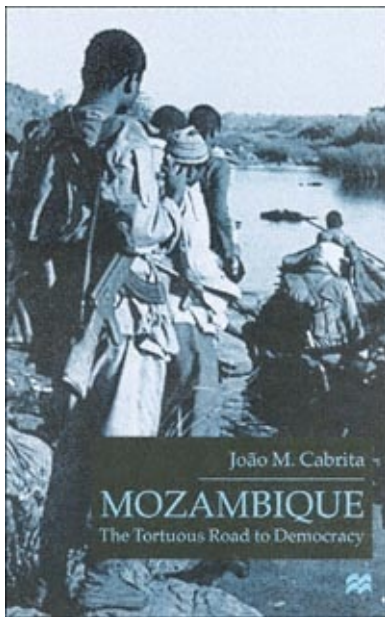


Cover



title: Mozambique : The Tortuous Road to Democracy
author: Cabrita, João M.
publisher: Palgrave Macmillan (UK)
isbn10 | asin: 0333920015
print isbn13: 9780333920015
ebook isbn13: 9780333977385
language: English
subject: Mozambique--History--Revolution, 1964-1975, Mozambique--History--Independence and Civil War, 1975-1994, Democracy--Mozambique, FRELIMO, RENAMO (Organization)
publication date: 2000
lcc: DT3387.C33 2000eb
ddc: 967.9
subject: Mozambique--History--Revolution, 1964-1975, Mozambique--History--Independence and Civil War, 1975-1994, Democracy--Mozambique, FRELIMO, RENAMO (Organization)

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The Tortuous Road to Democracy

João M. Cabrita

palgrave



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First published 2000 by PALGRAVE Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS and 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10010 Companies and representatives throughout the world

PALGRAVE is the new global academic imprint of St. Martin's Press LLC Scholarly and Reference Division and Palgrave Publishers Ltd (formerly Macmillan Press Ltd).

ISBN 0-333-92001-5

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data Cabrita, Joao M., 1953- Mozambique: the tortuous road to democracy / Joao M. Cabrita.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.

ISBN 0-333-92001-5 (cloth)

1. Mozambique — History — Revolution, 1964–1975. 2. Mozambique — History — Independence and Civil War, 1975–1994. 3. Democracy — Mozambique. 4. FRELIMO. 5. RENAMO (Organization) I. Title.

DT3387.C33 2000

967.9 — dc21

00-040457

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

09 08 07 06 05 04 03 02 01 00

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Antony Rowe Ltd, Chippenham, Wiltshire

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Acknowledgements

In researching for this book, I counted on the support of a great many people. Listing them in a sequence similar to the book's chronological order, I would like to thank Armando Khembo dos Santos for introducing me to several members of the exiled Mozambican community in Kenya, notably Fanuel Mahluza, Manuel Lisboa Tristão and Afonso Kantelu, who, like Santos, gave me a valuable insight into the founding of Frelimo and developments leading to Mozambique's independence. Lawe Laweki, Francisco Nota Moisés and Joaquim Njanje provided more information on Frelimo's 1967–68 student crisis.

Barnabé Ngauze Lucas introduced me to a number of sources in Maputo, and on my behalf researched for data and facts. Also in Maputo, Renamo chief whip Raúl Manuel Domingos referred me to Adriano Faustino, through whom I met Hermínio Morais, Vareia Manje, Filipe Augusto, John Kupenga, Chinagana Celestino, Amade Viajem, Olímpio Cambona, Francisco Manuel, Henrique Damião, Manuel Mussindo, Manuel Rudolfo, Virgílio Tomo, Martins Gamito Wizimane, Manuel da Maia and Anselmo Víctor who went out of their way in helping me to reconstruct specific events in the country's civil war.

I would also like to thank Frank M Machak, Casey Dowell and Karla M Kaplan of the Office of Freedom of Information at the State Department in Washington for handling the request submitted on my behalf by Hilary Andersson for the release of classified documentation relating to Eduardo Mondlane and Frelimo; Suzanne K Forbes and Stuart Culy of the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library, and Andrew Walker and John E Haynes of the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress in Washington for additional documentation on Mondlane and Frelimo; Moore Crossey and William R Massa, Jr of the African Collection and Manuscripts and Archives of the Yale University Library for photocopies of the Immanuel Wallerstein Collection of Political Ephemera on Mondlane and Frelimo; Lesbia O Varona, Cuban Bibliographer, Cuban Heritage Collection at the University of Miami Library, for materials on Che Guevara's stay in the Congo and how it impacted on Frelimo and its then leader; and the staff members of the Arquivo Histórico de Moçambique and Centro de Estudos Africanos libraries in Maputo for their varied assistance.

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A special thanks to Joele and Carla and others who reviewed the manuscript and advised on ways of enhancing its style and format.

The views and interpretation of events expressed in this book are mine and do not reflect any other position, official or otherwise.

List of Abbreviations

AMM	Associação Académia de Moçambique
ADEV	Associação Desportiva Estrela Vermelha
AIM	Agência de Informação de Moçambique
Amodeg	Associação Moçambicana de Desmobilizados de Guerra
ANC	African National Congress
BMATT	British Military Advisory and Training Team
BO	Brigada de Operações
BOSS	Bureau of State Security
BTI	Brigada Técnica de Investigações
CAIL	Complexo Agro-Industrial do Limpopo
CIM	Contra-Inteligência Militar
CIO	Central Intelligence Organization
CONCP	Conferencia das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colónias Portuguesas
Coremo	Comité Revolucionário de Moçambique
DGS	Direcção Geral de Segurança
DIP	Departamento de Informação e Propaganda
DMI	Department of Military Intelligence
DPCCN	Departamento de Prevenção e Combate às Calamidades Naturais
DSL	Defense Systems Limited
DTIP	Departamento do Trabalho Ideológico do Partido
GD	Grupo Dinamizador
GE	Grupos Especiais
GEP	Grupos Especiais Pára-quedistas
GLCB	Grupo de Luta Contra Bandidos
GVP	Grupos de Vigilância Popular
FAM	Forças Armadas de Moçambique
FLNA	Frente de Libertação Nacional de Angola
Frelimo	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
Fumo	Frente Unida Democrática de Moçambique
Funipamo	Frente Unida Anti-imperialista Popular Africana de Moçambique
ICS	Instituto de Comunicação Social
IM	Instituto Moçambicano
INLD	Instituto Nacional do Livro e do Disco

MAA	Makonde African Association
MANC	Mozambique African National Congress
MANU	Mozambique African National Union
MFA	Movimento das Forças Armadas
MML	Movimento Moçambique Livre
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola
ONJ	Organização Nacional de Jornalistas
PAIGC	Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde
PCN	Partido de Coligação Nacional
PIC	Polícia de Investigação Criminal
PIDE	Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado
PRM	Partido Revolucionário de Moçambique
Remo	Resistência Moçambicana
Renamo	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana
SADF	South African Defense Force
SAPA	South African Press Association
SARDC	Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre
SAS	Special Air Service
SIIP	Serviço de Informação Interna do Partido
SMO	Serviço Militar Obrigatório
Snasp	Serviço Nacional de Segurança Popular
Socimo	Sociedade Comercial e Industrial de Moçambique
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
TIS	Tanzania Intelligence Service
TPDF	Tanzania People's Defense Force
Udenamo	União Democrática Nacional de Moçambique
Unami	União Nacional Africana de Moçambique Independente
UNAR	União Nacional Africana de Rumbézia
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola
UPA	União dos Povos de Angola
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZNA	Zimbabwe National Army



*Map 1 — Mozambique
Designed by Haider-Soft*

Introduction

In October 1992, the Frelimo government of Mozambique and the Renamo guerrilla movement signed a peace accord that ended a 16-year civil war. At the root of the conflict, which broke out not long after the country gained independence from Portugal in 1975, lay the totalitarian regime imposed by Frelimo and the nature of its political, economic and social program. The war was inevitable, given Frelimo's conflictual past.

Ever since its founding, Frelimo has been at odds with itself and those it seeks to rule. The pattern of internal dissent, persecution and physical elimination of members and opponents that characterized the liberation movement during the years of exile continued after independence, except now in far larger proportions as Frelimo became the ruling party. The government's foreign policy, notably its decision to challenge some of its neighbours militarily, paved the way for foreign intervention in Mozambique, thus at the same time providing a channel for the frustrations of dissatisfied nationals.

A clear understanding of the causes of the 1976–92 civil war requires an exploration of events preceding and following independence. Reading between the lines of the often cryptic Frelimo papers and interviewing some of its founders and former members has been an invaluable aspect of reconstructing events and, indeed, reinterpreting the official view. Of priceless importance in this regard is a set of about 150 documents obtained from the United States under the Freedom of Information Act. In these, Frelimo's early history is at times narrated in the first person by Eduardo Mondlane, a Mozambican academic living in the United States who wished to control a revolution started in his absence, only to find himself in conflict with not only his colonial enemies, but his own people.

New light is shed on Mozambique's post-independence period, particularly the circumstances in which resistance to the established order arose. Those who organized resistance against the Frelimo government give an account of their movement's formation and how it evolved politically and militarily.

The dynamics of the war, the government's efforts to resolve the conflict militarily, and how the government eventually opted for a political settlement are reappraised.

Part I
A Tradition of Conflict

1 Marriage of Convenience

In the relatively short existence of Portugal as a Republic, the Armed Forces intervened in the country's political affairs twice. After the monarchy fell in 1910, Portugal entered a period of political instability, which over the next 16 years saw 44 changes of government (an average of three governments every year), eight presidents and 20 uprisings.¹ This prompted the Armed Forces to stage a coup in May 1926. Ultimately, the coup led to a Fascist dictatorship, which ruled Portugal for nearly 50 years, first under António Salazar, and then, upon his departure for health reasons in 1968, by Marcello Caetano.

The Armed Forces support for the regime which stemmed from the 1926 coup was unquestionable, save the occasional signs of dissatisfaction, which the loyalists suppressed. The situation changed when the Portuguese government, faced with a war in three of its African colonies, called upon the Armed Forces to play a more active role in the defense of what the regime saw as a 'multicontinental nation', stretching from Minho in northern Portugal, to Timor in Asia. Rather than being confined to barracks or used in extraneous governmental tasks, the Armed Forces were suddenly faced with a new reality altogether. Owing to their direct contact with the colonial wars, the Armed Forces began to change their perception of nationhood.

As the wars gained momentum, it became clear that the Armed Forces were heading for a collapse. Portugal's position had become critical in Guinea-Bissau where Amílcar Cabral's PAIGC guerrillas had made great inroads. Yet, the Portuguese government refused to consider a political settlement because it believed that that would inevitably pave the way to the crumbling of its empire. As Prime Minister Caetano told General António de Spínola, then Guinea-Bissau's governor general and commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces stationed there, he would prefer a

withdrawal through an honorable military defeat than an agreement with terrorists.²

For the Armed Forces, the longer they stayed in Africa, the greater the chance of being caught in a quagmire, with humiliating consequences. This they were not prepared to let happen, especially after the 1961 events in Portuguese India. The Salazar regime preferred to sacrifice Portugal's military presence in Goa, Damão and Diu than to submit to the sovereignty demands of India. In their view, the Portuguese Armed Forces, as an elite institution, were being threatened by the stubbornness of the country's politicians. The regime's continuation, which the Armed Forces had propped up for the last 48 years, was no longer a viable proposition. Thus, the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) brought down the Caetano government on 25 April 1974.

Initially, the new Portugal was divided into three factions. One was embodied in General Spínola's call for a Lusophone federation. The second was for the colonies' immediate independence so as to permit Portugal's integration into the European Union. The third, Marxist-oriented MFA officers, merely wanted power transferred to the nationalist organizations of Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique. In the ensuing power struggle, a younger generation of officers gained the upper hand, thwarting Spínola's neocolonial alternative.

The colonial crisis was settled in the traditionally undemocratic manner of Portuguese institutions, of which the apparently progressive MFA was an integral part. After all, the genesis of the MFA had not been ideological, but classist in the sense that its leaders were brought together by a dispute over promotions. Without a sufficient officer corps to lead the colonial wars, the Caetano government decided to promote non-career officers over professional soldiers, causing unrest and dissatisfaction within the military establishment.

No arrangements were made to ensure a democratic basis for the future African countries. Power was transferred to the nationalists, who were regarded as the authentic representatives of the people, a claim based on their years of fighting for independence.

In Mozambique's case, power was transferred to the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Frelimo), under the terms of the Lusaka Accord of 7 September 1974. The accord had been partially negotiated between MFA and Frelimo officials without the knowledge of the Portuguese president, and the foreign minister, Mário Soares. Spínola was unaware that the MFA issued orders to the Portuguese Armed Forces in Mozambique to disengage from operations against Frelimo and withdraw. Other groups were excluded from independence negotiations because

the MFA regarded them as either puppets or last-minute opportunists, although no political opposition had been allowed in Portugal and in the colonies during the deposed regime. Coremo, or Comit  Revolucion rio de Mo ambique, a Frelimo dissident guerrilla movement, was not invited to the peace talks. On 25 June 1975, the colony became the People's Republic of Mozambique. No provisions were made for elections.

The formation of Frelimo was announced for the first time in Accra on 29 May 1962 by the Uni o Democr tica Nacional de Mo ambique (Udenamo) and the Mozambique African National Union (MANU).³ For several months, the two organizations of exiled Mozambicans had been holding unity talks in their Tanzania base. A third organization, the Uni o Nacional Democr tica de Mo ambique Independente (Unami), joined before Frelimo's official debut in Dar es Salaam in June 1962. It was more a marriage of convenience imposed on the Mozambicans than a genuine united front against Portuguese colonialism, ultimately contributing to divisions within the colony's independence movement. Interference by African governments with different agendas for continental issues had been a determining factor in the marriage.

Formed in Rhodesia in November 1960, Udenamo was the first of the three Mozambican independence movements to advocate violence to bring about independence. Udenamo was influenced by Zimbabwean politics, and its members had a history of involvement with Joshua Nkomo's National Democratic Party. Adelino Gwambe, a 20-year-old Mozambican from Inhambane, led the organization. As a campaign for the independence of Mozambique could not be waged from white-ruled Rhodesia, Gwambe and his followers left for Tanzania, where, in view of its forthcoming independence, Udenamo would be better positioned to wage an armed campaign against the Portuguese.

Once based in Dar es Salaam, Udenamo continued to attract Mozambicans. In April 1961, Udenamo's vice-president, Fanuel Mahluza, wrote to Eduardo Mondlane, a US educated Mozambican anthropologist working for the UN Trusteeship Council in New York, inviting him to join the organization. Mondlane did not accept the invitation. He had his own agenda, which did not conform to Udenamo's. Mondlane, who had established close links with the Kennedy administration, had just completed a tour of Mozambique, where, in addition to the red-carpet treatment accorded to him by a Portuguese government eager to win him over, he saw that nationalist sentiment was strong.

During a two-day meeting at the State Department in Washington, DC in May, Mondlane gave a full account of his February-March 1961