vigilance of their citizens." This is, however, not always destructive, as demonstrated by Heald's (2005) material on the so-called *Sungusungu* groups in Tanzania. Heald found that vigilante activity may be seen to reform and reclaim the state, in addition to transforming the state into being more responsive to local priorities (ibid.: 282).

19. A recurrent theme in Ashforth's work focuses on situations of existential uncertainty in Soweto (see, e.g., Ashforth 2005) but is most consistently developed in a work devoted to the spiritual, economic, social, and kinship dimensions to the troubles of Madumo (Ashforth 2000), whose tale finds resonance in that of my informant Paulo.

20. Turner's (1957: 32) classic analysis of the Ndembu illustrates this belief: "Successful gun-hunters are regarded as sorcerers, who acquire their power in hunting from killing people by means of their familiars." In his work on southern Mozambique, Junod ([1912] 1962: 59) also underlined hunters as being magico-powerful.

21. Numerous works from Mozambique and Zimbabwe analyze the *tchikwambo* (also spelled *chikwambo*), and it appears that the workings of this category of spirit are believed to vary across time and space (see, e.g., Fry 2000; Gelfand 1954; Maxwell 1995).

22. Visible markers of economic differentiation in the form of corrugated iron sheets or other conspicuous household objects are significant in terms of sorcery and zombification accusations. Ardener's (1970) historical analysis of correlations between plantation economy fluctuations and 'witchcraft beliefs' among Bakweri in West Cameroon represents an interesting attempt to relate economic and sorcerous dimensions—to corrugated iron roofs and housing, as well. In addition, see Englund's analysis (1996) of witchcraft and the morality of accumulation in a Malawian case in which corrugated iron sheets are also prominent.

23. These vicious attacks are often seen in terms of empowering/enriching practices, such as the killing of children or adults and the ritual consumption of their body parts, sexual relations between close kin, or sorcery in the form of zombification of neighbors and kin used as slave labor power on the *machambas* (see also Bertelsen 2007a).

24. For critiques of glossed-up versions of Mozambique's present social and political condition, see Cramer (2007: 259–272) and Jones (2002).

25. Starting with works that included Maine's *Ancient Law* ([1861] 1963) and Malinowski's *Crime and Custom in Savage Society* (1926), up until at least the 1970s, there was a sustained interest on both sides of the Atlantic in the relationships between law, society, and the state, as exemplified in Africanist works by Allott (1960), Gluckman ([1965] 1967), S. Moore (1978), and even Turner (1957). But as Fuller (1994) rightly laments, due to what he sees as destructive methodological debates (especially between Bohannan and Gluckman) and the subsequent narrowing of legal anthropology to conflict resolution mechanisms, larger theoretical concerns were overshadowed. This "contributed to the subdiscipline's desultory state in the 1970s" (ibid.: 9). In a short introduction to the anthropology of law, however, Sally Engle Merry (2004: 8489) strikes a more positive note, writing that "[b]y the 1970s, the debate over the definition of law became increasingly sterile and was largely abandoned in favor of understanding law as a social process." Be that as it may, the point remains that legal anthropology is generally recognized to have been weakened, as has been the link between anthropology and law (see also Donovan and Anderson 2003).

26. For the anthropology of violence, see, for example, Aijmer and Abbink (2000), Ferme (2001), and Whitehead (2004). For examples of 'statist anthropology', see Friedman (2003), Krohn-Hansen and Nustad (2005), and Scott (1998). For some approaches to globalization, see Appadurai (1996), Ong (2006), and Trouillot (2003).

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