



Introduction

On 29 September 2015 a motorcade comprising a number of cars holding Afonso Dhlakama, his aides, and soldiers drove along a main road from Chimoio in central Mozambique toward the city of Nampula when they were attacked—apparently by the forces of the Mozambican state. Dhlakama, the long-term leader of Renamo, the country’s largest opposition party, had just spoken at a rally in Chimoio. The attack left a number of people dead, but Dhlakama himself allegedly escaped quite spectacularly: He transmogrified into a bird, a partridge—the symbol of his party Renamo—spread his wings, and flew off.

Various and conflicting accounts of the attack broke on social media a mere hour after it happened. However, a key element in coverage in Mozambican papers and on social media was that so-called traditional leaders confirmed Dhlakama’s transmogrification and escape (Cuna 2015). I spoke with my interlocutors in nearby Chimoio and Honde by telephone in the days that followed, and they also confirmed the story, with one elderly man expressing with some glee, “The state should have known he would escape like that! Dhlakama has a lot of power from tradition.”

This book is not only about disentangling key national events such as these—events where forces of the state allegedly seek to eradicate the leader of the political opposition by violence, or about what could easily be labeled beliefs, cosmologies, even ontologies of this particular part of Mozambique. Rather, it examines the multiplex, historical, and contemporary relations between hierarchically oriented structures, state (for short), and what lies beyond: the domain of the social, including what is often referred to as “tradition.”

Analyzing the Mozambican historical trajectory and complex present also seems pertinent at this juncture. In 2015, forty years since Mozambique gained its independence from Portugal, Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, the country's fourth African president, entered office as the candidate of the independence movement turned political party, Frelimo. A mature post-colonial state by all accounts, Mozambique has by no means seen either a peaceful colonial era or postindependence period: as the country enters its fifth decade of independence, the national army and the wider state security apparatus still struggle to maintain control; indeed, they have been involved in armed combat with and deployed heavy artillery against parts of the Renamo political opposition and its guerrilla army from 2013 and up to the current moment in the spring of 2016.

This is a resurgence of violence between the state, dominated by the Frelimo party in power since 1975, and the opposition party Renamo, which fought the Mozambican state between 1976 and 1992 during the country's so-called civil war. However, this is not a case of armed guerrillas at the outskirts of the political order waging war against its center; instead, Renamo was—and has been for more than two decades—running in the presidential and parliamentary elections, attaining at times almost half of the votes (Azevedo-Harman 2015). Moreover, from 21 October 2012 to early 2014, the leader of Renamo hid in the bush from government troops attacking Renamo bases, as his deputies simultaneously continued their work in parliament. 2015 and 2016 have seen similar forms of violence exerted against government posts and officials, against civilians and against Renamo premises and representatives, as well as having made road traffic perilous in central regions (Barbier 2016).

Violence has also resurged in other contexts. In February 2008 and September 2010, major urban riots rocked Mozambique. In many cities, including the provincial capital of Chimoio in Manica Province, the rioters assumed control of state infrastructure, attacked police stations, and engaged in extensive looting of shops and markets. In the late 2000s, a wave of popularly organized acts of summary justice, so-called *linchamentos*, became prominent and lethal ways of resolving the problem of crime in both peri-urban and urban environments in Mozambique.¹

The intensity of violent clashes with the armed opposition as well as the proliferation of urban riots and spates of lynchings undermine the image of a country that had successfully emerged from violent decades of upheaval—first liberation war (1964–75) and then civil war, which started in 1976 and ended formally in 1992. More crucially, however, clashes, riots, and lynchings all indicate how processes, spaces, and domains of the state are regularly challenged by formations beyond its control. Building on long-term fieldwork in and around the city of Chimoio

in central Mozambique, this book asks why processes of state formation have constantly been challenged by clashes, riots, and lynchings, bearing in mind that these are recent expressions of similar forms of violence and protest. Crucially, it makes the claim that addressing and analyzing such forms of violence are essential to any understanding of state formation in general and the postcolonial state more specifically.

Throughout the book, several questions are posed: How are we to grapple with such paradoxes as continued war and politics as usual, where an opposition party wields its own army and a state employs its army and security forces against its political opposition? What are the underlying currents that fuel and trigger violent events, such as lynchings and riots? Beyond journalistic discourses, in what ways are such and prior events interpreted by the large segments of people occupying spaces external to the elite-controlled domains of rapidly accumulated wealth in Mozambique's urban centers? How can we understand the tensions between processes of state formation and state ordering on the one hand, and various forces external to or uncontrolled by the state on the other? Put differently, how does the other of the state, what we sometimes call society, stand in relation to African statehood?

It is the contention of this book, however, to go beyond such tropes of state-society divisions so often imposed from the outside. Often presuming, evaluatively, a weak, limited, or strong state, the wider society is seen as that which is not (yet) under state control. By contrast, this book starts from the point of view of seeing the state *not* as a finite entity—a controlled apparatus of borders, politics, personnel, bureaucracies, and budgets—but rather as an always-emergent form of power and control identifiable at multiple societal levels. In looking at the state from this perspective, this book seeks to present an alternative to the institutionally based visions of the state and its emphasis of lack and stasis, analyzing instead, perhaps, its features of excess and emergence. Moreover, as argued by Jean and John Comaroff (2012), the global south in general and Africa in particular must be approached not only as empirical and theoretical testing grounds but should be seen as prefiguring future global developments of statehood, society, and capitalism more generally. As such, the trajectories of violence and statehood in Mozambique carry wider import.

A State of Unease

The relations between what one might conceive as state formations and society are riddled with antagonisms and ambiguities in postcolonial

Africa as elsewhere. However, in many African postcolonial countries, the state order is frequently perceived and experienced as a hostile entity to those external to its resources and capacities, as a formation interlocked with global reformations of power or as historically shaped hierarchical orders of subjection and exploitation (Reno 1999; Crais 2002; Argenti 2007; Piot 2010). As a developmental state, Mozambique has received vast amounts of aid after emerging from its devastating civil war (1976–92) that followed independence from Portuguese colonial rule in 1975. Arguably, given the impact of IMF- and World Bank–driven restructuring of the country from the mid-1980s onward, it turned into what Obarrio (2014) has aptly called a “state of structural adjustment.” Following the end of civil war, it has in donor circles been hailed as constituting a model for postconflict development—an argument often backed up by macroeconomic indicators.²

Yet, Mozambique has increasingly attracted critique from scholars concerned with how resources and capital are seemingly condensing around elites related to the dominant Frelimo party, with how class stratification is becoming more pronounced, and with the geopolitical concentration of resources and economic activities around the capital of Maputo in the extreme south (see, e.g., Cahen 2010; Hanlon 2010; Sumich 2015). In a context of recurring unrest, emerging critique, and, arguably, entrenchment of Maputo-based elites, it seems worthwhile to pursue how the postcolonial state formation is imagined and experienced from its margins—that is, from provinces beyond Maputo and from circumstances of impoverishment external to the powerful centers of political and economic elites.

This book is, then, such an empirically founded contribution toward these issues using mainly ethnographic material based on multiple periods of fieldwork from 1999 to 2011 in largely impoverished communities in the rural-urban continuum of Chimoio and Honde, Manica Province, central Mozambique. Over a total of twenty-one months, I followed the flows of people, resources, and substances between different localities and, therefore, various domains of authority (statal and other), diverse notions of territory, production and exchange, shifting perceptions of legal conflicts and their resolution, and broader sociocultural dynamics of health. I have been able to participate in such a rural-urban continuum with the assistance of individual interlocutors as well as living in poor households that frequently, and sometimes seasonally, relocate between the urban, peri-urban, and rural localities.

My focus in the field was continually informed not only by contemporary concerns relating to the current developmental national state order but also by how the trajectories of the state kind articulate antag-

onistically with its purported subjects. This general historical pattern of tension and antagonism—as reflected in the urban riots of 2008 and 2010 and the rise of lynchings throughout the 2000s—is especially clear when seen from the perspective of Manica Province in general and from Honde and Chimoi, in my case, in particular. First, both the gradual incursions of the Portuguese traders from the 1500s onward and, later, the rise of the Nguni kingdoms in the period 1830 to 1890—an effect of the *mfecane* upheavals of Southern Africa—may be seen as emerging formations of the state kind. For example, subsequent Nguni kingdoms of the nineteenth century expanded violently in Manica Province by destroying existing territorially based polities through warfare and subjected its population through systems of tribute, taxation, as well as enslavement. Such violent dynamics were continued under the concession company Companhia de Moçambique. Funded with international capital and ruling Manica Province from the 1890s to the 1940s as a sovereign state formation within the Portuguese imperial realm, the Companhia developed directly from the structures of the Nguni kingdom through, for instance, employing detachments of Nguni warriors in violent campaigns of tax collection and pacification. With the decline of the Companhia (formally abolished in 1941), the late colonial state furthered and refined existing practices of taxation and forced labor, encapsulation of people in protected villages, and encompassment of traditional authorities within colonial structures of governance. Although Mozambican independence in 1975 signaled an end to colonial relations of extraction, informed by a socialist ethos the postcolonial state under Frelimo attacked what it termed “obscurantism” through a program of social transformation that included the abolishment of traditional authorities, the construction of collective villages for rural production, and the cleansing of the cities of unproductive elements. Thus, the postcolonial state’s policies mirrored previous state formations’ in its attacks on crucial dimensions of the social such as kinship, the organization of agricultural production, and relations between territory and ancestral spirits. Further, while arguably complex in terms of dynamics and causes, the ensuing Mozambican civil war also violently engaged and enlisted dimensions of kinship, magic, spirits, and chiefly polities against the previously-mentioned policies of the postcolonial state. Following the end of the civil war in 1992, a reorientation is evident on the part of the postcolonial state in which a policy of “recognition”—a local derivative of a global order of governance (Tan 2011)—is implemented wherein those deemed “traditional authorities” are enrolled in politics of decentralization, frequently creating local situations of ambivalence in terms of authority and power.



Illustration 0.1. Remnants of a military vehicle destroyed during the civil war. The burned and corrugated metal is a material reminder of the war's destruction, and the metal curiously enough (or not so curious) remains largely uncollected for re-use. Honde, 2004.

This broad historical trajectory comprises central aspects of the historical patterns of state-society relations in Mozambique as viewed from the province of Manica. In approaching these through seeing state formation from outside elites internal to it or beyond its power centers, I will highlight what is arguably a frequently overlooked but nonetheless key dimension to such a state-society conundrum: the traditional field's relations to processes of state formation. Beyond identifying these processes historically, such a focus is informed by the fact that terms such as *tradição* ("tradition" in Portuguese), *tsika* ("tradition" in chiTewe), or *tchianhu wo atewe* ("the way of the maTewe") are employed by many in and around the city of Chimoio to denote multiple aspects—often explicitly seen to contrast the state order and regularly invoked for framing key experiences and dynamics. For example, the terms are used to describe the destructive and constructive energies of *uroi* (sorcery)—energies frequently seen to upset the hierarchies of formal social organization such as age, gender, or cycles of production, accumulation, and redistribution. Moreover, *uroi* is widely perceived as doubly appropriated as well as having appropriating capacities related to agents and prominent sections of state elite, and it is seen as partly constitutive of a reality external to and inimical of the formal state order—a realm framed with the terms *tradição*, *tsika*, and *tchianhu wo atewe*. Further, despite often lamenting what many argue is a current disintegration of "traditional

ways,” a range of people—from the *tchirenge* (rainmaker) in the rural location of Honde to the Frelimo party secretary in Chimoio—underline the constantly changing and open nature of the traditional field.

The force of what my interlocutors frame through the terms *tradição* and *tchianhu wo atewe* is, then, considerable, informing perceptions of contemporary and past state dynamics. In using the term “traditional field” here I do not seek to fully emulate, appropriate, and redeploy what one might broadly call non-Western perspectives—although several contributions to the so-called ontological turn contribute crucially to reformulating anthropological theoretical, methodological and analytical approaches to alterity and difference (Viveiros de Castro 1998, 2014 [2009]; Holbraad and Pedersen 2016; see also Bertelsen and Bendixsen 2016). Nor do I seek to resurrect or reformulate the colonial category of “tradition” that has rightly been discarded. Rather, I utilize the concept of “traditional field” to grasp experiential dimensions and broad historical trends that crucially shape contemporary and past dynamics of statehood, sociality, and power as these unfold. Further, its characteristic of constituting a nonentity by virtue of its openness and its continuity through change has informed my decision to call it a “field” more in the sense of force field than any cadastrally demarcated or unambiguously circumscribed social entity. I approach it, therefore, not as a constituent of an ontologically consistent and stable reality, but as a term that captures the cosmogenetic force of the social or, better, sociality’s constitutive ontogenetic thrust. But how should we, in more theoretical terms, grasp these dynamics of state and, conversely, the forces that shape lynchings, transmogrifications, and the everyday in places like Mozambique?

State Formation and the Social

Approaching the state as an order of externality has been the long-standing position of the so-called neopatrimonialists in their analysis of the African state (e.g. Bayart 1993; Mamdani 1996; Chabal and Daloz 1999; cf. Gulbrandsen 2012). Further, important contributions to understanding the structure of war—and its violent labor and dynamics of order and upheaval—have come from approaching state in this way. One example is Danny Hoffman’s rich work on young fighters in Sierra Leone and Liberia and he defines the state as “a hierarchical mode of organizing power that appears as a tendency or impulse through history” (Hoffman 2011: 7). Such an approach to the state has also, of course, been theoretically and empirically charted for anthropology by Pierre Clastres (1998

[1974]), contained in his notion of “society against the state.” Based on Amazonian ethnography, Clastres’s claim is radical by arguing for the existence of powerful social processes that antagonistically ward off nascent hierarchical orders of the state kind—in Clastres’s material analyzed in the context of the headman whose powers were always already effectively curbed. Despite its ethnographic situatedness and tendency to pose an evolutionary argument, Clastres’s state-society opposition has currency outside its Amazonian sociopolitical context.³

Clastres’s general point about a friction between statist dynamics and society carries import also for my analysis of the instances and violence of this relation. As a discursive object, lived reality and social and cosmological ontology (see also Rio 2007), what I call “the traditional field,” comprises a crucial aspect of the nonstate domain of sociality. More specifically, however, and in opposition to positions that endorse a very strict and somewhat totalizing reading of ontology in terms of confining this to a postpolitical or apolitical radical otherness (Pedersen 2011; cf. Vigh and Sausdal 2014), my understanding of seeing the traditional field as integral to social and cosmological ontologies is attuned to Kapferer’s reminder “that ontology realizes its meanings, and exerts the force of its logic, only through the ideological action of human beings in a social and political world” (2012 [1988]: 80). Conceptualizing the traditional field in terms of such a reading of ontology also means a narrowing of a project, potentially too totalizing or overly encompassing, of mapping Mozambican state-society opposition historically and contemporarily.

A warning is now in order: by using the term “the traditional field” to encompass this ontological dimension of the social and the cosmological in order to also reflect my interlocutors’ terms *tradição* and *tchianhu wo atewe*, I do not allude to notions of (supposedly) premodern social orders or cosmologies. Nor do I attempt to reactualise, resurrect, or redefine any opposition between “modernity” and “tradition.” Such approaches represent impasses, not least because these analyses necessarily primordialize or primitivize (see also Englund and Leach 2000). This analysis, therefore, neither approaches the traditional field as some sort of originary order (and, thus, as a residual category of modernity or its Other) nor as a reality wholly created by colonialism or other forces. Contrary to representations of the traditional as stagnant or primordial, I emphasize its vitality and dynamic through constituting a social and cosmological domain of the potential. This, I argue, is evident empirically in subsequent state formations’ inability to contain and capture the potentialities inherent to the field: from evasive maneuvers under the early and late colonial state to the current postcolonial state’s struggle to

contain effervescent riots, spates of lynchings, or processes of healing in the face of *uroi*, the very dynamic of the state is challenged. This capacity for deterritorialization and rupture in relation to the state order, as a highly volatile and rapidly changing domain, means that the traditional field is understood as a space of the virtual wherein new realities are emergent. Through analyzing specific empirical instances where these new realities are actualized—that is, progressing from the domain of the reality of the potential to the actual—I identify specific creative instances where the traditional takes shape in relation to and, frequently, in opposition to state ordering.

But “the traditional” is not the only problematic term when approaching these dynamics. What we normally define as “the state” is for Mozambicans frequently referred to as *o estado* (the state), *o governo* (the government), *o partido* (the party, i.e. Frelimo), or simply as just *Frelimo* (the Frelimo party). These terms encompass everything from everyday interactions with corrupt police officers to historical experiences of abolishment of chiefhood in the early postcolonial period. In order to analyze these disparate experiences of state ordering within the rural-urban continuum, the text will pursue processes of state formation mainly in Manica Province from the mid-1800s onward with an emphasis on the postindependence era.

For these reasons, my argument departs from current debates on the postcolonial state where positions diverge between those arguing for continuity between the colonial and postcolonial state and others emphasizing a more or less radical rupture.⁴ By instead tracing how the traditional field constitutes a specific site of potentiality, this book is not primarily concerned with breaks or continuities or, necessarily, the formal administrative and governmental apparatus of the nation-state. This largely noninstitutional approach to both the state and to the field of the traditional is, again, reflected in and informed by the empirical material at hand that ranges from early state formation, colonial dynamics of capture, and spirits of territorialization and deterritorialization to dynamics of healing and the current postcolonial state’s approach to *uroi*. As all are firmly based on the specific empirical context of the rural-urban continuum studied, the approach taken resembles a contribution toward seeing the state “from below.” However, this particular metaphor reinserts an unfortunate imagery by seeing the state as an already existing institutional arrangement or apparatus hovering above its subjects in a Leviathan-like fashion. In this book I will instead entertain the idea of the state as perpetually unfolding. This non-Leviathan-like character is also apparent when it comes to state sovereignty, which, I argue, in the present postcolonial era is distributed to the peripheries and with

opaque and contested ties to a center. In this sense, the argument deviates from a vision of the monolithic state by seeing it as perpetually emerging and, importantly, in conflict with nonstate domains of the social in general and the heterogeneous field I choose to call “the traditional” in particular. Instead, I argue, what is identified as the state is always in a process of *becoming*, not being. Following such an argument of dynamic emergence, the conflict between the traditional field and the state will always encompass *and* foment novel potential configurations.

State Recognition and Its Politics in Africa

One such event of tentative encompassment occurred with two decrees (*decretos*) issued in 2000 by the Mozambican government. They aimed at formalizing the positions of so-called *autoridades comunitárias* (“community authorities”), a term invented within the context of such decrees (Buur and Kyed 2006). The notion of “community authority” was designated to include prominent *secretários do bairro* (secretaries of parts of the city) as well as important religious leaders and so-called “traditional leaders” such as *régulos* (chiefs). Simply put, the decrees were oriented toward co-opting into the state administration those who were identified as de facto influential persons within the local community. For Mozambican *régulos*, the implementation of the decrees has compelled them to enroll within the formal state apparatus, including being vested with conflict-resolution powers, the possibility to tax state subjects, and the right to dress in uniforms strikingly similar to those of the colonial period. This move places the *régulo* in a highly ambivalent role, representing, on the one hand, the local community vis-à-vis the state and on the other representing the state itself (see also Kyed 2007b, 2009; Forquilha 2010).

Such an inclusionary move has a specific trajectory, and in current, largely aid-saturated Mozambique, the prominent development discourse is rife with allusions to a broader, global ideology of decentralization. Such discourse is often coined in rhetorical expressions, such as “moves toward strengthening local governance” or “steps in the process toward greater decentralization” (see also Obarrio 2014). The rationale for decentralization may be understood when considering that Mozambique has had a virtual one-party system with Frelimo (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*), the liberation movement and later political party, holding power since independence in 1975. Further, the period immediately following independence was dominated by two intertwined processes: on the one hand, the postcolonial state’s tentative

construction of a strict party and cadre structure steeped in an ideology of state centralism; on the other, its attempted *eradication* of what they saw as traditional structures, agrarian practices, and bodies of knowledge. These twin postcolonial processes profoundly transformed Mozambican society. In light of this political history, any inclusion of non-centrally dictated processes or agents of governance seemingly conforms to a globalized rhetoric of decentralization.

However, in practice, the process of “recognition”—supposedly one where inhabitants in an administrative area select “their” community authority thereafter to be registered with state administration—has engendered complex and conflict-ridden local authority structures. In the impoverished parts of Chimoio and the rural community of Honde such processes of “recognition” have meant that problematic dimensions of territory, authority, and autochthony have resurfaced—some of which are rooted in the civil war. Moreover, the frequent paradoxical effect of *doubling* representation for the dominant political party by instituting a new “community authority” and retaining their party secretary—both from Frelimo—has met with resistance and discontent as the practice seems also to marginalize further nonstate-based forms of authority, such as the *régulo*. The process of decentralizing power to “de facto” authorities has in the fieldwork localities thus created a highly ambivalent and complex situation where different domains of authority interpenetrate and conflict.

This development is a tangible and recent example of the predicament of the traditional field as it has been subjected to and embroiled in a number of political and violent dynamics in the circumstances of colonial rule, extending through the anticolonial struggle and into the era of independence after 1975.⁵ The Mozambican government’s move in 2000 is, of course, not unprecedented in Africa: for one, Gluckman et al. (1949) emphasized half a century ago the degree to which local political authorities are also always embedded in and comprise crucial parts of social organizations. As such, Gluckman’s seminal work represents a reminder to not merely restrict an analysis to political offices and formal structural relations between, for example, state administration and *régulos* or, later, so-called community authorities. My position in this book is informed by Gluckman’s in terms of probing the ambiguities of the traditional field as an aspect of the social and explicitly analyze dimensions crucial to its relation vis-à-vis the state order in, for example, territorial, spiritual, economical, or legal domains. However, in contrast to Gluckman’s systemic approach emphasizing the ambiguous position of the headman between state and society, my approach is also premised upon the *force* and *dynamic* of the social. Such recognition of the force

and dynamic of this field presents scholars with several puzzles. One such is: Why the seemingly increased political preoccupation with this field at this stage of the postcolonial state?

Admittedly, current attention follows decades during which newly independent African governments were concerned with modernization. For example, Tanzania and Angola's national liberation movements and governments-to-be both embarked on socialist-inspired policies of ousting colonial and "traditional" relics, like the chiefs, from power (see Orre 2010; Scott 1998: 223–61 respectively). Similarly, in postliberation Mozambique, modernization's goal was "not only the eradication of underdevelopment, but also the creation of a socialist society based on a workers-peasants alliance and ... aimed at creating a 'new man', i.e. one emancipated from the oppressive weight of tradition" (Macamo and Neubert 2004: 65; see also Farré 2015). These processes in Mozambique and elsewhere are reminiscent of what Scott (1998) terms "high modernism," central to which are processes of erasure or *confinement* of what is perceived as irrational, backward, and primitive—"the oppressive weight of tradition." Such *confinement* may take the shape of state-dominated processes of "folklorification" wherein certain groups of people, practices, or beliefs are redefined merely as the objects of "ethnotourism" (Alonso 1994). *Erasure*, on the other hand, may mean attacks on chiefly powers and their polities, as was the case in Mozambique postindependence (West 2009). However, the current recourse to and reintegration of *régulos* in Mozambican systems of governance opposes such high modernist trajectories of either *erasure* or *confinement*.

A second puzzle: Why does this political reemphasis on the traditional seemingly encompass Francophone, Lusophone, and Anglophone postcolonies, all of which had distinctly different types of colonial systems as well as divergent trajectories of colonial representation (Cooper 2005)? From South Africa (Oomen 2005), Botswana (Gulbrandsen 2012) and Cameroon (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000) to Southern Africa (Guedes and Lopes 2006; Hinz 2006) and West Africa (Perrot and Fauvelle-Aymar 2003) more generally, there are different yet similar reorientations and reemphases.

While I will refrain from attempting to answer these two puzzles here, several strands of scholarship have attempted to do so directly or indirectly, and I will revisit some in order to position my own argument about Mozambique. First, the last decades of Africanist research has seen a renewed interest in the *politics of identity, autochthony, and rights*, a vibrant new politics of belonging that in some contexts bypasses formal political structures and parties and in others becomes integral to these (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000; Englund and Nyamnjoh 2004; Obadare and Wil-

lems 2014). This field has generated numerous analyses oriented toward locating and recognizing local or African politics as relevant and important (Vaughan 2005) and, alternatively, criticizing visions of democracy, participation, and rights that are seen as projected onto African realities from Euro-American contexts (Englund 2006, 2011).

Second and contrastingly, a far starker approach to African political realities is increasingly influential in academic circles in which *the African postcolonial state* is seen to be decaying in most aspects and at multiple levels. This view typically characterizes what is seen as disintegration or nebulous transformation by depictions of increasing nepotism, corruption, and violence (Bayart 1993; Bayart et al. 1999; Collier and Vicente 2012). A related argument focuses on a disintegration of *postliberation national unities* (ideologies, cosmologies, etc.) in tandem with the crumbling of the formal state apparatus and bureaucracy—processes manifesting as disenchantment with national identities and histories (Werbner and Ranger 1996; Werbner 1998b, 2002) or as persistent preoccupations with a colonial past still terrorizing the present (Mbembe 2010).

Third, a theoretically informed and textually minded approach is voiced particularly by Achille Mbembe (2001, 2003). In his vision of the postcolonial *state* and *state of being/subject*, any meaningful sense of political ideologies has evaporated and the social and political world is deadened. These worlds are shaped by a politics of “necrophagous” violence where the subjects toy with power and its subjectifying force while engaging in carnivalesque consumption in grotesque circumstances. Contrary to Bayart’s position, the postcolonial subject for Mbembe exerts a certain agency by engaging and conniving with power or its symbols—albeit not to tangible emancipatory effects in a material sense.

Fourth, there is to some extent an anti-Mbembian and anti-Bayartian stance that identifies an increased interest in judicial mechanisms, rhetorics of law, and the legal corpus to address a wide range of social, political, and other ills (J. L. Comaroff and J. Comaroff 2006; Obarrio 2014). This position emphasizes a rampant and expansionist judicialization of social life, politics, and governance in general, but a judicialization that does not necessarily correspond with either a “rule of law” in a conventional sense or with the rhetoric of rights. It points, rather, to appropriation, mimicry, and transformation of legal texts, logics, and bodies reinserted into both novel social and political formations (Roitman 2006; Pratten and Sen 2007a) and into criminal and shadowy contexts of violent extraction (Nordstrom 2007; Mattei and Nader 2008; Ellis and Shaw 2015).

This latter trend is intimately related to a fifth strand of scholarship, namely, that where “tradition” and “traditional leaders” are treated as

integrative into local and national governance schemes. For the context of Mozambique, such an approach powerfully informs the current (and often celebratory) rhetoric of “legal pluralism” and the alleged salience of integrating the formal legal state apparatus, traditional courts, and community courts (Meneses et al. 2003; Santos 2006a, 2006b; Pimentel 2009; Kyed et al. 2012), a dimension analyzed in chapter 7.

On Potentiality and Partiality

What I have sketched as five approaches have all informed this book’s analysis of the predicament of state formation and the traditional field, and I will refer to, directly or indirectly, these debates throughout. Nonetheless, what all have in common on an explanatory level is that they arguably represent *partial approaches* as the field of the traditional is understood in terms of autochthony, belonging, and identity (Virtanen 2005a, 2005b) or focus on processes relating to or negating the possibility of national unity (Englebert 2002). Further, there is a tendency to reduce the state to a one-dimensional mechanism of exploitation usurped and employed by self-serving elites (see, e.g., Bayart 1993; cf. Gulbrandsen 2012). Lastly, elements of judicial and conflict-resolution mechanisms within the traditional structures are seen to mirror and, importantly, complement the formal legal and statal machinations in several analyses (see, e.g., Santos et al. 2006a).

This book deviates from these partial approaches in mainly two respects. First, instead of departing from notions of governance, belonging, or politics—an approach often rendering the traditional field a residual category—the starting point will be the domain of sociality and the traditional field itself. Second, my argument is therefore to *retain* the notion of the traditional as an analytical entity encompassing a range of logics and practices that must be seen in relation and that are irreducible to their parts. By proposing an analytical approach privileging unity over partiality, I do not mean to convey images of immobile entities with clear-cut boundaries but rather underline the traditional as dynamic and shifting yet particular and singular (Badiou 2005 [1988]). The book attempts to capture ongoing and changing empirical configurations of the traditional field and state formation with the term *becoming*—a term underscoring their dynamic and manifold aspects not retained by the (static) *being* (Deleuze and Guattari 2002 [1980]; see also Viveiros do Castro 2014 [2009]).

The emphasis of becoming is related to another point: the impossibility of the presentist “now.” While emphasizing the ethnographic ma-

terial collected during numerous periods of fieldwork in the rural-urban continuum of Chimoio and Honde, the analysis will be strengthened by a *longue durée* perspective. This provides the opportunity to present and analyze formative moments of particular crisis and depict how these impinge on the present in terms of, for example, the spirits of war (chapter 3) or popular reappropriation of discarded legal notions (chapter 7). Such an approach conforms with Gledhill's (2000 [1994]) and Sahlins's (2004) separately made arguments for anthropology's need to privilege historicization. Conversely, confining the analysis to the "now," to an ethnographic *presence* in a shallow sense, fails to recognize not only the importance of time-depth but also the considerable human variation in temporality and its manifestations (see also Nielsen 2014).

By including a historical dimension, I specifically look into how the potential of the traditional emerges in fields such as territory, justice, healing, sorcery, and economy in different Mozambican state formations. These notions and practices are crucial ethnographic entry points for analyzing how the state is implicated in, projects itself into, and is imagined in social contexts. Such a general focus rests on a stubborn assumption: that it is, in the face of a pluralizing, individuating, and disintegrative tendency in much recent anthropology, *still* meaningful—both analytically and empirically—to retain a notion such as "the traditional field" and see this as a domain of the social. This does not imply, of course, a return to either a folkloric vision of "tradition" in the singular as an encapsulated entity belonging to the domains of the museologically nonpolitical or being the object of ethnopolitics (but see Englebert 2005 for such a use of "tradition"). However, retaining the term "traditional" also implies being aware of its potentially problematic dimensions.

First, the term "traditional" may rapidly become associated with former anthropological notions—such as the prerational (Lévy-Bruhl) or primitive (Lévi-Strauss) rearing their ugly heads. Thus, the term is imbued with *political cum scientific connotations* that are troublesome in that this way of conceptualizing has modern proponents in what Paul Richards (2005) has called "the new barbarism" school, most famously and vocally represented by the writer Robert Kaplan (1997). Kaplan and others are highly influential in privileging the ideal of the modern "now" over the forces of a nontemporal, dark, and primitive "Africa" that is, in Eric Wolf's (1982) sense, still without history.

Second, and more importantly, there are a host of more theoretical problems if one upholds a dualism seemingly dividing the world temporally into premodern, being traditional, and modern, being the unavoidable but desirable end product along a linear temporal continuum.

For one, this notion of a flawless and rational modernity belies the constant frictions that makes the very term “modern” problematic (Latour 1993). To invert, the cleanliness of the modern is constantly made dirty by practices that were thought to be relegated to the undesirable residual category of the modern—tradition.⁶ Nevertheless, in some works, a somewhat monolithic and unidirectional modernity is invoked in an analysis wherein Africans are seen to presumably employ their *nonmodernity* in relating to, be anxious about, or denounce such modernity (see, e.g., J. Comaroff and J. L. Comaroff 1993). In other more recent attempts, modernity is frequently detotalized and instead construed as being open-ended, multisemic, and relational (see, e.g., Geschiere et al. 2008).

Arguably, many of these approaches fail to ground or empirically frame modernity, and the term could perhaps instead be pluralized into multiple modernities (Englund 1996b), if not be avoided altogether (see Englund and Leach 2000).⁷ On the other hand, these dichotomy-producing analyses seem to purify the categories for the simplicity of arguing for the alleged invented nature of “tradition” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992 [1983])⁸ or, conversely, for the heroics of resistance to the colonial or postcolonial state by employing more or less nontainted indigenous traditional resources (Scott 1985). In a critique of the “invention of tradition” thesis, Sahlins (2002: 4) has pointed out its skewed, Eurocentric, and, surprisingly, ahistoric leanings:

What else can one say about it, except that some people have all the historical luck? When Europeans invent their traditions—with the Turks at the gates—it is a genuine cultural rebirth, the beginnings of a progressive future. When other peoples do it, it is a sign of cultural decadence, a factitious recuperation, which can only bring forth the simulacra of a dead past.

Following the thrust of Sahlins’s argument, when non-European peoples attempt to *discard* (presumably invented) traditions, these attempts are frequently interpreted in terms of mimicry. One Mozambican example: analyzing the fractured sovereign status of the Mozambican state given donor power, Hall and Young (1997: 220n11) call the 1991 political program of Renamo, Mozambique’s main political opposition party, an “absurd mimicry of the US constitution.” Such allocations of “mimicry” effectively preclude novel analyses of state formations as these are always already invented in another, and allegedly more appropriate, Western context.

A third problematic dimension impinging on a notion of the “traditional field” is the extensive conniving between anthropology as a discipline and the colonial state project (Asad 1973; L’Estoile et al. 2005).

As Gledhill points out (2000 [1994]: 69), “Anthropologists were part of a larger colonial power structure, and that affected their analyses.” The anthropologists of the Lusophone world were no exception to this rule (Thomaz 2005).⁹ In the era of colonial anthropology, the conceptualization of what was represented as “traditional” was merely one of the foci that have subjected it to later criticism. Evans-Pritchard’s (1957 [1940]: 7) description of the scope of his work on the Nuer underlines this orientation: “We have endeavoured to give as concise an account of their life as possible, believing that a short book is of greater value to the student and administrator than a long one, and, omitting much material, we have recorded only what is significant for the limited subject of discussion.”

Hence, one scope of some colonial monographs was to produce a limited yet manageable—in also its Foucauldian governmentality sense—account of ways of life and, as such, cater *also* to the needs of the colonial administration.¹⁰ This has given the research within this area a dubious complicit ring to it, and it has also formed academic schools of thought on *how* to relate these issues: in many countries terms denoting matters local and nonmodern, as with *kastom* in Melanesia (see, e.g., Keesing 1992), have been produced by the machineries of (colonial) statecraft and the near universal ideology of nationhood. Comparatively, in Mozambique the term *tradição* is used in popular and official discourse alike to denote such disparate issues as the formal authority of traditional leaders (Lundin and Machava 1998), ceremonies hailing the Mozambican president in “traditional ways” (Israel 2006), and vaginal practices integral to female sexuality and bodily aesthetics (Bagnol and Mariano 2008).

This means that the self-evident English translation of the term, *tradition*, is problematic as it necessitates a wide range of clarifications regarding to *which order* the concept belongs. Seemingly this might be evaded by differentiating between *tradição* for officialist discourse and *tchianhu wo atewe* (“the way of the chiTewe”) or *tsika* (“tradition”), as previously mentioned, where the latter designates the whole field of the rural-urban continuum studied. However, such a distinction would attribute clear divisions where there are none empirically, as people use the terms interchangeably, as also already mentioned. Analytically such a division would also belie rather than elucidate the relations between local practices, perceptions, and relations and wider regional, national and historical dimensions to the terms and their usage.

My argument is contrary to this: I view the traditional field as being subject to and the object of specific historical trajectories transforming and inscribing meaning to its contents rather than erasing it. By the field

of the traditional, this book explores, on the one hand, the empirical domain described by my people as *tradição* (tradition) or *tchianho wo atewe* (the way of the chiTewe). On the other hand, the term *tradição* is also frequently employed by the state or its agents in both local and national contexts. By employing “traditional field,” I seek to embrace this whole unruly and contested domain of the social. Sometimes, however, I will use the term “tradition” or *tradição* when referring specifically to the official domain and politics and also sometimes use *tchianho wo atewe* if that reflects more correctly my interlocutors’ view. As identified by the latter, the traditional field harbors potentialities that challenge the formal colonial or postcolonial state structure. The analysis will identify these within polities in Manica Province at different periods in terms also of how these polities may be seen as structures of the state order in a Deleuzian sense. Thus, “field” in the analytical term “traditional field” denotes here not so much a distinct, static, or clearly defined hierarchical or institutional domain of the social as an unruly and contested entity of potentialities—a fact I only gradually came to appreciate through my fellow travelers in the journey to make sense of the world as it appears in Chimoio and Honde.

Carmeliza’s *Tradição*—or Getting a Grip

When men and women in Honde and Chimoio used notions such as *tradição*, *tsika*, or *tchianhu wo atewe*, the concepts were related to in a multitude of ways: as abstractions of practices preceding colonialism, war, and independence; as idealized moral or cultural orders; or as terms denoting particular groups of people or individuals being, implicitly, more or less “traditional.” However, one pervasive element was continually communicated: the openness and unboundedness of *tsika*, *tradição*, or *tchianhu wo atewe*. This openness finally dawned on me during a conversation in 2005 with an elderly woman, Carmeliza, from Honde. While sitting in her courtyard, as I had many times since 1999, I asked her about historical differences pertaining to things such as household organization, land tenure, and taxes. After having answered the specific questions, always providing new details, she clearly wanted me to understand an additional facet:

You know, Bigorn [Bjørn], things change but also they do not change here. We go because of war, because Frelimo wants us to do this and that. And we come back. We do the same things even though we do different things. Our *tradição* is an open *tradição*. Yet our *tradição* is always the same. Do you understand?

Short of making me stop engaging in a simplistic conversation of the sort “what was different then from now,” at the time I was unsure if I comprehended fully what she was saying. With hindsight, however, I see that she wanted me to understand the necessary dynamic and ever-changing nature of what I have called the traditional field.

To recall, one might argue that if not defined properly, the term *tradition* reifies, fossilifies, or entifies features of social life that need to be approached as changing, open, and contested. One may further argue that by pluralizing and deidentifying into *traditional* one will purge the term of some of its connotations of “olden days” or “primordialism”—as previously detailed—and contrarily underline its constantly changing nature. This is, of course, a crucial argument that this work seeks also to support and substantiate. However, by purely underlining its non-stasis, one may fail to appreciate how the *traditional field*, as I have termed it—even though it has been and is constantly challenged, violently coopted, or sought to be abolished—has retained certain sets of logic that have continuities in the *longue durée*.

Precisely therefore and to undermine arguments of the neoprimitivist kind, I aim to contextualize the traditional field historically and ethnographically. Moreover, through showing how it is often violently forged by macropolitics and colonial and postliberation policies and politics, the trajectory of a particular social reality may be mapped and analyzed. Put differently, it is thereby seen as a field that is *relative* to other social formations and continually in a *process of emergence*. Such emergence, and I stress this, entails that the traditional field is not necessarily and exclusively exterior to state dynamics. Rather, the traditional field is often also interpenetrating with state dynamics—as the previous example of community authorities indicates.

More generally, retaining the term *the traditional field* as a unit of analysis also serves as an argument against compartmentalization into specific subtopics. A single focus, for example, on merely *legal pluralism* would confine the traditional field’s relation to the state apparatus to purely judicial and administrative aspects, thereby subsuming it to statal logics and systems and inadvertently capturing it by state terminology, so to speak. This thematic approach means that the format of this book does not conform to a coherent, monographic representation of a single community. As I have also underlined in other works (2002, 2003, 2007, 2011), it is problematic to analyze “local communities” in Mozambique as coherent and whole in any meaningful sense of the term as the ruptures in practices, social relations, territorial or political orientation, simply are too great and many to argue for continuous, single communities. But how are we to grasp such elusive entities analytically?

Assemblage, Formation, Becoming

As I have emphasized and as they are employed here, the terms “state” and “traditional” are neither to be taken as terms corresponding to demarcated empirical institutions nor to representational universals, i.e. tradition versus modernity. Rather, in this book they are to be understood in Deleuze and Guattari’s sense of *assemblages* that have certain qualities or directions, that have some endurance, and where the parts are to a lesser or greater extent internally related. In an interpretation of the Deleuzian vision of assemblages, Manuel DeLanda (2006: 253) claims these “are not Hegelian totalities in which the parts are mutually constituted and fused into a seamless whole. In an assemblage components have some autonomy from the whole they compose, that is, they may be detached from it and plugged into another assemblage.” Although DeLanda is right in accentuating shifts and interchangeability—a plasticity concurrent with Carmeliza’s *tradição* as well as with the Deleuzian vision—the dynamic itself engenders considerable friction. This is so as the transference of “components” to other assemblages—to use DeLanda’s mechanistic metaphor—is regularly contested, as such shifts may challenge particular social realities. Thus, although acknowledging DeLanda’s emphasis on the reallocation of components, the social and material contexts in which these take place have, as the historical relations between the traditional and state in Mozambique will show, “a certain autonomy from the whole” only so far as simultaneously recognizing the violence, friction, and, sometimes, resistance that such shifts entail. Further, as assemblages are impermanent and open to destabilization (*deterritorialization* in Deleuzian terms) and stabilization (*territorialization*) the relations between these are crucial.¹¹

My material from Mozambique therefore lends itself to seeing “traditional field” and “state formation” as subsequent and shifting assemblages characterized by processes of *territorialization* and *deterritorialization*. This is what I have until now termed the “tensions” between state and the traditional field. This work will, therefore, also attempt to analyze particular instances of detachment, reappropriation, and transformation of the components of each assemblage. As this book approaches state dynamics as unfolding and emphasizes a noninstitutional perspective, the term “assemblage” intuitively seems to correspond clearer with the material at hand than the centric notion of “formation.” However, both terms have salient aspects making them retainable.

For one, assemblage seems to imply an always already deterritorialized social field in which every element playfully can (be made to) fit with every other. Put differently, there is an absence of value in some of

the applications of the notion to, for example, processes of streamlining corporate organizations (see Fuglsang and Sørensen 2006b). Such absence of value is not supported by my material: as I will explore in the book, the potentiality of the social in general and the field of the traditional in particular lie precisely in *valorization* of elements and structures that are frequently antagonist to statist dynamics and ordering. Frequently such valorization is actualized through deterritorializing and rhizomic processes that challenge the arborescent structures of state ordering. Second, state formations can, contrary to what the notion of assemblage may imply, also be seen to be characterized by *endurance* in terms of reproduction and transformation of systems of governance, networks, and practices, comprising what Foucault (1980) calls a “superstructural” arrangement.¹²

Thus, in lieu of a novel concept combining the virtues of the centric “state formation” and the noncentric “assemblage,” both will be used in a complimentary fashion in order to identify contrasting aspects of statehood. *State formation* is, therefore, here taken to mean specific and identifiable empirical formations of the state kind—as, for example, the Mozambican postcolonial state. I further see *assemblages* as particular configurations of state power or the traditional field, characterized by fluidity, impermanence, and change. The notions of *assemblage* and *formation* thus bring forth contrasting dimensions of the state in the colonial and postcolonial period. Contrastingly, the terms *statist dynamic(s)* or *state order* are theoretical notions that denote a universal hierarchical ordering integral to all social formations—not necessarily only within empirically identifiable state formations.

Using the term “assemblage” to denote both the traditional and state is not an argument of these sharing similar orientations and dynamics; as the ethnographic material will substantiate, a characteristic of *the traditional field* (as integral to sociality) in the Mozambican context is its deterritorializing, mobile, and horizontal orientation. Such an orientation is contrasted with a *statist dynamic* characterized by forms of territorialization and capture that are vertical in orientation. These characteristics or orientations, Deleuze and Guattari emphasize (1986, 2002 [1980]), are conflicting and adverse modalities of power or organization. This means that these are conceptualizations of dynamics of social formations and power and *not* concepts descriptive of entities in the empirical or ethnographic realm.¹³

There is an unwillingness in this book to reduce the analysis to dichotomous universals, as these always *de-represent* certain singularities or particularities. Thus, rather than moving away from the particular instances of tension between state formation and the traditional field—a

retreat into theorizing—I valorize and bring forth rather than occlude the ethnographic. This insistence on the empirical allows for the formation of concepts that may grasp the unending flux in a context marked by relations and constellations which are constantly forged and disassembled. As such, analytical concepts such as *being* (of persons or other units of analysis) or *entities* (as clearly demarcated, internally consistent and stable units) are highly problematic as they project analytical freeze frames onto what cannot be frozen. The alternative path chosen here is to underline the perennial *becoming* of social formations. But if we are to take seriously, as this book does, Carmeliza’s insistence on the recurrence, perhaps even recursivity (Holbraad 2012), of the traditional, how may we grasp this theoretically—as well as analytically—beyond seeing it in terms of perpetual becoming?

As I have already suggested, what I call the traditional field encompasses not only a range of outlooks, repertoires, and logics but also practices and physical set-ups in time-space, and I suggest here that the field’s potency may be grasped through the Deleuze-Guattarian term *virtual*. Rather than referring to “virtual realities” or simulacras of the empirical, virtual denominates that which is “real without being actual” (Deleuze and Guattari, quoted in Albertsen and Diken 2006: 242). The term *virtual* is opposed to the notion of *actual* describing the tangible “state of affairs”—for example, observable social processes (Deleuze and Guattari 1994 [1991]: 155). Contrary to this realm of the tangibly empirical, Deleuze posits and accords a reality to *the virtual* and is adamant in his critique of philosophers (as Leibniz) who frequently conflate the virtual with the possible in a process where “the possible is opposed to the real; the process undergone by the possible is therefore a ‘realisation’. By contrast, the virtual is not opposed to the real; it possesses a full reality by itself” (Deleuze 2004 [1968]: 263; see also 240f).¹⁴

This view of virtuality as an analytical term encompassing empirical reality is helpful to appreciate the explosive potential—being real without being actual—of the traditional field that is actualized in particular *events*: from the mobilization through and cannibalization of notions of the traditional during the civil war by Renamo to current dynamics of popular justice in 2008, including the lynchings of thieves (see chapters 1 and 7 respectively), the particular configuration at the time of the reality of the traditional field had very visible effects—also in terms of shifting relations to state formation processes. Analytically, such a view accords agency to the traditional field at a structural level wherein the emergence of the state is undermined by forces of the social in the process from virtual to actual. Further, such instances in which the state order is effectively attacked or otherwise challenged in terms of its dom-

inance can, I claim, be seen as instances of actualization of forces arising from the virtual of the traditional field. By seeing the traditional field in terms of great creative and destructive potential—the generative force of its virtuality—I map particular tensions between the assemblages of state and the traditional field. Thus, while the basic Deleuze-Guattarian notions presented serve as an overarching analytical apparatus for grappling with a highly heterogeneous ethnographic reality, contrasting and alternative theoretical approaches will be introduced in analyses in subsequent chapters throughout. Further, the text will relate extensively to ongoing debates on Mozambique and the colonial and postcolonial state as well as within anthropology—an ambition also reflected in scholarship on Africa and anthropology in the postcolonial era (Ntarangwi et al. 2006; Zeleza 2006; Santos and Meneses 2010; Devisch and Nyamnjoh 2011; Nyamnjoh 2012).

At the most general level, this book contributes to the growing literature on the traditional field and state formation in Africanist anthropology and in Sub-Saharan Africa more generally by underlining how tensions between these assemblages are keys to understanding the postcolonial state. Specifically, it argues for approaching the traditional field and state formation as comprising variously related, opposed, and integrated assemblages. This particular optic contributes both to a theoretically informed understanding of domains of the traditional as one of potentiality as well as to seeing state formation as a perpetual and violent becoming. Such an argument effectively shifts analysis from the orthodoxy of juxtaposing “modernity” and “tradition” or institutional approaches to the state by demonstrating how assemblages of statist dynamics and the traditional field violently impinge on, shape, and are forged by people’s lives empirically.

Notes

1. For some analyses of riots and lynchings, please see Serra (2008, 2012), Groes-Green (2010), Macamo (2011, 2015), Schuetze and Jacobs (2011), Bertelsen (2014a) and de Brito et al. (2015). Lynchings will also be treated in chapter 7 in this book.
2. For such an argument, see, e.g., Clément and Peiris (2008). For a critique of the postconflict framework, see Darch (2015).
3. For a critique of its evolutionary bent, see Deleuze and Guattari (2002 [1980]: 393ff).
4. A key symbolic debate within postcolonial studies is whether to hyphenate (“post-colony”) or not (“postcolony”). Proponents of the former claim there is a need to (also) textually separate the field of study from the colonial discourse

- (see Ashcroft et al. 2005), while scholars such as Appiah (1992), Werbner and Ranger (1996), or Mbembe (2001) argue that precisely the intimate relations between regimes merit nonhyphenation. Siding with the latter, I employ the term “postcolonial” so as to not exclude *a priori* possible important similarities and continuities existing between the two eras or entities (cf. Bayart 2010).
5. For some works on the predicament of the traditional field in Mozambique, see Lundin (1994, 1996), Harrison (2000, 2002), Buur and Kyed (2005, 2006), Virtanen (2005b), West (2005), Florêncio (2006), Gonçalves (2006), Kyed and Buur (2006a, 2006b), Meneses et al. (2006), Forquilha (2010), and Obarrio (2014).
 6. See also Cooper’s (2005: 113–49) trenchant critique of the conflicting uses of “modernity” and “modernization” in relation to both studies of colonialism and colonial contexts.
 7. See also Werbner (1986) for a critique of monolithic modernist representations.
 8. But see also a revision of this thesis ten years on (Ranger 1993).
 9. The colonial politics of anthropology in Mozambique was the subject of a heated exchange between the American anthropologist Marvin Harris (1959, 1960), who visited Mozambique in the 1950s, and the contemporary doyen of Portuguese anthropology, A. Rita-Ferreira (1960, 1961). The debate revolved around explaining Thonga migration to South African mines, but more importantly it addressed being critical to (Harris) or supportive of (Rita-Ferreira) the Portuguese colonial enterprise. Harris also wrote a damning report (1958) on Mozambican labor conditions that influenced political levels within the United States as well the UN system to take a more critical stance toward Portuguese colonialism.
 10. These predicaments did not end with Evans-Pritchard and his era or with the fall of the colonial empires and its subsequent redefinition of anthropology as underlined by the critical works of Price (2004) and González (2004). In the specific context of African anthropology, some, as Archie Mafeje (1996), would argue that the foundations and historical complicity with colonialism fundamentally undermines the anthropological project, while Pierre (2006) calls for a radical rethinking of what he argues is anthropology’s implicit notions of race and “African exceptionalism.” While Mafeje’s and Pierre’s points are valid, the force and potential of anthropology in contexts such as Mozambique means that a critical reflection on the discipline’s assumptions needs to continuously be undertaken. This can only be done in an anthropology that is practiced, not abolished, due to past and, perhaps, present sins.
 11. Fuglsang and Sørensen (2006a: 15) have proposed seeing the concept of assemblage as a contribution to understanding social ontologies, leading them to argue—with yet another technical metaphor—that “the assemblage constitutes the decisive materiality of the social bios.”
 12. The argument of the hegemonic endurance of state order is also highlighted by Badiou (2005 [1998]: 110; see also 2012), who argues that even after radical political changes such as revolutions, revolutionaries such as Lenin “despaired over the obscene permanence of the State”—a thought resonating also with

- Gramsci (quoted in Alonso 1994: 381), who claimed the state could be seen as a “hegemony protected by the armour of coercion.”
13. Such an approach to the empirical material may seem a misapplication through the seeming conceptual stasis of “state formation” and “the traditional field” while Deleuze insisted on dynamics and speed. Perhaps. However, as Žižek points out (2004: 13) in an analysis of Deleuze’s *Difference and Repetition* (2004 [1968]), an application of what Žižek terms the “core of his thought” is both tenable and advisable. I believe that by, in all modesty, interpreting some “cores of thoughts,” this book also develops and tests the analytical worth of a Deleuzian approach to the material at hand. Following Žižek, such deviation from the “letter of thought” allows, then, for a Deleuzian optic expressed in the argument of seeing the traditional field and the state as comprising particular assemblages. An additional element here is the proliferation of philosophical concepts construed by Deleuze (sometimes with Guattari). In a philosophical engagement spanning several decades, numerous published works and several orientational and, indeed, conceptual shifts (as from “desiring machines” in *Anti-Oedipus* [2004 (1972)] to “assemblages” in *A Thousand Plateaus* [2002 (1980)]) and in a work some have (in an anti-Deleuzian and strating fashion) summed up in 150 key terms (Parr 2005), it is virtually impossible *not* to extract and adapt from the vast corpus for analytical purposes. Further, I will in some places in the text write “Deleuzian,” “Deleuze’s,” etc., and in others “Deleuze and Guattari’s” or “Deleuze-Guattarian,” etc. This discrepancy indicates a fuzzy authorship/coauthorship on part of the two philosophers, as discussed by Genosko (2001) and Dosse (2010 [2007]). However, when writing “Deleuze’s” or “Deleuzian,” I allude to notions developed or works authored in the main by Gilles Deleuze. Conversely, “Deleuze and Guattari” or “Deleuze-Guattarian” denote in the main coauthorship of notions or works, although the distinction remains debatable, as noted.
 14. Deleuze’s position is radical in an ontological and epistemological sense by according a reality to the virtual that normally is represented as a bleak reflection of a universal starting point—the real. Precisely to avoid such a relation of inferiority between notions as in the dualism real-virtual, Deleuze claims that *virtual* should be seen in relation with *actual* and that both are instances of the real: “The virtual is opposed not to the real but to the actual. The virtual is fully real in so far as it is virtual . . . Real without being actual, ideal without being abstract; and symbolic without being fictional” (Deleuze 2004 [1968]:260; see also 1988 [1966], 2006 [1977]) and Deleuze and Guattari 1994 [1991]. So crucial is this distinction with the possible that interpreters of Deleuze, for simplicity, sometimes denote the terms *virtual/real* and *actual/real* (see, e.g., Boundas 2005).