Mediating bureaucrats
embedded economic action in the Mozambican sugar industry

Buur, Lars; Nystrand, Malin

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LARS BUUR

Associate Professor, Roskilde University, Denmark, and coordinator of the Hierarchies of Rights research program

Email: lbuur@ruc.dk

and

MALIN J. NYSTRAND

Lecturer, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Email: malin.nystrand@gu.se

ABSTRACT

This article develops the concept of 'mediating bureaucrats' by exploring their role during liberal reforms that led to rehabilitation of the sugar industry in Mozambique. By focusing on how relations between the state, government and business are mediated by a group of cadres who have occupied positions in different social domains, the article argues that these 'mediating bureaucrats' cannot easily be identified in one-dimensional terms as belonging to either the public or private sector, the state or the market. It is argued that as 'socially embedded actors', the group of 'mediating bureaucrats' are in a position to translate and mediate between diverse and sometimes conflicting interests and aspirations of the state, the government and business. We use the rehabilitation of the sugar industry in Mozambique to show how mediating bureaucrats adopted two practices – muddling through and translation – in order to straddle conflicting interests during different reform initiatives in post-independence Mozambique.

Keywords: mediating bureaucrats, muddling through, translation, mediation, liberal reforms, sugar sector

High-level directors in the sugar industry who have moved between national or provincial governments, the state and the private sector in Mozambique often tell stories about their shifts in position from the colonial era via the post-independence state-centric organization of society to the present liberalized market economy. In different constellations of public and private office, they recount how they have experienced, arbitrated over and intersected with positions in both the public and private sectors of society. Moving between different positions in party, state and the public and private sectors is common for cadres emerging out of former one-party states such as Mozambique. This observation may seem trivial in southern and eastern African contexts where dominant one-party states have been and still are not only common but dominant.[1]

Recent literature has emphasized how contexts dominated by one party and with cadres moving in and out the public and private domains, as well as state and business circles, facilitate clientelism (Kelsall 2013) linked to regime survival (Whitfield *et al*. 2015; Gray 2015; Behuria 2016), state capture (Southall 2013) and more broadly everyday or generalized corruption (Blundo & de Sardan 2006; Schubert 2017). Except for Blundo & de Sardan and others who follow the more 'street-level' bureaucratic approach made famous by Lipsky (1980), in these other, mostly structural political economy accounts, the experiences of individuals and/or groups of cadres tend to disappear or become subsumed as primarily driven by narrow rational interest-based calculations related to regime survival that leave little space for the roles of ideas, history and agency (Lavers & Hickey 2016; Bebbington *et al*. 2018). Alternatively, all practices tend to be treated as related to the domain of 'the state', as political-science approaches more generally have a tendency to do, instead of seeing bureaucratic practices 'as a bundle of practices and a system of social relations' (Schubert 2017: 15).

In this article, following Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 251), we will 'bracket' the 'ordinary preconstructions' of how we have understood the reforms and rehabilitation for a moment to explore

in greater depth the experiences of a group of Mozambican cadres who, over the last forty years, have taken up public and private positions spanning party, state and business related to the Mozambican sugar industry. This in turn, we will argue, will allow us to understand better the specific role this group of cadres played during the liberal reforms in which the rehabilitation of the sugar industry was embedded.

The liberal reforms were initiated by Mozambique's first president, Samora Machel, before his tragic death in 1986, but they took serious hold after his death when Joaquim Chissano took over from Machel and led Mozambique towards, the General Peace Accord of 1992 that ended the sixteen-year civil war between the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (Frelimo) and *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (Renamo) that had devastated Mozambique (Hall & Young 1977).[2]

At the end of the 1980s, under the guidance of President Joaquin Chissano, the party-state bureaucracy of the Marxist-Leninist Frelimo party was tasked with preparing for the end of the sixteen-year civil war. This happened after Frelimo began a slow process of opening negotiations with the Renamo opposition, leading to the General Peace Accord (GPA) of 1992. However, long before the GPA a specialized agricultural 'task force' had been created that included high-level members of government ministries, state institutions and state industries. Luísa Diogo, then a technical adviser in the Ministry of Finance and later vice-finance minister before becoming Minister of Finance and ending her government career as Prime Minister, suggested the following when we discussed the post-conflict situation in 2010: 'The cities could not absorb more people, so we had to get the rural areas developed. We analyzed many sectors for their potential to create job opportunities and provide services' (Diogo 2010 int.).[3]

Of particular concern were the pragmatics of stopping the inrush of internally displaced people to the booming cities and, at a later stage, offering demobilized soldiers a future in both urban and rural areas. Here the task force tried to identify industries that could provide jobs and income-earning

opportunities, as well as crucial export revenues for the government, given that the economy had come to a standstill by the end of the 1980s. As Luísa Diogo argued: 'Sugar was one of them due to its proven track record' (ibid. 2010 int.). This in turn led to the rehabilitation of the Mozambican sugar industry from 1995, which saw four out of six sugar estates become productive enough to service the internal sugar market that was created, as well as exporting sugar primarily to the EU. The process set in motion created between 20,000 and 30,000 jobs depending on how one counts formal and seasonal jobs (see Buur *et al*. 2011; 2012a; 2012b; Whitfield *et al*. 2015), and it also allowed thousands of cane out-growers to emerge in the south of Mozambique to feed the two plants in the region.

Other accounts of the rehabilitation of the Mozambican sugar industry have focused on, for example, the problems cane smallholders confronted during the first phase of their involvement in cane production (Jelsma *et al*. 2010) or the gendered, health and historical labor continuities reproduced by the rehabilitation process (Lazzarini 2017; O'Laughlin & Ibraimo 2013; O'Laughlin 2017). Equally important are the fact that the rehabilitation of the sugar industry, with its extension into out-grower schemes, has created land disputes and conflicts (see Mandamule 2017; 2018), as well as problematically reproducing Mozambique's focus on mega-investments (see Mandlate 2014). We acknowledge these criticisms, but we will also argue that in the general sea of despair, where hardly any productive sectors were rehabilitated after the end of the civil war in 1992, it is still justified to focus on why and how the rehabilitation of the sugar industry was possible.

In an earlier work on the role of the rehabilitation of the sugar industry, Buur *et al*. (2012b) identified the emergence of an 'embedded and mediating bureaucracy' as crucial for connecting the party-state to business interests in Mozambique during the liberal reforms leading up to sugar's rehabilitation. The authors particularly suggested that the cadres of a mediating bureaucracy could broker diverse political interests and aspirations on the part of the state and government, as well as investors in the

industry, because of the embodied knowledge they had. They could therefore draw on both intimate tactical forms of knowledge and the rationales and concerns guiding government, state and industry. In this article we want to take this further by theoretically developing the concept of 'mediating bureaucrats' as 'socially embedded actors'.

We use two intertwined practices – muddling through and translating between multiple and often highly conflictual concerns and ideas – to denote what characterize the practices of 'mediating bureaucrats'. Our analysis focuses on how the cadres in charge of rehabilitating the Mozambican sugar industry navigated in and shaped it, as well as the nature of power relations throughout the reforms. This will speak more broadly to the various political reforms in which the rehabilitation was embedded, which became part of how the continuity of Frelimo party control was reproduced in and through these neo-liberal reforms (Pitcher 2002; 2012; Whitfield *et al*. 2015; Macuane *et al.* 2018).[4]

This article is based on a decade-long engagement with the Mozambican sugar sector and the cadres who were involved in the rehabilitation of the sugar industry from 1994 to 2018 over two periods, first from 2008 to 2012 (see Whitfield *et al.* 2015), and again from 2015 to 2019 (see Buur 2020 forthcoming).[5] We use only a smaller sample of interviews directly in this article in order to illustrate more general patterns related to the two practices mentioned earlier as having been pursued by these cadres: muddling through and translation.

In the following sections, we first address how we understand the concept of 'mediating bureaucrats' as 'socially embedded actors'. We then explore how these mediating bureaucrats acted in the reforms of the Mozambican sugar sector. This includes examining the historical experience of the industry's successes and failures and the attempts to get it going again between independence and the present liberal era. In the process of tracing the mediating bureaucrats' actions, we use the changing positions and shifting constellations of state-industry personnel over time to understand the general nature of the rehabilitation of the sugar industry that was embedded in Mozambique's liberal reforms.

MEDIATING BUREAUCRATS

The concept of 'mediating bureaucrats' has not been widely used or defined, despite occasional references to it here and there. For example, Chambers (1977: 365) makes casual reference to the existence of a 'mediating bureaucracy', in contrast to situations in which there is no organized bureaucracy in rice-growing communities, but he does not provide any clarity regarding what the notion refers to more broadly, except that it relates to 'the state' in one way or another. Torry (2016: 21) comes closer to a useful definition when, in a recent work, he discusses 'institutions that mediate', thus facilitating specific relationships. He is concerned with 'mediation' between secular and religious institutions or organizations that are sometimes also referred to as structures. Even through Torry seems to conflate institutions and organizations, as is common in the social sciences (see Douglas 1986 for a critique), more usefully he points to the importance of mediation as a particular kind of practice that resolves conflicts in society. Who or what that entity is or is related to is a question Torry leaves open, which is useful for our own understanding of the term 'mediating bureaucrats', which is also premised on a Weberian understanding of bureaucracy.

Drawing on Weber, Evans (1995: 12), in his important work on 'embedded autonomy', pointed out that the state and its bureaucrats cannot be kept autonomous from the economic sphere if successful innovation and economic development is to be achieved. States and their bureaucrats must respond to 'demands [for] more intimate connections to the private economic agents, a state that is more "embedded" in society than insulated from it' (Evans 1995: 32). As we shall argue later, this is an important observation, but the significance of mediation in the literature on the state and business is primarily focused on the 'embeddedness' of state bureaucrats in the sense of their institutionalized engagement and relations with industry actors. For obvious reasons we are also inspired by Evans, but his understanding of bureaucrats is that in essence they are 'external' to the economy, whereas

we emphasize movements between party, state and industry in different constellations where what is inside and outside is less clearly demarcated. This leads us to the social embeddedness of actors.

The embeddedness concept has been interpreted and used in various ways, but we draw primarily on Mark Granovetter's (1985) understanding, which focused on actors' embeddedness rather than societies' structural embeddedness. By highlighting the social embeddedness of all societies and economies, he also provided a way out of the dichotomies between traditional and modern societies common in embeddedness analysis in a Polanyian tradition (Krippner *et al*, 2004; Block 2001) meaning that 'economic actions and actors always have to be understood in relation to the context in which they are embedded' (Nystrand 2015:8). Granovetter's actor focused approach to embeddedness is based on a critique of both over- and under-socialized views of economic behavior and suggests that actors are embedded in 'concrete, ongoing, systems of social relations' (Granovetter 1985: 487).[6] The mediating bureaucrats are here seen as such socially embedded actors, who embody the experiences of taking up formal positions in the state, the government, business and party and thereby become mediators between these social realms.

One important context in which meditating bureaucrats act in our understanding is related to what Lipset (1960), drawing on Weber ([1968] 1978), focuses on: the bureaucracies themselves. That is, Lipset concentrates less on the institutional aspect and more on the bureaucracy and the individual bureaucrat within it, arguing that bureaucracies are major integrating mechanisms in society. This is because their members are in the nature of 'an impartial expert rather than an interested party' (Lipset 1960: 52) due to their allegiance to Weberian bureaucratic norms. As such they are important in mediating conflicts in society, as they take on a mediating role in the way they act. Here Lipset follows Weber in arguing that this provides some stability during social change or other transitional periods, as bureaucratic procedures 'tend to reduce conflicts to administrative decisions by experts, [thereby effacing] issues from the political arena' (ibid.). A bureaucracy's mediating role is in part due to what

we might call the ability to depoliticize contentious decisions, in our case to implement contentious policies by mediating and translating between ideological positions so that resistance to reforms is smoothed.

Here it is important to remember that Weber not only discussed state bureaucracies, more generally he described and discussed the key characteristics of different ideal-typical forms of public administration, government and corporate business. In this modern way of understanding bureaucracy more generally, an administrative system governs any large society in both its public and private aspects. A bureaucracy can therefore refer to the centralized hierarchical structure of a public administration as much as to a corporate business or a multinational company. More broadly, the ideal-typical 'bureaucracy' Weber referred to, in both the public and private sectors, as well as in different combinations, was characterized by being 'fundamentally [related to] domination through knowledge' (Weber ([1968] 1978: 225). This knowledge involved understanding the hierarchy of the organization, with its formal as well as informal lines or chains of command related to fixed areas of activity. However, Weber and most of those who have studied bureaucracies have emphasized the formal aspects of the rigid division of labor, with bureaucrats involved in the regular and continuous execution of assigned tasks.[7] Keith Hart (2008), by contrast, has repeatedly pointed out that, in the shadow of the formal aspect of bureaucracy, with all its benefits, we usually find bureaucrats with an intimate understanding of the informal working of a given bureaucracy who simply could not operate based on the formal procedures alone. In Hart´s (2008: 11) own words: 'The formal and informal aspects of society are already linked, of course, since the idea of [the informal] is entailed by the institutional effort to organize society along formal lines. "Form" is the rule, an idea of what ought to be universal in social life'.[8]

However, the formal sphere of society in all its public and private aspects does not just exist in the abstract, it 'consists also of the people who staff bureaucracies [in public and private entities] and

their informal practices' (Hart 2008: 12). It is this double aspect of bureaucracy we want to capture, using the concept of 'mediating bureaucrats' who can *translate* between the different political and economic ideologies and logics in which they are socially embedded. This implies navigating the uneven terrain of not only formal rules and regulations, but also what Blundo & de Sardan (2006: 5) refer to as the 'tacit codes and practical norms' at play in public services. They pointed out that following a formal rule guiding social activities is one thing, understanding the 'tacit codes and practical norms' allowing bureaucrats to translate between different political and economic ideologies and logics quite another. Although Blundo & Sardan explored everyday corruption in public services in West Africa, what we consider important is mediating bureaucrats' ability to translate and navigate between the formal and informal, between different rules and 'tacit' codes.

The tacit aspect of bureaucrats' ways of operating was also pointed out as important by Buur *et al.* (2012b), who identified the emergence of an 'embedded and mediating bureaucracy' as crucial in connecting the state to business interests in Mozambique. The authors suggested particularly that the cadres had embodied knowledge – a certain 'knowing-how', while also 'knowing-that' (Ryle 1949) – for example, that ideology and political projects mattered to party and government officials. They were therefore able to draw on both intimate tactical forms of knowledge and the rationales and concerns guiding the government, the state and industry.

In line with these arguments, by 'mediating' we mean that bureaucrats can *translate* and liaise between business and political interests, technical and technocratic concerns, and administrative and legal procedures. This clearly requires translating multiple political, ideological and pragmatic concerns without necessarily letting official policies be 'reinterpreted beyond recognition' by the bureaucracy (Kaviraj 1990: 13). In Mozambique, bureaucrats' historical experiences of being socially embedded in the party-state, government and private industry on the one hand, and their

understanding of the enmeshing of these domains in one another on the other hand, gave them a unique position for mediating and translating.

Besides translating, we wish to point out one further way of understanding mediating bureaucrats that is intimately related to 'knowing how' and tacit forms of knowledge, but which also focuses more on pragmatism. Often the experiences of the cadres or bureaucrats we encountered when studying the rehabilitation of the sugar industry and the liberal reforms in which it was embedded can best be described as '*muddling through'* (see Lindblom 1959; 1979; see also Buur 2015 for a more recent use of this concept). The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines 'muddling through' as 'to manage to do something although you are not organized and do not know how to do it', while the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* suggests that it means 'to achieve a degree of success without much planning or effort' (see Buur 2015). For Lindblom (1959; 1979), 'muddling through' or 'incrementalism' is a way of trying to find a middle way between a rational actor model and bounded rationality – neither long-term, goal-driven policies and analytical rationality on the one hand, nor laissez-faire approaches on the other.

In the context of this article, muddling through should be understood as a way of working in and through a state-based and state-controlled planning apparatus – a top-down exercise – as well as a *de facto* need to take a gradual approach to addressing particular problems based on the embodied knowledge that success in economic planning is rarely reliant on blueprints for action. As the cadres we focus on here became astutely aware, planning is rather a result of contingent processes of implementation and unintended consequences (see Buur *et al*. 2011; 2012b). This is a *modus operandi* that comes closer to the Lévi-Straussian figure of the bricoleur (Lévi-Strauss 1966), with its focus on addressing concrete problems by combining different elements in new constellations to produce new solutions through an iterative process based on the resources, knowledge and experiences at hand.

We argue that this group of cadres – the 'mediating bureaucrats' – cannot be defined in simplistic and one-dimensional terms as belonging to the state, the government, business or party, as is commonly assumed. Instead the 'mediating bureaucrats' in charge of the rehabilitation of the sugar industry and the liberal reforms in which it was embedded were people who, over the last decade before the privatization reforms, had taken up formal positions in all these social realms in different configurations. But just because they are socially embedded, as Nystrand argues, 'they are not following norms slavishly, but continuously negotiate with and reflect on social norms' (Nystrand 2015: 9).[9] The mediating bureaucrats' embeddedness in different social realms means that they negotiate and reflect on norms embedded in these varying realms, and thereby embody the capacity to mediate between state, government, business and party.

As we shall discuss in the following sections, the existence of mediating bureaucrats during the post-1990 liberal reforms in Mozambique was important because of the considerable mutual mistrust between the actors involved. On the one hand, parts of the state bureaucracy and the political elite did not trust the intentions of foreign investors and were apprehensive of the effects of allowing them to run former state industries. On the other hand, in most cases the foreign investors who began investing in Mozambique after 1992 had limited experience of working with a *de facto* one-party state apparatus and political system.

MUDDLING THROUGH MULTIPLE EXPERIENCES

An important characteristic of the sugar sector is that all the bureaucrats and leaders who were in charge of the rehabilitation of the sugar industry, including the union leaders we interviewed at the national and provincial levels, had been working in it in both 'private' and 'public' capacities since the 1970s. In different constellations, they had been educated by and/or worked for colonial-era private sugar estates, the post-colonial centralized state and the Frelimo party as cadres before taking

up positions in the party, the state and privatized companies after rehabilitation was initiated at the end of the civil war in 1992. This group of cadres had experienced with their own bodies, and acquired their specific skills from those experiences, what the sector had achieved in its heyday during colonialism, when it was the biggest formal employer in Mozambique, the leading sector with the biggest company (the colonial-era Sena company, whose core industry was sugar production controlling two sugar estates) and the third biggest exporter and foreign-currency earner. They had also experienced the struggles of the late 1970s under the centralized state system, when the six sugar companies were either nationalized or subject to other state intervention, as well as the total breakdown of the industry during the 1980s, when the civil war intensified. They had also been part of the unsuccessful attempts to rehabilitate the state-owned industry using foreign loans from, for example, the African Development Bank, at the end of the 1980s to the early 1990s (see Buur *et al*. 2011; 2012b). These multiple and overlapping experiences of success and failure became a resource during the rehabilitation of the industry that was embedded in the liberal reforms that took shape after 1990.

The story told to one of the authors in 2011 by a former director of cane production on one of the sugar estates in Sofala province in Mozambique captures well the multiple experiences that informed his work. His experiences spanned both the colonial and post-independence eras, when the sugar industry was state-owned, after which he took up positions at the sugar institute in Maputo and at the provincial level in Sofala, where he was director when we met him:

My father worked for the Sena Company, and I went to a company-supported school. Sena then gave me a bursary for an agricultural college in what was then Rhodesia [Zimbabwe since 1980]. Then came independence, and when I returned and had gone through political schooling, I was sent to one of the southern sugar estates to work there. I was then transferred to Sofala and the Mafambisse estate. It was difficult because of the [civil] war – we tried to produce, but sabotage undermined production, and we were always running out

of supplies and inputs or they came too late. I then became director of the sugar estate's agricultural department and became part of the executive. I was then transferred to the National Sugar Institute in Maputo before later on returning to Sofala and becoming a member of the provincial government, where I now work as a director [for one of the line ministries] (Former Dir. Cane production Mafambisse Sofala 2011 int.).

Being a provincial line-ministry director today was in large part made possible by the colonial sugar company and the schooling it provided, as well as the experiences this cadre acquired within the framework of the post-colonial party-state. Like other cadres who had come out of the twin experiences of the colonial and state-owned sugar industry, he saw the demise of the sugar sector as tragic: these cadres knew it could have been avoided with a mixed economy, and they suggested that, had the postcolonial state pursued its centralizing policies less rigidly and allowed a greater degree of flexibility, it might have been enough to meet changing market conditions (world market conditions seriously deteriorated after 1974, when sugar prices plummeted). Flexibility did not apply to the international market alone but also to responses to internal conditions such as the civil war, labor incentives and productivity, and the production, organization and mobilization of inputs.

The former director of the Maragra estate in southern Mozambique after independence, when the state took over after roughly 300,000 people of predominantly Portuguese origin were in part forced out and in part fled out of fear of the incoming post-colonial regime (see Weimer *et al*. 2012; Sumich 2018), suggested that these problems were nested in one another:

When inputs, for example, fertilizer, were requested by an estate and conveyed to the National Sugar Institute [INA], they first had to request currency from the Ministry of Finance to buy it [and that took time, as foreign exchange was limited]. If they got foreign currency to buy it [after some time], they then had to find a seller. This could be difficult, as we were at war, and the Cold War also imposed problems. East European countries were not reliable for inputs. They were always late, and the quality was not good. Then they needed to get it to Mozambique, which also required currency, and then begin distribution to the six estates during a war situation, which was yet another obstacle. Before any fertilizer arrived, it would already be time to harvest.

With no proper organization and storage facilities, the fertilizer would perish before the next season, and the planning nightmare would repeat itself (Former Director Maragra, Lisbon 2010, int.).

This particular cadre, who had been trained as an agrarian economist, only to be given the daunting task of managing the newest of the six sugar estates and mills when productive units declined as skilled people and owners abandoned the industry, suggested that, despite such problems:

'There was a lot of good will and good intentions, as we wanted to change the rural countryside and produce for the New Society – we wanted to succeed, but we did not have sufficient knowledge or capacity to make it work'. All kinds of inputs were needed, such as spare parts to make the production run at all in a state-centralized system […] There was too much control and top-down decision-making. We tried our best, but did not succeed' (ibid.).

This particular cadre later moved out of Mozambique and relocated to Portugal where we meet, but he maintained close contact with other former cadres. He was well aware of developments in the industry and had been very supportive of state control of it after independence and its aim of changing the rural countryside to be more accommodating of Frelimo party ideas (see below for a discussion of the New Society). But this cadre was also very clear about the challenges faced by this state-directed industry.

As the above account of their experiences clearly suggests, these cadres, who had experience spanning several decades as industry, state and party actors, had a keen eye for the problems a state-based system could encounter from a market-driven procurement system. On one level they knew what the aim was and what was required to increase production, or even just to produce, and also how difficult this could be in a highly centralized state system. They were aware of the policies and aims involved and were highly motivated, but they also knew that none of this guaranteed success. At another level, even if these cadres did not fully understand the operation of the international market, then at least they had some experience of its *modus operandi* and the constraints involved in trying

to market sugar in an international system. Although ostensibly free and equal for all, this market was actually characterized by high levels of protection by some countries, while 'dumping price' practices undercut the viability of others' production (INA 1996; LMC & Global Sugar Consulting 2000).

We suggest that the ability of people like these cadres to 'muddle through' with regard to policy changes from the colonial via the post-colonial to the liberal reforms of the 1990s is absolutely key for understanding why policies in the sugar sector were actually implemented, in contrast to other sectors that were promoted just as much, but that fared far less well (see Pitcher 2002 for cotton; Buur *et al.* 2011 for cashew). This group of cadres had intimate knowledge of success and failure they could draw on, as they encountered new obstacles and needed to find pragmatic ways to deal with real-life policy decisions after liberalization in 1994. What makes it important is that they captured both the *how* and the *what* of expanding industry interests and needs on the one hand, and the diverse and often contradictory mixture of state-party and government political imperatives on the other. This was concerns and problems that would emerge with the reform of the sugar sector and the wider political and economic liberalization reforms in which the sector was embedded. Here the key to muddling through in unfamiliar territory was to use the experiences these cadres had acquired while straddling the colonial and post-colonial eras in an ad hoc fashion in the new context of the liberal reforms.

These cadres had seen the sector fall victim to dumping prices in trying to rely on sugar exports for revenue purposes during the post-independence period, and they had also to come to realize that all sugar-producing countries base their production on two pillars: internal markets and external trade agreements (see LMC 2004; Buur *et al.* 2011.). Entering into such trade agreements with the US and the EU in particular, as well as with east European countries, did not just happen by itself but required coordinated international lobbying by both the industry and the Foreign Ministry, which formally signed such agreements.[10] The changing positions and shifting constellations of party, state and

industry personnel among the mediating bureaucrats meant that cadres in charge of the reforms had tacit knowledge of how to work within changing policy environments.

For example, even though ideologically the trade union president for the sugar industry was aligned with the old guard of socialists around the now late Marcelino dos Santos and therefore favored a state-owned sugar industry, he had himself experienced the problems of the state-owned and centrally governed industry after 1975. He had also taken part in the rehabilitation efforts during the 1980s and realized that, without strong foreign partnerships, finance, technology and market access, rehabilitation would be an uphill battle (President SINTIA, Maputo 2009 int.). He therefore met with leaders within Frelimo's nomenklatura, who were against the reforms on socialist ideological grounds, to get them to understand that the reform could industrialize and urbanize peasants through other means that could nonetheless still be seen as a continuation of Frelimo policies. Just when he was acting as a go-between when attempts to block the illegal trade in sugar needed the support of the socialist ideologues in the party, the Chissano administration confronted the business empire of the future President Guebuza. We argue that it was this particular blend of skills and experiential knowledge that made it possible for mediating bureaucrats like this union leader to 'muddle through' using their experiences and their factual and tacit knowledge to straddle various ideological frontiers. Despite their experiences of decline and the more or less total breakdown of the sector, they were adamant that it would be possible to get the flagship of modern rural industrialization in Mozambique up and running again, but from their experience they had also realized that political backing in itself would not be enough. As a consequence, assistance from outside Mozambique would be required as well, and they acknowledged that private investments could be important. As one cadre who had been active in the party after independence and later became the national director of INA and, in the new millennium, the first 'black' Mozambican director of one of the privatized companies argued in 2010:

'The state has its limits, particularly when it comes to sourcing and developing new technology. Free sugar marketing is complicated, and accessing new (protected) markets is a major struggle. Combined private industry knowledge about marketing and state-brokered access to loans and markets can go hand in hand. It requires both parties to accommodate each other, to give and take, and that is the struggle we encountered. But it is possible' (Former Director INA, Maputo, 2010 int.).

It was knowledge and experience of the different spheres and the inner workings of the party, the state and business in their fragmented forms that were important for the emergence of those we call 'mediating bureaucrats' in the Mozambican sugar industry. The cadres were 'bureaucrats' in the Weberian sense (Weber 1946: 196-204), as they had been working in and had been in charge of the industry after independence and were embedded in the liberalizing reform initiatives after 1994. It was cadres who had muddled through during the colonial, post-colonial and post-civil war liberalizing reforms who realized their own limitations as the drivers of a state-centralized industry after independence, as well as the need to involve the state in the liberal reforms. They used this tacit knowledge to deal with the constraints of the global market economy in which they had to operate when marketing sugar, procuring technology and inputs, and trying to upgrade and make the industry more effective after 1994. This particular set of experiences consisted in paradoxically running down an industry and then trying to rehabilitate it within a liberalizing regime without unnecessarily upsetting important ideological hardliners from the Marxist-Leninist period, as we indicated above. We will discuss this further in the next section, where we consider the ability of mediating bureaucrats to translate multiple concerns.

TRANSLATING MULTIPLE CONCERNS

The mediating bureaucrats who were embedded in the liberal reforms that were introduced after 1986 but were speeded up after 1990 could intercede and translate between foreign direct investment (FDI)

and the state's, government's and Frelimo party's needs as they changed over time. The mediating bureaucrats embodied and, in different configurations, were able to draw on experiences that gave them an intimate understanding of the different aspirations of investors, the state, the government and party officials, while still being able to play on and promote each of these aspirations when necessary during the reform process, as they translated between multiple concerns. In the process, they changed the socio-economic matrix within which the sugar industry operated. As a result, it went from being a sector revolving around a profoundly party-state-industry-based nexus in the 1980s to something closer to a mixed liberal economy in the 2000s, when the sugar industry, while still largely reliant on the protection of state tariffs and state co-ownership, operated more and more independently.

Translating liberal reforms and privatization into a form that could appropriate the ideological terrain and win the ideological hardliners who felt that the post-1990 liberal reforms were abandoning the post-independence socialist project was not easy. A key concern for the Chissano regime, particularly after 1994 and the first democratic elections that followed the first wave of liberalizing reforms, was job creation after the civil war and the closing of redundant state-owned industries in urban areas. This happened when people began returning from internally displaced camps (IDPs) after the 1992 General Peace Accord. A policy that could, with a degree of translation, cater for both issues was to create an 'urban labor class' in rural areas by rehabilitating the sugar industry.

A former state-industry cadre that among things had been Director of the Buzi sugar estate before taking up various positions in the privatized sugar industry after 2000 elaborated in an interview in 2010 on the sugar industry's track record as 'the biggest (private) employer in Mozambique before independence' and as a 'key export commodity' that 'made colonial investors rich', as well as highlighting the sugar industry's 'proven capacity to monetize and industrialize the rural areas' (see also the National Sugar Policy, INA 1996). Here in particular the industry's capacity to change labor relations and turn 'petty peasants into labor that could work in the industry' was valued (Former

Director at Buzi sugar estate, Maputo, 2010, int.). Job creation in the sugar industry allowed these cadres to connect the particular ideological history of creating a New Society after independence with liberalizing reforms in Mozambique – two histories that were in opposition. However, being able to tap into this history of changing rural areas was important in mobilizing support for key aspects of the strategy behind the rehabilitation (see INA 1996), as it legitimized liberalizing state ownership with some state participation. The liberalization of the industry and the involvement of FDI were contested politically within the ruling Frelimo coalition, where members of the old hardline ideological faction did not want to back down over retaining the Marxist-Leninist tenets of the post-independence state project, in which state control was imperative. However, if FDI and liberal reforms could somehow be presented not only as supporting Frelimo policies but also as delivering this imperative in a new way, this could soften the implacability of their resistance.

One key area for understanding how post-independence concerns relating to transforming society came to be translated into the domain of liberal reforms is the policy of 'urbanizing the rural', which suggests a continuation of post-independence policies to create a *Homem Novo* (New Man) and a *Sociedade Nova* (New Society) (see Buur 2010; Sumich 2018; Buur & Sumich 2019). After 1996 party, state and industry cadres and officials implementing the sugar rehabilitation policy repeatedly emphasized that, wherever the sugar industry had asserted itself, one saw a greater transformation of rural areas compared to other agricultural, industry and infrastructural investments. In particular, when the sugar industry became operational after 2000 (see Buur *et al.* 2012b), there were a number of knock-on effects, including expansions of local trade, public services, banking and credit, and infrastructure (roads and communications). In general, the rural economy around the industrial plants changed, as far more resources and services (markets, banking and telecommunications, as well as the transport of cane, workers and agricultural labor) emerged, and with it came improvements in the provision of infrastructure related to transport, education, health, water and other state services. The

argument was that the sugar-producing areas stood out as 'islands' of modernity in a landscape of superstition and authority based on culture and ethnicity. The fact that the sugar industry was known for providing superior, quasi-urban social services in housing, education, health and water made it special for the Frelimo leadership.

The ability to link the transformative capacity of the sugar sector in rural areas during the liberal reforms to Frelimo's long-term post-independence socialist drive towards the idealized, modern and rational *Homem Novo* and *Sociedade Nova* that would transform colonial society and its social relations (see Buur 2010; see also Sumich 2013) was important in creating political support for the rehabilitation of the industry. This deep link between post-independence concerns related to social transformation and post-socialist concerns with market relations nonetheless needed some translation.

Samora Machel's vision as the first president had been for a society cleansed of its traditional divisions: 'No tribes, no regions, no races, no religious belief [...] to divide us' (Machel 1981: 43). After independence, rural transformation was attempted through 'collectivization': peasants, or family-based' subsistence farmers, as they were largely but wrongly regarded (given that they were integrated into the world market in multiple ways), were forcibly concentrated into collective villages or state farms with little consideration for their market-based livelihoods, which mainly took the form of cash-crop production and seasonal migrant labor. This forcible and often quite violent attempt at 'uprooting' the populations of the rural hinterlands and gathering them into villages was expected to bring with it access to education and health, to political training, to the party-state authorities and so on, thus creating the conditions for the internal liberation of Man, not only from traditional society, but also from all elements of capitalist exploitation and colonial divisions.[11]

The transformative capacity of the sugar industry is what the president of the sugar producers' organization (APAMO) referred to as 'urbanizing the rural' or 'making hostile populations more positive to change' (President APAMO, Maputo 2008 int). This was also what Prime Minister Diogo

later suggested in a series of interviews during 2008-2010 with one of the authors, as well in her book *A sopa da madrugada: das reformas à transformação económica e social em Moçambique, 1994-2009* (Diogo 2013). She forcefully pointed out that a major concern of the Chissano government, as people returned from internal and external refugee camps after the peace accord in 1992, was access to services they had been accustomed to, but also that returnees needed to be accommodated so that they did not feel abandoned.

The APAMO president had been part of the rehabilitation process from the outset in 1995 and had taken up positions in the post-independent state-party before becoming president of the sugarcane producers. As a core example of a mediating bureaucrat, he had served as the state industry's representative at the Buzi sugar estate during the civil war and later as advisor to the governor of Sofala during liberalization. The APAMO president was well placed to appraise the contradictions that had to be reconciled between on the one hand the project to create the New Man and Society after independence in 1975 through socialist relations, and on the other hand, after the end of the civil war in 1992, the transformation that was to take place through and with capitalist relations, as well as the measures required to facilitate this displacement of goals. The old ideological vanguard was not naïve, but it trusted mediating bureaucrats such as the APAMO president, who had worked closely with them as a loyal party cadre in state-owned enterprises, line ministries and at the provincial level when they had all taken up high positions in the Frelimo state as governors of key provinces, ministers and directors of state industries. The story of how the old ideological project of the New Society was linked to the rehabilitation of the sugar industry as part of the liberal reforms was echoed by all interviewees regardless of faction. That this was a paradox or contradiction in terms was exactly the point – being able to bridge and translate the divide was what allowed the mediating bureaucrats to find the political support to push forward the reforms. One way in which this group of hesitant leaders was, if not convinced, then eased into support related to ownership. Continued ownership of the sugar

industry by the state was contested by both the old ideologues, who disliked being involved with FDI, and the foreign investors, who severely distrusted the intentions of the Frelimo state with respect to its ownership, as they feared interventions.

MEDIATING BETWEEN COMPETING INTERESTS

A surprising feature of the rehabilitation process was that, until around 2012, the Mozambican state (through the *Banco de Moçambique*) was still a main player in the sugar sector. Today it still has shares in more than one company, but until after 2012 it was actually a majority shareholder in three of the four companies (see Buur 2011). This was after the first two waves of privatization involving heavyweight South African and Mauritian capital, management and knowledge infusion. The Mauritian stake was later taken over by large French-Brazilian capital interests, and one of the South African companies, Illovo, was bought up by one of the biggest players in the sugar industry globally, Associated British Foods plc. Besides big corporate international sugar interests, a few private investors, some of whom were former sugar-company owners from the colonial era like the Petiz family from Portugal (involved with Maragra and later on cane production at Buzi in Sofala), became involved after the restructuring and privatization (Buur *et al.* 2012a; 2012b). In a country apparently overrun by neoliberal reforms (Hanlon 1991; Obarrio 2014), it came as a major surprise that the state still had major interests in the industry. This first became clear when individual sugar estates wanted to promote individualized marketing strategies when international sugar prices peaked after 2012 after they had been forced by the state to pursue collective marketing through the National Sugar Distributor (DNA) after 1994 (see Buur 2011; 2012b).

The reasons why the privatization of the sugar industry did not mean the Mozambican state relinquishing its ownership of or control over the sugar sector has both political and economic underpinnings, and they were intimately related to the particular way in which access to finance for

the rehabilitation of the industry was initially provided. Here the mediating bureaucrats as 'socially embedded actors' played a key role in mediating between different competing interests emanating from industry actors and government.

In order to access cheap loans for the rehabilitation process, besides what the investing companies could bring to the table themselves, the Mozambican state 'borrowed' money from special funds like OPEC and the Kuwait Foundation and handed it over to the sugar companies (Diogo 2010 int.; Whitfield & Buur 2014). In exchange, the state retained 51% of the shares after the foreign companies had bought themselves into the industry after 1994. The state percentage in fact first saw a large cut in 2008, when private investors began a new round of upgrading and expansion of cane production in order to increase productivity further. This expansion was in large part stipulated by the EU's accompanying measures (AMSP 2009). As new investments were made, the state share of ownership slowly diminished further. For the state this initial arrangement was beneficial: as the private investors serviced the 'state loan', the state's credit ranking increased so that it could take out new state loans for other projects at cheaper rates (see Buur *et al.* 2011). This arrangement not only created links between the FDI-driven sugar companies, the state bureaucracy and the government, it also enmeshed ownership structures in three out of the four sugar estates that were rehabilitated.

This was a risky arrangement for both the Frelimo government and the state, as well as the international companies. While the state and the party relinquished day-to-day management of the sugar estates to foreign companies and their staff, they maintained close control over their boards and over how sugar rents from creating a protected internal market were distributed and to whom. First, as a guarantee and a way of monitoring the companies, the government appointed one or two representatives to the boards at the outset of the privatization process, and three companies still had such representatives as late as 2016. The appointees were highly ranked cadres whom we regard as members of the mediating bureaucracy, people from either the party-state or the state-business sector.

For example, the former director of the National Sugar Institute (INA), who was previously in charge of drawing up the rehabilitation strategy, was appointed to all the administrative boards. He paid special attention to Tongaat-Hulett's investments in Xinavane in the south and Mafambisse in the center of the country, where he later became executive director until 2017. The new INA director who took up the mantle after 1996 later served on the board of Marromeu until 2009. Other members of the boards were high-level Frelimo or state officials with similar experiences from the era of centralized industrialization, civil-war management and the transition to a mixed economy during liberalization. They were cadres who had alternated between party, state and industry.

According to Luísa Diogo, the former Prime Minister, members of the mediating bureaucracy who served as state representatives on the boards and in the leadership of companies were important because they 'served as our eyes and ears, as many members of the party did not trust FDI' (Former Prime Minister Luísa Diogo, 2010 int.). What Diogo is referring to here is the mistrust of the liberalizing reforms on the part of the hardcore socialist ideologues, as they feared the country would be taken over by foreign capital, thus undermining Frelimo's legitimacy and its control over society and the economy. However, by placing trusted cadres in key positions on boards and in the management of the industry, this allowed the state to prevent breaches of contract and to ensure that the companies honored the financing deals, which ultimately had implications for the government's credit-worthiness. Particularly during the early years after the end of the civil war, the formal links with company boards allowed the state to follow the rehabilitation process closely, monitoring it so as to ensure that the politically important aspects of the rehabilitation plan were being followed, such as job creation and social service provision. A known aspect of this was that the industry suspended automating cane-cutting, thus making sure that thousands of temporary cutters' jobs would be available every year during the harvest up to and after Christmas.

This special arrangement also allowed the mediating bureaucrats to mediate industry concerns, particularly when companies were confronted with labor unrest (see Buur & Sumich 2019) or when they struggled to have important inputs released from the ports when they were kept there because of red tape. In particular, as a director of one of the sugar companies, a former INA director and longstanding state representative on several estates, argued (Former Director INA 2010, int.):

We can push the companies so they take their CSR seriously so social services are available – the building and maintenance of schools, health and housing facilities, water provision and so on, which in turn were underpinned by the ideological project of transforming rural populations – and so that training of the work force is honored without undermining the economic sustainability of the estates.

Second, while the companies certainly felt that they had become enmeshed in the webs of influence within the Frelimo state as it emerged after the GPA of 1992 and during the liberalizing reforms, and therefore were put under pressure to support election campaigns (providing cars, lorries and other contributions), creating jobs and minimizing import costs, it also provided ample ground for trade-off agreements between the companies and the party-state. Such trade-off negotiations and decisions, which benefitted both parties, required that the right people, those who understood the needs of international capital and how to translate them into national political concerns, could be mobilized. Here the mediating bureaucrats – greatly valued, as they could bridge different concerns so that policy-wise they could support each other, even if they were somehow mutually contradictory. International investors, for example, needed some protection for the internal market in order to be able to recover the costs of their investing in a situation of risk. By legislating and enforcing the implementation of a flexible tariff for sugar imports, the government pursued a means of protecting infant industries (Buur *et al.* 2012b). Aligning related but ideologically different policy trajectories became a major input that mediating bureaucrats could provide, thus allowing reform of the industry to continue, despite being contested by World-Bank liberalists, anti-liberalist NGOs and post-

independence centralists. During this process the mediating bureaucracy, were important in that they facilitated the transition of the sugar industry from being state-owned to being the predominantly foreign-owned industry it is today.

In short, the mediating bureaucrats in the sugar companies were able to influence state and government actors to assist the companies when, for example, the tariff system that protected the industry from outside competition needed to be adjusted or renewed (see Buur *et al.* 2012b; Buur 2020 forthcoming). By having what we have referred to as mediating bureaucrats placed strategically in boardrooms as 'socially embedded actors' leading the main interest organization in different capacities in each of the companies, conflicting expectations and interests could be aligned. Because this group of cadres had knowledge and sufficient political savvy due to their deep-rooted historical understanding of what other actors, whether in the state, the party, government or industry, needed in order to continue the association they could get things moving. They could even overcome the devastating flooding washed away hundreds of millions of USD, as in 2000/2001, 2007/2008 and again in 2013 (UNDP 2014).[12]

This group could draw on empathy from having seen the industry erode after independence, as they stayed on when, after independence, the political project imploded, trying to rescue what could be rescued, as well as issuing informed communications about the challenges and possibilities that could be mutually beneficial for the state, the government and investors based on some degree of 'mutual interest' (Whitfield & Buur 2014). In a dominant one-party state there are always people who, due to party-state connections, a history of common struggle or a shared organizational history, have influence beyond their title or official duties. What they have may come close to what Ferris *et al.* (2005: 127) refer to as 'political skill', defined as: 'The ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and/or organizational objectives'. Cadres with such understandings can allow trust and ability to be listened

to, creating the basis for being able to exert influence that could amount to political savvy. Political savvy for mediating bureaucrats meant that they could translate and communicate difficult political and economic realities to all parties: industry, state and government. Such mediation allowed the rehabilitation to move forward until 2019, when it stalled due to the Idai cyclone, the effects of the disappearance of the lucrative European internal market, industry actors' corporate strategies and the government turn to gas and minerals as the most important sectors to use for support for purposes of political survival (see Buur 2020 forthcoming). However, that is a story for the future.

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

In this article, we have suggested that the concept of 'mediating bureaucrats' as 'socially embedded actors' is useful when trying to understand how certain policy processes move in certain contexts. The article used the rehabilitation of the sugar sector in Mozambique and the wider process of liberal reforms in which it was embedded to explore two practices that characterize the work of mediating bureaucrats: muddling through and translation. Using Mozambique as an example, we have shown how the implementation of the sugar rehabilitation policy would not have been possible without cadres' ability to translate and mediate between conflicting interests. The mediating bureaucrats drew on the historical experiences of success and failure they had acquired from the colonial era before 1975, the post-independence experience of implementing socialist economic policies (and their failures) and a series of more pragmatic political and economic experiences that emerged as the liberal reforms took hold. This gave the cadres as 'socially embedded actors' a unique understanding of longer-term ideological stances, principally related to the post-independence era, but also to the market-based ideas and needs that took root with the new liberal policies. Given Mozambique's past as a former one-party state, the type and form of business interests one could engage in after independence in 1975 were party/state-centered and formally operated within a Marxist-Leninist one-

party framework. Even though after 1990 a new constitution formally separated state and party, as well as the public and private spheres of society, this did not function as such in practice. The actual experience and manifestation of these processes challenge the conventional notion of a clear separation of social spheres – for example, party, state, and market – that is common in mainstream political and economic theory (Block, 1994).[13]

As 'socially embedded actors', the cadres took up distinct positions as state, company, government and party representatives at different times, conceptually being referred to as 'mediating bureaucrats'. As we have suggested in this article, mediating bureaucrats had the know-how that allowed them to muddle through when managing workers and dealing with processes of accumulation; they had familiarity with issues around FDI capital and knew how to deal with government officials. This know-how emanated from experiences dating back to the colonial era and more particularly from the post-independence era, and they also had a clear understanding of foreign investors' needs and requirements after the end of the civil war in 1992. This allowed this group of cadres to facilitate the liberal reforms that saw the sugar industry rehabilitated after 1994. As they facilitated the transformation of the sugar industry from being state-owned to being predominantly privately owned, those within the mediating bureaucracy drew on their growing fund of knowledge and know-how, which accumulated with each new position they took up over time, to make the rehabilitation of the industry work. As discussed above, bureaucrats' translation and mediation of conflicting interests is an active processes of reinterpreting elite policies and investor interests and rendering them understandable in different vernacular idioms. In the Mozambican case we can take this still further, as the work of the mediating bureaucrats not only attempted to translate the multiple needs and concerns of government, state and industry positions as they moved between them. In the process they also contingently transformed the sugar sector from being state-led to becoming more of a market-led sector during the 2000s.

To suggest that mediation was important in the process of rehabilitation is not by any means to imply that it was itself non-conflictual. In fact, conflict was rampant at all stages, over the selection of which estates to rehabilitate (south or central/north); how to finance the rehabilitation (foreign direct investment or state-guaranteed loans); the creation of an internal market (pitting top party members, supporters and traders involved in dealing in contraband sugar against the reformed custom authorities and trade union members); how to share export and internal revenues between the sugar companies; and questions related to ownership (foreign or national). The existence of mediating bureaucrats with experience of all these formal positions meant that they could liaise between labor and employers, business and political interests, technical and technocratic concerns, and administrative and legal procedures both formally and informally, which in turn ensured that conflicts were never stalemated for too long. This also allowed mistrust to be confronted so that it did not impede rehabilitation. The ability of the bureaucrats to bridge the different interests and expectations of the political elite on the one hand and new foreign-industry actors on the other hand throughout the process was crucial to the progress of the rehabilitation project.

The key here is to understand the relationships and historical encounters that were forged between former party-state and industry-state personnel, including government actors, which generated both continuity and the ability to engage with foreign investors after the turn to liberal reforms and privatization from the mid-1980s, which only peaked, however, after 1994. This implied that in the Mozambican case the relationship between the state and private capital was intertwined and enmeshed not only after independence, but also after the liberal reforms of which the mediating bureaucrats, as 'socially embedded actors', are a living proof.

NOTES

[1]. For example, the ANC in South Africa, SWAPO in Namibia, ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe, the MPLA in Angola and the CCM in Tanzania.

[2]. Frelimo and Renamo fought a devastating sixteen-year civil war from 1976 to 1992. The war started as a Cold War destabilization war, with Renamo supported first by the Rhodesian regime and, after Zimbabwe's independence, by the apartheid regime in South Africa. The war quickly developed into a civil war, as Renamo tapped into criticism of the centralized Marxist-Leninist policies of the post-independence era that marginalized populations in the center and north of the country. The civil war destroyed much of the country's infrastructure and displaced up to 40% of its population.

[3]. Joao Mosca a leading agricultural expert and academic who himself became one of the young cadres that after independence was given huge responsibilities has reflected on the post-independence and liberal transitions in relation to the agricultural sector (see Mosca 2010) in ways that clearly echo many of the points made by our interviewees.

[4]. In this article we will not discuss how the liberal reforms in which Mozambique became embedded were neo-liberal and what this meant more broadly. Here it is sufficient to point out that there were both external pressures to adopt liberal reforms (see Hanlon 1996) and internal pressures and interests in finding ways of tapping into resources, knowledge and market access so that the regime could survive (Pitcher 2002; Whitfield *et al.* 2015; Weimer *et al.* 2012). This story forms a contrast to how the neoliberal reforms and privatization are usually presented as an external imposition in Mozambique (see Obarrio 2014; Hanlon 1991; Castel-Branco 2002).

[5]. Our account is historical, since the people we refer to were professionally active from colonial times (formally ending in 1975). Their importance for the post-independence reforms and later liberal reforms therefore have an end-point that has implications for their role during current developments, as indicated in later parts of the article.

[6]. However, subsequent research based on Granovetter's definition of embeddedness has primarily focused on networks, that is, on the structure of the links between actors (Krippner & Alvarez 2007), thus limiting analysis of the embedded actors themselves.

[7]. This formal bias has focused on decisions and powers specified and restricted by regulations executed by officials with expert training in their fields, in which career advancement depends on technical qualifications evaluated by merit-based organizational rules rather than on the particular individual bureaucrat.

[8]. Here Hart touches on neo-patrimonialism without explicitly using the broader language connected with it (see Chabal & Daloz 1999; Chabal 2009), focusing upon what they see as the actual politics going on behind the scenes of the formal structures – the use of disorder as an instrument of governing (see also Kelsall 2002).

[9]. Nystrand is drawing on Andrew Sayer´s (2000) concept of 'lay normativity'.

[10]. Interestingly, a pairing that mirrors the mutual embeddedness of the state and market in practice.

[11]. This violent attempt at creating a New Man and Society was one of the main reasons the Renamo revolt won a sustained foothold from the end of the 1970s.

[12]. When the 2019 flooding happened with the Idai cyclone, this trusted group of cadres had nearly all been pensioned off or had lost their positions due to the new politics of natural gas (see Macuane *et al.* 2018).

[13]. The notion of progress is most explicitly proposed in Fujiyama's 'End of History' thesis, but it often tacitly underpins conventional political sociology and new institutional economics approaches built on the open and closed access order thinking (see North *et al*. 2009).

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