5

Sovereignty

The Mozambican President and the Ordering of Sorcery

Why does the Mozambican state attempt to control *uroi*—a force that is seemingly incompatible with the state rationale of both the postindependence Afro-Marxist era as well as the post–civil war period of neoliberal democracy? This chapter will broach this question through untangling the problematic relations between spirit and state within the context of AMETRAMO (*Associação da Medicina Tradicional de Moçambique*—the Association for Traditional Medicine in Mozambique), a state-sanctioned institution organizing so-called traditional healers. I will argue that the case of AMETRAMO exemplifies a statal mechanism for capture and control of the force fields and potencies of the *n'anga* and the *profete* by employing specific techniques. Important constituents of these techniques involve, especially, proceduralization, bureaucratization, and standardization in terms of making the practices of these types of healers legible and eligible for state reterritorialization. However, as this chapter will demonstrate, these attempts at striation and reordering also here set off new lines of flight that undermine, confront, or evade the statist dynamics and the state's machinery of control. In the context of this chapter and building on the insights of the former, the lines of flight index specific evasive, constructive, and potent practices and potentialities that are related to spirits and *uroi*.

Representing these practices or dynamics in generic notions of "resistance" would be a misconstrual—at worst, perhaps, also a delusion of the politically romantic kind (Brown 1996). However, most importantly, resistance is a term often confined to dualisms and dialectics of

oppressor-oppressed or hegemony-resistance that serves to conflate the complexities of state and what is beyond into neat, dichotomous units (Scott 1985, 1990; but see Theodossopoulos 2014). In contrast, the optic of lines of flight, it will be argued, shows the recurrent yet changing dynamics produced by the triadic structure of state, *uroi* (sorcery) and spirit—a structure that produces numerous points of tensions between the assemblages of state and the traditional. Empirically, in this chapter *uroi* will be contextualized in relation to the state order both in terms of AMETRAMO as well as in the figure of the sovereign—the Mozambican president. However, given the scope of the material as well as the nature of sovereignty, beyond tapping into the theoretical insights from Agamben, de Heusch, and Deleuze and Guattari, this chapter will also compare the material with analyses from the Sudan, Rwanda, and Latin America. Concretely, this chapter probes the analytical validity of the argument of the king's two bodies in terms of the figure of the sovereign and the power he wields. As such, the chapter's focus shifts from the formation of the state and its violence articulated with the traditional field at the periphery to scrutinizing central state institutions. In this way the chapter contributes further to an understanding of the becoming, imaginary, and magic of the postcolonial state that is Mozambique.

A Need for Order: Beginnings of AMETRAMO

To recall, both the Mozambican colonial and postcolonial states have related variously and contradictorily to the field of the traditional: during late colonial times, the *régulos* were often forcibly integrated into the colonial machinery of control, while what was deemed "traditional" during postindependence was attacked, sought to be eradicated, or radically refashioned by the Frelimo state (see also Israel 2014). Toward the end of a civil war in which the traditional field was appropriated and refashioned by Renamo, the Mozambican state altered its position toward what it termed *tradição*. With the consent of the Mozambican state, in 1992 the organization AMETRAMO was established. Crucially, its creation followed the Mozambican state lifting the ban against traditional healing—a ban upheld until 1986 (West 2005: 210f).[1]

When founded, the explicit aim of AMETRAMO was to reorder Mozambique's so-called "traditional medicine," and from its outset it has been related to provincial and state policies and officialdom.[2] This is visible, for instance, in that AMETRAMO follows the bureaucratic logic of the Portuguese colonial state (as the postcolonial state also does to some extent) and is divided into a national, provincial, and local organizational

body. Far from being a bureaucratic formality, this gives the organization rapport and legibility with the Frelimo state at different levels. As West has also noted for the northern region of Cabo Delgado, what people referred to, understood, and acted according to was that the "central" AMETRAMO office doubled with the local party headquarters (2005: 214f). Similar understandings were also routinely expressed in Chimoio.

Of more immediate interest is the fact that the emergence of AME-TRAMO bespeaks a Mozambican state that became increasingly geared toward controlling what it could not eradicate. The *n'angas,* the *profetes,* and other experts of the Mozambican medico-traditional field—politi-cally shunned during Samora Machel's rule (1975–86) and ousted from the cities during *Operação Produção* as we saw in chapter 2—were grad-ually seen as keys to relegitimize Frelimo. Simultaneously, by recogniz-ing them Frelimo would undermine Renamo's support among the rural and urban populations as a custodian of *tradição.* Such conclusions were drawn after the military non-victory of Frelimo in the civil war, the par-ty's postwar failure to regain popular loyalty in former Renamo-domi-nated areas, the defeat in the socialist battle to erase "obscurantism," and the continued importance of those "relics of colonialism"—*régulos.* For Frelimo in the early 1990s, defeats on these fronts meant that it was not only opportune but necessary to facilitate the formation of an organiza-tion that sought to control an *unorganized* and, thus, threatening field that had also become a domain of Renamo: that of traditional medicine and the accompanying field of sorcery and spirits.

If unfamiliar with the field of bodily healing, one might be led to think that AMETRAMO's meddling with this field constituted a marginal affair. The sheer numbers reveal such a view to be unfounded: in 2005, within only the province of Manica, AMETRAMO had 1,506 members according to their own numbers.[3] While this scale crucially indicates AMETRAMO's strength as part of what is normally labeled "civil society," what concerns me here is instead its establishment and practice as a vehicle to striate, order, and establish statal sovereignty within and over the unruly and dangerous field of healing, *uroi,* and spirits.

A Head in Our Midst

The perils of this field dawned on me during one of many visits in 2005 to AMETRAMO's Chimoio offices. As most structures outside the *bairro cimento,* their offices consisted of a rectangular building made of mud bricks, painted in white, with a tin roof. The building had two rooms: one for meetings and one office, both with very basic facilities. In the

adjacent courtyard, I met Mr. Cerveija, the president of AMETRAMO in Manica.[4] Cerveija, himself a *n'anga* from Gorongosa, is regarded as a powerful healer and is regularly invited by the governor of Manica Province to participate at different official ceremonies. He is also well-known as someone who fought Renamo during the civil war and is strongly affiliated with Frelimo. Over many meetings throughout the years, he (and others related to AMETRAMO) have explained the work, scope, and ambition of the organization in various ways. However, during our first encounter in 2005, Cerveija explained to me that the scope of the organization was fourfold:

> The first is to organize the *n'angas.* The second is our social role to resolve conflicts. The third is our cultural role. And the fourth is to resolve problems in the communities.

This first explanation conformed well to the official discourse of the need and necessity to include the traditional field of medicine, where the *n'anga* is represented as central to improving public health issues (see also Green 1997; Agadjanian and Sen 2007). This is, however, a *n'anga* that is integrated in the logic of the state in terms of being a card-carrying member of AMETRAMO.[5] Contrarily, a nonmember *n'anga* can be suspected of harboring loyalties other than to the state and the party. As preceding chapters on Frelimo's postcolonial development have shown, these loyalties would most probably be discursively represented or politically imagined as "anti-social" or as potentially creating *confusão*—"confusion" (Kyed 2007a).[6] In the dominant Frelimo state optic, other polities or orientations are routinely cast as potential threats to the state's ongoing project of social ordering—what I have in previous chapters identified as territorialization. "Organizing" the *n'angas,* as Cerveija put it, is also thereby indicating a state mechanism aimed at co-opting their potentialities and neutralizing nascent or existing antistate orientations that they may be suspected to be part of.

However, in new conversations in 2007, Cerveija divulged other and more pressing concerns that he experienced AMETRAMO to be up against:

> B: What are the most important tasks for you here at AMETRAMO?
>
> C: The primary task for us now is sorcery [*feitiçaria,* Portuguese for *uroi*]. It is a big problem and it is increasing in strength all the time. One problem concerning sorcery is that there is no law against it. It would have been much better if there were a law against the problem of witchcraft—it would give us more power in resolving cases.
>
> B: How do you resolve cases now, then?

C: We can catch the witch [*feitiçeiro,* Portuguese for *muroi*] and speak to him or her. But we cannot use the *chamboco* [whip used for corporal punishment] here! But this would have been very good if we could [laughs]!

The explanatory shift on the part of the president was, of course, also the result of a gradually more intimate relationship between him and I as our relationship deepened, our conversations multiplied, and I participated in AMETRAMO's everyday practices. One effect was that the initial officialese rhetoric, in which *uroi* was accorded a miniscule role, gradually gave way to a sharing of his frustrations of the challenges—politically and cosmologically—that AMETRAMO faced.

Matters came to a head—literally—on a hot afternoon some days later in 2007 during an AMETRAMO meeting of *n'angas* and *profetes* in Chimoio. The meeting was explicitly called to discuss the annual renewal of membership fees, news on membership cards to be issued from Maputo headquarters, and to debate, revise, and harmonize rates for the healing of various afflictions. During the meeting, about forty *profetes* and *n'angas*—80 percent of them women—together with the anthropologist, the president of AMETRAMO, and his secretary were seated inside the premises. The different issues were presented by Cerveija and many women punctuated the decisions with ululation while the men nodded. All seemed to be going smoothly until a single issue threatened to throw the whole meeting into chaos. The commotion began when Cerveija related the following:

I have heard that yesterday a *profete* got caught in [Chimoio's] Bairro Josina Machel. She was selling a human head. She went to the cemetery and took up the body of a person from the grave. She then cut off his head, put it in a plastic bag, and went back to her house. It was a member [of AMETRAMO] and one of her neighbors that called the police.

All sitting along the walls or on the floor on their mats now rose, shouted, and talked loudly. Cerveija tried for about ten minutes to calm matters. It was evident that this piece of news had sparked off tensions among those present. In the heated discussion, a division between *n'angas* and *profetes* crystallized: the *profetes* emphasized that the culprit was not first and foremost a *profete,* while, in contrast, the *n'angas* strongly emphasized that the opposite was true. Thus, a kind of a "structural-cosmological" schism became visible (and tangible)—and one that Cerveija clearly wished to prevent from becoming destructive in his attempt to defuse the tension:

We cannot have two agendas or organizations here. We cannot have *confusão* [confusion]. We need one agenda only. This agenda is to cure people. This

is the work of the *n'anga* and of the *profete*. We cannot have contradictions between the *n'anga* and the *profete*. If a person would like to change [from being a *n'anga*] to being a *profete,* we do not have any problems with this. If a person would like to change from *profete* to *n'anga,* we do not have any problems. We would like to construct, not destroy. And if we do not manage this, we will destroy AMETRAMO. You, mothers [women], are the most difficult. You need to work on this division. She [with the head] that went to prison, no one should visit her. It was *her* work. And her alone. From today, I do not want to hear this talk [of a division between *profetes* and *n'angas*].

This calmed matters for a few minutes. However, in the ensuing discussions many complained that it was a problem that Cerveija had made it clear in the initial statement that the *muroi* was a *profete*. Again, Cerveija tried to calm everyone down by joking that there is no difference between *profetes* and *n'angas*—that he himself was *both* at the same time! This attempt at defusing was met with laughs and smiles. But many also solemnly shook their heads incredulously at Cerveija's claim of being able to appropriate two such adverse healing agencies.

AMETRAMO's relation to the case of the *profete* caught with the head—an act of *uroi*—illustrates empirically the way in which the state, in the guise of Cerveija as a state agent, is involved in an attempt to control the unruly field of spirits, *uroi,* and healers. By pointing out the benevolent ideal of curing to the group, Cerveija also critiques those meddling in the darker arts of *uroi* experienced to foment problems—*confusão*.[7] But how are we to understand *uroi* in this context and beyond? And why should the state—here through AMETRAMO—meddle at all in the affairs of healers and *uroi?*

Illustration 5.1. The head of AMETRAMO in Manica Province, Mr. Cerveija, photographed in AMETRAMO's offices. Chimoio, 2005.

Uroi—Sorcery and Witchcraft

The concept that I have until now interchangeably dubbed "*uroi*," "sorcery," or "witchcraft" is a complex matter impinging on the lives and deaths of people in the rural-urban continuum of Honde and Chimoio. Moreover, by merely employing the analytical terms "sorcery" and "witchcraft," I relate directly and indirectly to an enormous corpus of ethnographic and Africanist material. Rather than providing a full review of this vast scholarly corpus, I will select some works to frame the discussion ethnographically and emphasize how *uroi* relates also to dynamics of statehood and sovereignty. Crucial to this is the shift in explanation of AMETRAMO's tasks from 2005 to 2007—a shift involving going from implementing ideas of radical societal transformation to increasingly focusing on the impact of *uroi*. And, indeed, there is ample—especially Africanist—research that argues that such a change has taken and continues to take place in many African contexts undergoing rapid political shifts. Geschiere (1997, 2013) builds his argument on the conception that "sorcery" (*maka*) in Cameroon may be interpreted as a form of political action, akin also to notions in Western democracies of wavering between desires to seize power and feelings of impotence. The language of witchcraft, Geschiere argues, is thus a modern conception that one should neither "esoterify" nor relegate to a premodern domain. A related reading is launched by Jean and John L. Comaroff (1993). They propose approaching modernity as a global force that is sweeping in its commodification and generative of novel formations and configurations of capital, markets, and labor. In this context, they see witchcraft as a "finely calibrated gauge of the impact of global cultural and economic forces on local relations, on perceptions of money and markets, on the abstraction and alienation of 'indigenous' values and meanings" (1993: xxix).

Both Geschiere and the Comaroffs are insightful and influential contributors to a broad trend in recent "witchcraft studies" in Africa and beyond that, in different ways, pegs the understanding of witchcraft to various visions of modernity in the form of commodification, multiparty democracy, capitalism, or globalization. These contributions are important, as these processes are central to understanding current political and social processes and transformations in Africa and beyond.[8] However, there are several aspects of these understandings that emerge as problematic in relation to the case of AMETRAMO and *uroi*.

First, there is a certain conservative bent in such analyses in that they, often inadvertently, subscribe to a (somewhat nostalgic) vision of coherent pasts that are now subjected to fragmentation or fracture. This

claim is implicitly or explicitly premised on an idea of the disintegration of a past societal whole wherein what is termed "witchcraft" had a more or less clearly defined role, place, or was circumscribed by definite practices. Now, however, witchcraft is presumably a language that is no longer integral to particular social and political formations. Rather, in the "modernity of witchcraft" argument, "witchcraft" has instead become a *reactive* mode of understanding and interpreting universal processes of modernization/modernity. As Englund pointed out in a critique of this argument by the Comaroffs' approach, witchcraft is in this way seen as "an argument *about* modernity, not merely viewed as operating *within* modernity" (1996b: 259, italics retained; see also Bonhomme 2012). Such critique might have led Geschiere et al. (2008) to argue for a *relational* and open-ended concept of modernity applied to African realities. To some extent this obviates Englund's critique; however, "modernity" is still retained as an analytical point of departure where the notion of relationality underlines its necessarily *external* position vis-à-vis the (presumably nonmodern) Africa. These aspects of "dislocation" or "externality" of the "modernity of witchcraft" argument are also consistent with the more general discourses about modernity itself captured in the familiar terms of disenchantment, fragmentation, etc. What is problematic here is the degree to which these reduce witchcraft and sorcery to *reactive categories* and modes of understanding and interpretation external to (a vision of) modernity. This is opposed to a view that accords potentiality to *uroi* itself as a significant social dynamic and as a continuously unfolding and changing force. Conversely, an approach not according such potency "flattens" in my view an understanding of *uroi* to the point of precluding analyses of why state apparatuses of capture, as AMETRAMO, aims to order, control, and tap the forces of *uroi* and its agents.[9]

A second problem is the often alarmist tones in reporting and analyzing witchcraft—a timbre of sensationalism that anthropologists should be wary of. This alarmism is especially evident in reports claiming dramatic increases in sorcery, witchcraft, and evil (see, e.g., Haar 2007), and it is instructive in this regard to be reminded that previous reports of such increases are recurrent in anthropological analyses from Southern Africa. Among others and based on fieldwork between 1934 and 1945, Hilda Kuper reported that the Swazi "complain that *batsakatsi* [witches and sorcerers] are more common now than in the past" (1963: 66). Hilda Kuper represents one of many who within the last fifty years have reported that people allege that sorcery has increased locally. For example, Marwick (1965: 92) also notes that among the Ceŵa "a majority of informants believe that there are more sorcerers nowadays [1953]

than there used to be."[10] In light of such historical claims, the reports from the 1990s onward of dramatic increases in sorcery bespeak at best the results of long-term processes not readily encapsulated by the alarmist reports. At worst, they may rest on flawed analyses of societal change and its relation to sorcery and witchcraft.

These problematic dimensions of the "modernity of witchcraft" approach have led me to be rather cautious of subscribing to a popular view in Honde and Chimoio where some people would complain about increases in *uroi*. Instead of endorsing and *re*-representing these claims of increases—a move that would implicitly involve a comparison and a subsuming of the material to supposedly larger and more universal processes—I find it more useful to look at the particular social and historical processes that have produced these reports and cases. Interestingly enough and contrasting the widespread assumption of a universal African increase in sorcery, people in my material are in great disagreement as to whether there actually has been an increase in relation to the immediate postcolonial period, to the period of civil war, or to the colonial period. However, a significant shift which is often pointed out and about which there *is* some degree of agreement, is the reorientation from a collective organization of sorcerers—a (counter)society of sorcerers, if you will—to increasingly singular acts of *uroi* perpetrated by individuals. In light of the previous material also on the deterritorialized spirits, the shifting roles and capacities of *mhondoro,* and the general upheaval in territorial dimensions of social, political, and cosmological domains, this change from collective to individual seems to parallel more general trends of deterritorialization and upheaval. For example, in narratives about *uroi* and *muroi* in the late colonial period and prior to the liberation war, people often underline the orderly ways of dealing with these phenomena. Carmeliza, the elderly woman living in Honde that attempted to make me understand the changing, open, yet continuous nature of *tradição* that I quoted in the book's introduction, is also the paternal granddaughter of a former *régulo*. In this excerpt from an interview made in 2005, she explains the differences in dealing with *muroi* now as compared to the colonial era of the 1950s and 1960s.

> B: In the colonial period when you were young, if you caught a thief [*mbava*], what would you do?
>
> C: [Laughs] We would beat him very much!
>
> B: Where? At the court of the *régulo*?
>
> C: Yes. But first in the place where he was caught. Afterwards in the house of the *régulo* himself.
>
> B: And did you beat *muroi* [sorcerers] as well?

C: Yes. You had to. OK. First we went to a *n'anga* to sort out the particular case [i.e. finding out whether or not they were *muroi*]. And afterwards they had to pay a fine.

B: But did you beat them until they died?

C: No. Very, very much, yes. But not until they died.

B: Are *muroi* different today than in the past?

C: *Ih*! They are. *Uroi* before was much stronger than today.

B: In what way?

C: Before it was much easier to kill people. And the ways to resolve *uroi* was also different.

B: How did you solve the cases?

C: Nowadays *uroi* is organized much more by everyone themselves. Everyone goes by themselves to the *n'anga* to become drugged [*ficar drogado*] or to find a solution to their problems.

Narratives such as Carmeliza's reveal crucial shifts in how *uroi* is addressed. In the late colonial period when communities were seen as tightly knit, populous, and resourceful, these faced "countersocieties" of witches that worked together to attack individuals, to dig up corpses to devour, to predate upon live human flesh, to kill relatives or others in the community.[11] Likewise, resolving *uroi* cases was part of the polity organized around the paramount figure of the *régulo,* who elicited the assistance by a *n'anga,* if need be. In contrast, today, both actions to counteract *and* to become empowered by *mutombo* are more individual, mirroring, thus, the violent and disintegrative transformation of polities at the hands of both the immediate postcolonial state as well as Renamo. This shift is also reflected in the practices surrounding deaths in which foul play is suspected. Increasingly, upon death, a plant that is often explained to derive from Gorongosa will be planted on top of the grave.[12] This plant will rapidly grow stronger in the following period, and at the instant when the plant's first leaf falls to the ground, the sorcerer or someone within the sorcerer's family will die. This way, one may find out who is responsible for someone's death. This practice effectively allocates "executionary agency" to the plant and signals a break with the formerly quite common practice of engaging the wider community through employing a *n'anga* to name the guilty.[13]

However, despite Carmeliza's insistence that past *uroi* was more powerful than the present—a reflection also correlating with her claim that *tradição* was more potent before—*uroi* is experienced as a tremendous force that (still) permeates, destroys, and empowers a range of social relations, practices, and cosmological domains. Undeniably, the term *uroi*

corresponds to certain aspects or understandings of what has variously been termed "witchcraft," "sorcery," or "wizardry" in the vast corpus of witchcraft studies preceding the "modernity of witchcraft" paradigm presented and critiqued earlier.[14]

At first glance, there seems to exist a distinction of "witch" and "sorcerer" corresponding largely to Evans-Pritchard's pioneer Azande work (1976 [1937]) and all those following him. In chiTewe the term *muroi* (singular) denotes a person who is often characterized by shape-shifting characteristics and whose being has a predatory orientation on kin relations, family, and people. As I argued in chapter 3, the shape-shifting characteristic and capacity is not exclusive to *muroi* but may also apply to powerful individuals such as chiefs, kings, and healers—as evidenced in the case of Dhlakama transforming himself into his *mitupo* animal, the partridge, and escaping the forces of the state during the height of the civil war. What is significant in the case of the shape-shifting of *muroi,* however, is their use of other animals as vehicles of harm or accumulation, as well as becoming these animals—especially predatory, or nocturnal ones.

Unbeknownst to the victims, the *muroi* will frequently amass a person's labor power—for example by making him or her work at night on their *machamba* or *matoro.* This form of personal aggrandizement through predatory practice inverses social and kin ideals in a rural setting in which the coordination of labor power is of prime importance to the reproduction and well-being of individual households and families. Contrarily, mobilization of labor power is normally circumscribed by institutional arrangements such as, for example, *djangano* which mobilizes neighbors, kin, and *dzindza* for a specific labor-intensive task, like the weeding of a *machamba.* During work and, increasingly, as the task nears completion, the participants are given traditional maize or sorghum beer (*duro*), underlining the collective and reciprocal ethos. *Djangano* can be called by anyone who has the need for labor power and the resources to brew beer.[15] Conversely, the *muroi*'s clandestine eliciting of labor power from one's fellows negates or inverses the reciprocal and collective mechanisms of *djangano.*

Further, *muroi* are also said to be driven by an almost insatiable lust for human flesh–*kurha nhama io munhu.* This appetite is so strong that the *muroi* will nocturnally reopen fresh graves to feed their necrophagous desire, or will attack victims and devour their limbs while they sleep. Victims will normally wake up with just minor bruising as the *muroi* will sew them up after devouring the flesh. Slowly, however, victims will weaken after repeated attacks and may eventually die if they are not treated. Reflecting this clandestine and nocturnal activity, a gen-

eral characteristic of the *muroi* is that they act shrewdly, underlined by the covert accusation in the phrase "they know something"—that is, they possess a profound knowledge that is employed secretly for personal gain and to the detriment of others.

Another figure of fear stalking the rural-urban continuum of Honde and Chimoio is the *wakamba*. This is a person who has elicited the services of a *n'anga* to become drugged strong *mutumbo* (medicine), in keeping with the *n'angas*' and *profetes*' ambiguity as discussed in the previous chapter. A person having become *wakamba* is seen to be guided by hatred, envy, and greed, often combined with ideas of personal aggrandizement in terms of social hierarchies or positions at work. For a high monetary price, the *n'anga* will give *mutumbo* to the *wakamba,* and this will empower the recipient, inflict danger upon others, or amass material wealth, especially in the form of money.

Beyond reflecting Evans-Pritchard's basic distinction between "witch" and "sorcerer," *muroi* and *wakamba* seemingly correspond to the classic typology of "night witch" and "day witch" as also argued by Krige and Krige (1956 [1943]: 250–53). However, in people's experiences, the categories are indistinct and most of my interlocutors are much more prone to use the term *uroi* for all kinds of practices and potentialities—effectively a blurring of seemingly distinct traits that also Marwick identified in his Ceŵa material (see Marwick 1965: 81–82 especially). For a start, persons who are identified as *muroi* are regularly seen to also engage in the use of *mutombo*—as the following case shows.

In Honde, a senior man that we may call Rui, a respected member of the *aridzi wo nhika,* is widely considered to be a *muroi*. Born around 1940, Rui is married with seven children and is a comparatively successful peasant in terms of generating a small income from selling agricultural produce (especially tomatoes) at the markets in Chimoio. The suspicion that he is a *muroi* had been directly and indirectly conveyed to me at numerous occasions by neighbors, kin, and even members of his own household. A decisive event around 2000 that pushed people to believe he was a *muroi* was repeatedly recounted to me. One version is contained in the following excerpt from an interview I recorded with Adamo, an elderly man from Honde in 2005.

> A: Rui likes meat a lot, you know. One time, it could have been in 1993–94, he went out at night like a sorcerer [*muroi*]. He left his body in his house. It was just his spirit [*espirito*] that left. That spirit went to a cemetery where there were persons who had just been buried. He tore off a part of the body of one of these persons here [points at his stomach] and brought it back to his house. There, Rui ate a little and the rest he tied with string from the roof, inside the house.

B: Was this to save the meat for later?

A: I do not know. But what happened was that the meat went bad after a while and became full of insects [*bichu*]. And the insects started to fall down on the floor of the house, making noises—TAT! TAT! TAT! People in Honde started to talk, then, that "this is *uroi,* this."

B: But why did people enter his house?

A: It was his wife that called them to have a look at the insects! She did not know what to do. No one dared to talk to Rui directly about this but all said to his wife that "perhaps he is *muroi.*"

B: And afterward, what happened?

A: Well. When Rui returned from his *machamba* a lot of people had gathered outside his house. No one still dared say anything, they just stood there. And he did not say anything either, he just entered his house without saying anything. And afterward he beat his wife very severely. She fled from him to her family in _____ and stayed there.

B: [Remembering Rui as having beat his wife also during my fieldwork] But he beat his wife also in 1999 or 2000, didn't he?

A: Yes. Rui beat his wife twice. The first time was in 1993 or 1994. And the other time was in 1999. The last time the wife was drunk—she and Rui were at a place where they served traditional beer [*duro*]. While there she repeatedly told all present, "Rui, why are you eating the flesh of other people?" For this, he beat her again.

B: Thus, it was not only once that he ate human meat?

A: No. Meat is his vice [*vicio*]. When deaths occur, he will always go. He then takes the meat from the bodies at night. To eat.

B: But can you see from the bodies of the dead that there have been parts taken out?

A: No. They close up [after having taken out meat] real good.

B: But *muroi* … Do they eat meat to make drugs or medicine [*mutombo*]?

A: No. No, it is not to become drugged [*drogado*]. But if you eat the meat of another person you become very powerful, yes.

B: Are there others in Honde also—others with the *kurha nhama io munhu*?

A: Yes. Do you remember that old man who lives close to _____?

B: Yes?

A: That one! He is very dangerous, as well. And eats meat, as well. He is the grandson of [a well-renowned former *régulo*].

B: But do the *muroi* know each other?

A: Yes, they do. And they help each other as well. For example, Rui knows who the other *muroi* in Honde are. He knows very, very well. "This is my night-time friend" [mimics Rui's voice and manner of talking]. But he would never say this or who they are.

All other versions that broached this particular instance of *uroi* also high-lighted Rui's *kurha nhama io munhu*—his lust for human flesh. However, it was also widely believed that Rui had undertaken other dark measures of *uroi*. Specifically, he was seen to have engaged the forces of the lion—as we discussed earlier a potent animal in the form of the *mhondoro*. Rui appropriated lion capabilities with the aid of a *n'anga* in a ritual during which he consumed a piece of the animal's hide. His consumption is believed to generate an authority residing in and emanating from his bodily person that is physically experienced by others as a sense of fear in his presence—akin to that, obviously, one would experience when confronted by a lion or a *mhondoro*.[16] Again, and as in the case with *djangano,* Rui's actions represent an inversion of a dimension of sociality in terms of tapping the forces of a guardian of the field of the traditional (*mhondoro*) for personal gain.

In conversations, Honde residents confided that Rui showed signs indicating that he was a *muroi,* a significant aspect being that he often ate alone, which was evidence of greed and antisocial behaviour in the presence of his (non-*muroi*) kin and family. Resembling the context of the *n'angas* and *profetes* discussed earlier, this manner of describing some-one is an important constituent of what one might call a speech genre (Bakhtin 1986) of *uroi*. As a constantly evolving, dynamic, and embra-cive notion of a body of expressions and notions, the speech genre of *uroi* may be seen to include a number of covert ways to allude to the possibility of someone being a *muroi*.[17]

Beyond taking his meals in solitude, a more visible, tangible, and distinguishing feature pertaining to Rui are the rich yields from his *ma-chamba* and *matoro*—produce that provides him with comparatively higher income from cash crops such as tomatoes (*matemate*). As widely documented from Southern Africa, conspicuously successful crop yields are frequently related to engaging in different forms of magic or other illicit behavior. As Gluckman (1963 [1956]: 96) noted more than half a century ago, "Exceptional achievement is bought at the cost of one's fellows. The man who is too successful is suspected of being a witch and himself is suspicious of the witchcraft of his envious fellows."[18]

In the speech genre of *uroi* in Honde (and also Chimoio), several varieties of augmenting one's yields are envisaged. As mentioned above, one powerful measure is to covertly drug others to perform labor on one's *machamba* during the night or invisibly—a practice called *kurima no zwiphoko*. Another variety is to use powerful *mutombo* to make maize stalks, watermelons, sweet potatoes, beans, or other crops increase in size, grow faster, elude the gaze of thieves, or repel pests. While *kurima no zwiphoko* is clearly seen as *uroi,* the use of *mutombo* is something ev-

eryone engages in, either privately or with the aid of a *n'anga* or *profete.* However, there are more powerful and somber *mutombo* obtainable by engaging in illicit and transgressive activities such as forms of sacrifice or incestuous relationships.[19]

Rui was thought to have engaged both *kurima no zwiphoko* and the dark varieties of *mutombo* to enlarge and protect his crops, and the few public and many clandestine accusations against him were all subsumed under the term *uroi.* His case also reflects the many urban instances of *uroi* that people are preoccupied with. In conversations, people will often discuss a particular *muroi* as operating or—as in the case with the *profete* with the human head in a plastic bag—having been caught, talk of pending trials against *muroi* who have killed, or talk of suspicious behavior of people.[20] One such case from autumn 2005 may be instructive to appreciate the multiple dimensions of *uroi*—also in urban settings and, crucially, involving dimensions of politics and sovereignty.

The particular case came to my knowledge through a quickly spreading rumor of a man who had been caught eating human flesh in Bairro Primeiro de Maio in Chimoio. After hearing the rumor, I traveled the following day to his home and discovered a number of other people who were also curious of this man. He was, however, not there, and his home looked like it had been attacked. The bystanders were more than willing to divulge what had occurred, and I spent the next few days conversing with a number of inhabitants of this and other *bairros* about the *muroi.* The following is a typical version that I recorded from one of these conversations:

> X: There is a person who has eaten another person! He ate all the flesh of a child.
>
> B: Is it true? Where?
>
> X: Yes, it was there in Bairro Primeiro de Maio. There lived the young man who ate many people. He also ate big persons.
>
> B: How did he do it?
>
> X: This guy went to the cemetery the day after a young girl had been buried. The following day a young boy discovered that the grave and coffin had been opened and went to tell the girl's family. The family went to look and the body of the girl was gone.
>
> B: *Eh pah*! And it was this young man who had robbed this corpse?
>
> X: Yes! But still they did not know what had happened. The father went to the [local] radio station and had them ask, "Who stole this corpse?" After this the mother of the girl saw a man who was selling the girl's blanket. This blanket was bought in South Africa. And the mother went to the police to have him arrested.

B: And then he was arrested?

X: No! This guy was very, very strong [*forte*]! Two armed policemen did not manage to apprehend him. They had to call in the FIR [Mozambican special police forces to make them apprehend him.[21]

B: And did the FIR manage?

X: Yes, after a long time. He was very strong! In his house there was a small mountain of human bones. A veritable mountain! He said to the police that he had eaten people for ten years. It is a long time!

B: Is he in the Cabeça do Velho [the provincial prison] now?

X: No. This young man was very, very strong and Mozambican president Guebuza said, "I want to see this person." So, he was sent with a plane to Maputo.

B: Will Guebuza kill him, you think?

X: I do not know. Guebuza … *chiiiiiiiiii* … he is also very, very powerful [*poderoso*].

The young man's despicable actions and the reactions of the state in the form of police and president structured all the popular discourses around this case. Just about everyone seemed to have *masoko* (news) about it, often containing gory details of the number of victims, how his home reeked of rotting flesh, or how impressive the mountain of bones was.[22] Crucial here is how such details are seen to demonstrate the hideous manner in which the young man empowered himself. By transgressing, or, rather, *inverting* behavior that is seen as morally acceptable and even human and by gorging himself on flesh, his disgusting acts tapped illicit human energies. Now contained within his body, these energies enabled him to also attack "big people," as the quoted interlocutor has noted.

Importantly, "big people" [*pessoas grandes*] do not primarily allude to bodily size, although one might be led to think in those terms given the objective of human flesh consumption. Rather, it points to persons wielding considerable socioeconomic or political power, as politicians, higher-ranking bureaucrats, or businessmen. As analyzed in the foregoing chapter, in terms of hierarchies and bodily comportment, a young, impoverished man would usually behave deferentially around "big people." However, by devouring them he demonstrates a force superior to "big people"—despite the fact that these are also thought to safeguard and strengthen their positions by *uroi*. This element of force was also demonstrated in the need to call in the FIR—the special police unit—to apprehend him after the ordinary police failed. However, this should not simply be interpreted that the FIR was more powerful in the conventional sense of the term, i.e. having more efficient arms; rather, the FIR is seen to be linked to the state apparatus in a much more direct manner

than the regular municipal police or the novel institution of "community police" (see also chapter 7). Thus, their successful intervention and the subsequent transfer of the *muroi* to Maputo underline the importance of the Mozambican president's interest: Guebuza himself wanted to "see this person."

These cases, urban and rural, have demonstrated varied imaginaries of as well as experiences with *uroi*. In opting for retaining the term *uroi* and translating it as "sorcery," I mean to analytically denote a diverse range of practices and potentialities. It is also a choice made so as not to impose a dichotomous typological rigidity (i.e. sorcery versus witchcraft) that is unsupported by the material. More importantly, however, the term *uroi*—as experienced in a variety of forms—retains the open-ended, dynamic, and forceful capacity that is identifiable in Honde and Chimoio: individual, relational and collective; diurnal and nocturnal; involving *mutombo* or not.

Thus, when Cerveija related the problem of the *profete* caught with the human head, both the *n'angas* and the *profetes* present identified immediately the act as being one of *uroi*. There is, however, an additional yet central element here: How are we to understand the direct intervention of the state, in the form of AMETRAMO and Cerveija?

Uroi and the State

> Yet, all power, when it calls itself sacred, also becomes terrifying, steeped in sorcery.
> Luc de Heusch (1985: 216)

By attacking the *profete* caught with the head through AMETRAMO, the Mozambican state actively intervenes in a case of *uroi*—a field that permeates nigh all aspects of life as we have seen. For one, the *profete* case involves the order of the state oriented toward striating a field it deems unruly, disorganized, and potentially dangerous. This tentative striation of *uroi* space cast these as forces still beyond the grasp of the state and is oriented toward imbuing them with legibility, control, and organization—an extension of the long-term state optic of attaining control over societal and cosmological unruliness, which is lumped under the generic term *confusão* (confusion). As has been discussed, the political genealogy of *confusão* spans the period of attack on obscurantist politics immediately postindependence to a branding of all opposition as fomenting a form of disorder that is inimical to state, society, and people in general.[23]

The use of *confusão* by state agents, as Mr. Cerveija of AMETRAMO did, alludes also to forces that would prove elusive to a formalistic approach to state formation and state-society relations. Cerveija used it explicitly above in his admonition to "the mothers," the female *n'angas* and *profetes,* that created not only *confusão* with their actions but presented themselves as dangerous for the state order due to the destructive force of their inimical relations. Thus, the *profete/n'anga* schism constitutes a case of negative potency of considerable force wherein also its intimacy with *uroi* is a constitutive part—as evidenced by the commotion at the news of the *profete* with the head.

AMETRAMO's attempts to neutralize the forces of *uroi* underline how, more generally, sorcery both impinges on and is integral to social and political realities. As summed up by Kapferer (2002: 14),

> Sorcery is the imaginal formation of force and power that is to be expected in social circumstances that are disjunctive or in some sense discontinuous. Its concept in many different ethnographic contexts revolves around the magical capacity to work with the very potencies of difference, differentiation, division, opposition, contradiction and transgression. It gathers the force of such potencies, harnessing them to the purpose of destruction or to conjunction. … Sorcery is a thoroughgoing force of the social and the political.

Kapferer's assertion of sorcery as a profoundly social and political phenomenon underlines its integration with the logic of the state: Confronted by forceful threats within social and political realities, the state form is oriented toward attempting to assert or reassert supremacy as well as to redefine the fields of the social and political from whence the dangers arose.

In keeping with this orientation, one such technique employed was the familiar statal mechanism of *bureaucratization.* By imposing the definitions of "traditional medicine-men" onto the field of healers, spirits, and *uroi,* the state tentatively reterritorializes the same field it sought to eradicate under Samora's rule (1975–86)—as we have seen earlier. The rise of AMETRAMO post-Samora signals a departure from a confrontational modernist state order characterized by attacks on "obscurantism"—a term conflating vast and complex social and political institutions, practices, and cosmologies beyond the state (see also Israel 2014: 154, 167; Obarrio 2014: 16, 46–47). Nonetheless, the emergence and continued importance of AMETRAMO signals a well-known statist reorientation wherein the state abandons a project of eradication and attack on forces antagonistic to it, turning instead to one of encompassment, reordering, and reterritorialization (Kapferer and Bertelsen

2009). There is, of course, a historical parallel here, namely the case of the *mhondoro* that was identified as a dynamic variously internal and external to different polities but always with the potential to upset and challenge them. Similar potentiality for upsetting the state order may be found in the schism between *n'anga* and *profete* as well as in the very labile and forceful realm of healing, spirits, and *uroi* itself.

Second and more significant perhaps, AMETRAMO's measures are also state attempts at either neutralizing or feeding on the explosive potentials of popular perception—evident in the tension between *n'angas* and *profetes.* In the discourses of *profetes*, *n'angas* are frequently cast as devil worshippers and evildoers as they do not necessarily recognize the authority of the Holy Ghost, the sacraments or the Bible, or other dimensions of the Christian faith. Similarly, *profetes* are seen as being evil and considered *muroi* in *n'angas'* portrayals due to many *profetes'* association with Zionist or Pentecostal churches and their (alleged) negligence of ancestral spirits and ritual. This schism and mutual antagonism between the two groups is actively cultivated by both—a cultivation of difference that neglects the wide array of similarity in practices, perceptions, and techniques of healing and dealing with *uroi* and spirits.[24]

The distinctions between *n'angas* and *profetes* generate considerable social and political tension also directed against the state, as in accusations against state organs or its agents of clandestinely hiding, representing, or using the nebulous force of either *n'angas* or *profetes* (depending on which group is making the claim). From the perspective of state bureaucracy and the elite, if the state through AMETRAMO and organs such as FIR manages to redefine the field, this will allow the state to make legible and, thus, manageable the forces of *uroi,* the potencies of healing, as well as the spirits that are appropriated by both *n'angas* and *profetes.* In the state optic of health management, the *n'angas* and *profetes* may be seen as nodes or regulatory entry points for state intervention and control if their forces and potentialities are coordinated and effectively bifurcated. Put differently, what is defined as the potential for *benevolent* healing is sought to be subsumed under state technologies of medicine and health. Conversely, what the state identifies as the *malevolent* forces—that of *uroi* in the form of nefarious consumption of bodies or trafficking in body parts—are also relegated to the state domain but confronted by its agents of law. Such a statist bifurcation and redefinition represent, from a bureaucratic point of view, a domestication and neutralization of the forces and potencies involved.

However, and third, AMETRAMO's mode of engagement and the powerful experiences of state intervention against the cannibalistic sorcerer reveal that these do not merely reflect Mozambican historical tra-

jectories nor emanate from universal traits of ordering. The formation of AMETRAMO in significant aspects also echoes a dominant and shifting international trend of understanding health, well-being, and medicine. As such, AMETRAMO may be seen to be informed by the international trend of "recognition."[25] As part of this international trend, the World Health Organization (WHO) has for decades also understood health as transcending the confines of biomedicine and in its definition has embraced a wider understanding, emphasizing also communal, collective, and relational dimensions (A. Honwana 1996, 1999; Igreja 2004; McKay 2012; Shapiro 1983). Reflecting this trajectory, Langwick (2015) has argued that while the Tanzanian state increasingly seeks to "recognize" and reorder traditional medicine also according to neoliberal restructuring, also traditional medicine and its circumstances prove unruly.

Be that as it may, in the aftermath of the Mozambican civil war, the WHO's non-biomedical approach also informed visions of "reintegration" and "reconciliation" at both practical levels of demobilization of soldiers as well as official discourse. The conflict- and trauma-solving societal potential outside institutionalized legal or therapeutic frameworks has also been recognized by many observers, but only to a small extent been seen in terms of simple "reconciliation."[26] Nonetheless, the formation of AMETRAMO may usefully be seen to also be a concretization of increasing international non-biomedical rhetoric of health and well-being.

More broadly, AMETRAMO is also a product of Frelimo's reorientation toward and increasing dependence on policy shifts, according to, especially, the Bretton Woods institutions from the mid- to late 1980s and onward—institutions whose dominant discourse for a sustained period of time was antistate in its demand for decentralization, economic liberalization, and liberal democracy. In a country emerging only in 1992 from a devastating civil war, Cramer links Mozambique's postwar *military demobilization* to a parallel *economic demobilization* of the state— exemplified by Mozambique suffering "the largest privatisation programme in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s," which involved corrupt accumulation and rampant asset stripping (2007: 266). Such "economic demobilization" went hand in hand with the Washington consensus' rhetorical as well as practical attacks on the state in the 1980s and a global trend critics have called "the production of a weak state" (Santos 2006a: 43). As sketched earlier, from the mid-1990s donors reoriented, and one practical outcome of this was the formation of AMETRAMO.

If we step back from the hands-on world of international policymakers, the Mozambican state's appropriation of or, better, *absorption* by these often donor-driven discourses also provides novel state mecha-

nisms for capture, domestication, and appropriation of forces that are potentially destructive to and antagonistic toward the state order. To be more specific: AMETRAMO's form of capture might be seen as one that is "culturifying" and "localizing" by disembedding particular practices and spaces of healing, destruction, and empowerment from their distinct social and political frameworks and particular historical trajectories. Thus, the double-edged recognition on the part of AMETRAMO entails attempts at an effective *desocialization* that is recognizable in and integral to a universalizing politics of health embedded in an overarching system of governance and, ultimately, state order.

In the state optic, *uroi,* the roaming spirits, and, also, unregulated ritual practices—represented by *n'angas* and *profetes,* as well as the domains of the household—are perilous, as they are generated and accessed by powerful nonstate agents. By evolving along trajectories that evade the propensity of the state for striation, sedentarization, and integration in forms of bureaucratic order, the dynamics of spirits, *uroi,* and ritual practices in general assume some of the same potentialities as violence in being rhizomic and a-structured—a force in themselves, perpetually expanding and transforming, and both beyond as well as constitutive of and embedded in the social. As Kapferer (2001: 69) has noted in a distinctly antifunctionalist (conceived broadly) argument on the force of violence, "Violence is not simply a product of certain kinds of social context, it is also, despite its manifest asociality, obviously an agency in society and constructive of social contexts." The same nonfunctionalist approach as Kapferer has argued for violence in the context of Sri Lanka (and beyond) may be extended to the case of *uroi,* the spirits, and their interlocutors or intermediaries in terms of the unpredictability of their force and directions. However, significantly, the attempts to control this field through instruments of state power, such as AMETRAMO, enters the domain of the empirical—exposing the long-lasting spirit of the state's dealing with *uroi.*

Spirit of the State

I start here by describing a measure taken against sorcerers in the late 1500s in Mozambique—an ordeal described by Portuguese contemporary sources (Santos 1964 [1609]: 204–5):

> The second oath is called by the Kaffirs the oath of the xoca, which is the iron of an adze heated red-hot in the fire; it is then taken out with pincers and held to the mouth of the accused, who is told to lick the red-hot iron with his tongue, and if he is not guilty of the crime with which he is charged

the fire will not harm him and his tongue and lips will not be burnt; but if he is guilty, the fire will burn his tongue, lips, and face.

What is important to notice in this account is how the veracity of the case of alleged sorcery is controlled by and intimately related to the apparatus of the state. In the late 1500s, it was a crucial feature of the disciplinary and ruling apparatus of the king to decide if unlawful witches or sorcerers were operating in his terrain. These witches were seen to destabilize and threaten the authority of the king and the well-being of his subjects. This could, of course, merely be one singular historical instance of a particular king's manner in which he attempted to establish control. However, in an interview with Cerveija in 2007, it was revealed that in AMETRAMO the test of the iron hot adze is also used to decide in cases of accusations of sorcery. Here I have asked Cerveija how AMETRAMO in practical terms decide whether a person they have apprehended is a *muroi* or not:

> C: Well. We work with a small adze that we put into the fire. It is about twenty centimeters. It is made of iron, so it becomes very hot. We leave it there for an hour. If the accused touches it without burning, he or she is innocent. If he is burnt, he is guilty.
>
> B: Do you still do this?
>
> C: [Very vague] Now we do not do this. But we still have this system to decide whether someone is innocent or not.

What is striking is the similarity between practices described from the late 1500s within the realm of traditional kingdoms and techniques that are, maybe, still relevant in 2007 in a state-controlled organization for traditional healers. This durability in terms of techniques reveals important aspects of long-term preoccupation with and exposure to the destructive potential of witches.[27] Further, sorcery and its containment, control, or dominance is also revealed to be at the heart of the royal as well as multiparty state form: in the former case, a witch or a sorcerer that was not sanctioned by or in the service of the king posed a challenge to sovereign power itself. Likewise, in the work of AMETRAMO, the forces of *uroi* need to be addressed as they may work destructively in society and against state authority and order. This is also formalized in the sense of serious cases of accusations of *uroi* being transferred to AMETRAMO from, for example, community courts or even the police (see also Bertelsen 2013). In 2007 AMETRAMO therefore proceeded to work proactively by penetrating urban and rural communities where sorcery had been revealed and attempted to deal directly with the alleged sorcerer. For Cerveija this engagement reflected the group's altered role:

> The things have changed slightly. Before we were often given cases by the police or by community leaders. Now it is much more direct—we may hear of cases in the *bairros* and we will go there to investigate. Or, as often, there are people who come and talk to us or to accuse others. Many times, the whole family will stay here when we resolve matters.

The way in which AMETRAMO president Cerveija deals with *uroi* and the field of *n'angas* and *profetes* is undergirded by a triangular power base. He is vested, first, with the power of the state as illustrated by the capacity to channel resources from Maputo, wield stamps and letterheads, etc. Second, his power in terms of being a formidable *n'anga* is well-known, harboring a range of spirits. Third, and somewhat paradoxically as he is also a state agent, his origins within the Gorongosa mountain range, the powerhouse of the traditional field in Mozambique, imbues him with extraterritorial and allochthon powers and evokes respect and fear.

It is important to bear in mind here that, and as indicated previously, AMETRAMO at times operate like an extrajudicial and extralegal body within the state apparatus by deciding on guilt in cases where conventional forms of evidence is absent. AMETRAMO's use of the "trial by fire" test may therefore be seen to comprise a sort of powerful "spirit of the state" that is invoked to decide on guilt and to fend off *uroi*. As such, AMETRAMO transcends the confines of a formalist Weberian vision of the state as its state organ transforms administrative tasks of conflict resolution and societal order into veritable duels against sorcerers—present and potential alike (see also West 2005). Using age-worn mechanisms of ascertaining guilt through an adze of metal and tentatively subjecting *n'angas* and *profetes* to the logics of state sovereignty and the definitional category of "traditional medicine," it is clear that the case of AMETRAMO explodes notions of bureaucratic structures or "recognition" (whatever that means) of the field of non-biomedical forms of healing. What emerges from the material is a state propelling itself with great intensity into the lighter and darker, violent and vegetal dimensions of mediating between spirits, bodies, and matter. In doing so it also illuminates the occluded or at least more subtle workings of the state.[28]

AMETRAMO may, thus, be seen as an expression of state sovereignty within the field that one might call the "supernaturally social." However, the organization does more than substantiate Agamben's (1998 [1995]) general argument about the frailty of human life in the face of power and the practice of defining certain categories of humans as disposable or beyond the law. For, in this setting where state meets the violent powers of sorcery and the *n'angas* and *profetes* that operate within this realm, law in the form of the authority of AMETRAMO meddles with what evades

and—in some senses—negates the state: the sorcerer and their interlocutors that feed on the feeble which comprise structures and practices of power uncontained by the state apparatus. Here, the sorcerer is not only part of the state, but by way of its territorializing dynamic or its making of "oneness" (Clastres 1994 [1980], 1998 [1974]), the state also propels itself into the domain of sorcery by establishing courts and laws founded on that which transcends and subverts the surfaces of everyday sociality. Such law-making and the continuous establishment of sovereignty are recognized well beyond the apparatus of the state's often derelict offices in all Mozambican cities and in some rural areas. The analysis of AMETRAMO provides, therefore, an argument against a formalist approach to state formation and orders and underlines the need to scrutinize the state well beyond the paraphernalia of bureaucracy, its territoriality, or its very visible (and tangible) and violently enforced "rule of law" (see also Obarrio 2014).

The very existence and operation of AMETRAMO also demonstrates to the full "the mythical foundation of authority" in which the dealings of AMETRAMO are seen as natural by a great number of people (if not legitimate—as many do not recognize the legitimacy of the Frelimo state). Thus, AMETRAMO's practices must not *only* be reduced to a case of a postcolonial African party-state encroaching on a field to gain legitimacy or—at least—attempting to gain control over an unruly and powerful terrain and its people. Instead, complementing such an analysis must be a recognition of AMETRAMO as establishing an entry point to scrutinize the state and its sovereign forms—hereunder its apex, the president.

Sorcery, Bodies, and Sovereignty

In Southern Africa, figures of sovereignty, such as kings, chiefs, or rainmakers, are frequently represented as the prime sorcerers of their realms (see, e.g., Gluckman 1963 [1956])—a vision still very much present in current understandings of hierarchy and power. As touched upon in chapter 3 and argued elsewhere (Bertelsen 2004) when attributed to antistate forces in the person of Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama in the context of elections, rainmaking and sorcerous potentialities shape powerful perceptions of politics and political action. The parliamentary and presidential elections of 1999 are a case in point as these were followed by large-scale floods and my interlocutors in Honde and Chimoio (as well as elsewhere) interpreted these as having been created by Dhlakama in response to alleged electoral fraud by Frelimo. This Mozambican case

of what one may call a "political cosmology" bespeaks, therefore, the relations between the sovereign's body and his powers—political and sorcerous. This imaginary of state power in the body of the king is, however, not just confined to Southern Africa.[29] A brief look at two cases from southern Sudan and Rwanda may be instructive in such regard.

In a highly interesting and detailed volume examining the social, political, and symbolic forces and dynamics of rainmakers and kings, Simon Simonse (1992) argues that these figures may be seen as doubly sacrificial and wielding great powers. He builds on a vast array of anthropological material on regicide and the king's body in South Sudan, ranging from the Seligmans' classical treatise (1932) to Schnepel's more recent (1991) analysis of Shilluk shrines and ritual. Simonse's analysis revolves around the dual themes of rainmaking and kingship, dimensions of power that are intimately related in his material from the Lulubo, Lokoya, and Lotuho in South Sudan. In one case, serious drought ravaged the region in the period 1982–84, and the rainmaker was increasingly singled out as the rainstopper or droughtmaker by her community. As a culmination of increasingly more public accusations and actions taken to bring rain (i.e. the exhumation of corpses of elders and throwing these into the river), the ritual experts in the rainmaker's community informed her that would be killed. In a highly nonritualized fashion, on 8 July 1984 the rainmaker was taken to a place in the bush where a fire was lit, and under the auspices of the *mojomiji,* the ritual expert, a group of three (a leper, a blind man, and a lame man) beat her to death with sticks and threw her into the flames. After her death, her belly was opened and mixed with substances from a nonedible melon, and her corpse was thrown into the bush.[30] In the days following her death, rain came in large amounts, contextually both underlining her power as a rainstopper and providing evidence that her powers had now been released (Simonse 1992: 366–372).

Interestingly, Simonse also exemplifies with a king's death in the area and underlines that this bears similarities to that of the rainmaker, arguing how the period of royal death is one in which the forces of the king must be contained within his corpse.[31] Contrarily, and if released, "the violence contained in the corpse may emerge and disrupt the community" (1992: 382), causing crop pests, disorder, and impede the provision of rain. It is therefore vital to plug the orifices of the king's corpse upon death to contain the power of kingship in a dangerous transitional period (1992: 383).[32] In the case of an Ikang royal death, similar relations are expressed: the king's body is also closed but left on a platform normally used for drying sorghum—exposed to the sun for days. It is left there until the abdomen bursts open, the contents are distributed,

and "peace, rain and food [are] believed to spread over the land …" (1992: 384). In both instances—the violent death of the rainmaker and the nonviolent death of the king—regenerative forces are contained within their bodies—forces that are potentially benign if contained and transferred or distributed in correct ways.[33]

Similar care regarding the king's body is found in de Heusch's (1982b [1972]) examination of central African foundational myths—an analysis complementing Simonse's assertions of the bodily significance of royals. De Heusch (1982b [1972]: 237f) argues that the ways of treating the king's body—by mummification, dismemberment, or by placing the bodily remains in jars, or, prior to death, suffocating the king to death—are linked to dry and wet cycles of agricultural production. Arguably, such a structuralist argument is, perhaps, somewhat too generalizing given the less than perfect correlation to specific contexts and annual cycles of production and reproduction. However, the theme of the king's body is also explored in terms of the dangers of violent death of the sovereign where great apprehension is also taken to obstruct or, rather, impale the orifices of the body to let open the beneficial and forceful flows that hitherto had been corporeally obstructed by, and contained within, the royal body.

This is the concern of Christopher Taylor's (2009) reexamination of imaginaries shaping sovereign and political power during the 1994 Rwanda genocide. In the context of genocide, Rwanda's president Habyarimana was in popular cartoons depicted as a formidable being that prevented the flowing of *imaana*—a powerful and central life-giving force. Thus, his figure was in breach of the sovereign's central regulatory and circulatory function for the well-being, fecundity, and fertility of his realm, and in these same cartoons, he was drawn as impaled and, thus, violently "reopened" to allow *imaana* to flow anew.

One dimension to be elicited from these African examples is the centrality of the corporeality of kingship, statehood, and sovereignty—also a fundamental theme in political philosophy more broadly. A relevant entry point in regards to the above Mozambican material—and, indeed, the dimensions of kingship and rainmaking from the Sudan and also Central and Southern Africa in general—is Agamben's (1998 [1995]) refreshing rereading of Kantorowicz's classical treatise on the *The King's Two Bodies* (1997 [1957]: 91–103). Kantorowicz states that the physical, organic body of a particular king and the body of kingship are separate, as reflected in expressions like "the king never dies" or "the king is dead. Long live the king." Agamben critiques this by claiming such a separation is rooted in Christian mythology of the perpetuation of "Christ's mystic body." Building on examples from the Roman and Greek

antiquity, Agamben instead proposes that the king should be seen as a form of *Homo Sacer*—a figure that can be killed but not sacrificed. Upon death, a king or an emperor's body should therefore be seen to have "not two bodies but rather two lives inside one single body: a natural life and a sacred life" (1998 [1995]: 100). This sacred life is accessible and potentially dangerous at the time of death, and, again building on Greek and Roman material, Agamben argues (1998 [1995]: 98) that "the first consequence of death is the liberation of a vague and threatening being … who returns, with the outward appearance of the dead person, to the places where the person lived, belonging properly neither to the world of the living nor to that of the dead."

Although informed by a rather limited set of classic European empirical material, Agamben's critique of the purportedly Christian imagery at the heart of Kantorowicz's notion of two bodies is instructive as it points to dimensions of sacrifice, liminality, transgression, and, above all, the apex of the political system where power condenses around the king. The element of danger and transgression—an element recognizable in the Sudanese cases above—is also clear from his emphasis on the substances of danger—life itself contained within the sovereign body—that is threatening to the "non-deadened" world. Death and the ritual transference between it and life is potentially extremely destructive, productive, and disruptive—seen in the cases of the rainmaker and sovereigns (kings and presidents) in the Sudan and Rwanda. Agamben underlines time and again the relation between sovereign power and death, in contrast to the perpetuity of *dignitas* argued by Kantorowicz, and one whose excess and whose body represents "the cipher of the absolute and inhuman character of sovereignty" (1998 [1995]: 101).

If Agamben's consideration of sovereign power and the king's body is correct, the sorcerer apprehended in Chimoio and brought by FIR agents directly before the president in Maputo perhaps becomes clearer. The character of the president, a figure containing within his body powerful substances, is also at the apex of a system of purported absoluteness. This is evident from the imaginaries of the president—and perhaps solely him—being powerful enough to confront (and "see") the sorcerer that, through transgression and consumption of men and women, artificially created forces within *his* body that were radically and increasingly experienced as threats against the lives of others. Neutralizing the dangers of this sorcerer necessitates the forces of someone equally or more powerful. The president co-opts these forces by containing them within his body, so to speak.

Such co-optation, on the other hand, makes the president protrude as an immensely potent twilight figure and one that, in this case, acts

in the interest of his subjects by appropriating the destructive forces contained in the body of the necrophagous sorcerer of Chimoio. Neutralizing him, the president defuses the potentialities generated by his sorcerous actions and, thus, also precludes the generation of evil spirits following the sorcerer's death should he have been killed by people. On the other hand, the actions by the president also strengthen and empower him further, impregnating him against attack and bolstering his sorcerous powers of extraction, accumulation, and dominance, as many see it. In this imaginary of the state, the president, thus, attains the familiar role of supreme sorcerer (see also Kapferer 2002: 15). The potencies of *uroi,* therefore, are integral elements not only in the figure of the sovereign president but also in testifying to the dark potencies harbored by the hierarchies of the state.

However, this interpretation needs to be supplemented by another dimension that is also, at the same time, a criticism against the absoluteness of the sovereign figure as argued by Agamben. In an incisive critique, Laclau (2007) argues that Agamben's vision of the *nomos* of the camp as the ultimate sovereign expression, his insistence on the totalitarian project of politics and law, and the ways in which the *Homo Sacer* is integral to the formation of sovereign, in sum, underline a form of political nihilism and totalitarianism. In the realm of Agamben's dynamics of sovereignty and the bare life upon which it inscribes itself, it is inconceivable to identify forces, agencies or potentialities that fundamentally challenge such a formation. Thus, and in keeping with the thrust of Laclau's critique, the vision of the Agambenian sovereign formation is of a power that perfectly encompasses its human subjects and their social and political capacities. Conversely, one does not find in Agamben's analysis, neither internal to the sovereign formation nor external to it, articulations of potentials for forces, agencies, or agents that may destabilize or, even, are in discord with the sovereign.

Applied to the material on the king's or rainmaker's body and power—in the form of potentiality or force, for example, as expressed in the imaginary of the sorcery of power, politics, and the king—Agamben's totalitarian sovereign eclipses too perfectly his own as well as wider domains of control and influence. Rather, and against Agamben, there is every reason to emphasize that power, in this case that wielded and, indeed, embodied by the sovereign, transcends the confines of what can be regulated and domesticated, appropriated and controlled absolutely and perpetually.

This does not imply that the figure of the king as the supreme sorcerer is faulty. It means, however, that the figure of the king as the supreme sorcerer is an image that is constantly blurred, so to speak, by

the action of his purported subjects. In the realm of sorcery and its relation to sociality and politics, this can be imagined empirically as the immense force with which new formations in the cosmological domain emerge as well as the speed and force with which these become enmeshed in ongoing social and political realities. One such example has been given earlier in the state's attempt to bureaucratically striate the field of *profetes* and *n'angas*. However, as the case of the *profete* with the human head shows, the forces of *uroi* that AMETRAMO members also potentially engage in transcend the machinations of statehood itself or state bodies and technologies. Another example may be the rainmaker from Sudan in Simonse's material who was no longer able to contain the forces of power conveyed upon her. A third might be the powerful cosmologies of regicide at work during the Rwandan genocide in 1994 wherein the body of the king needed to be violently reappropriated in order to reopen the forces of *imaana* to let these again flow into the rivers of the nation and regenerate the polity.

These three instances point to what one might call the perpetual *excess of power* present within and confronting any state formation (see also Kapferer and Bertelsen 2009: 6f). Further, the popular imagery of a state or sovereign's absoluteness resembles the splendor of sovereignty being *absolute et perpetuélle*—as elaborated famously in the mid-1500s by Bodin (Bodin and Franklin 1992 [1576]). For Bodin, sovereignty is fantastically imagined and revolves around totalitarian, millenarian, or other revolutionary transformations by the state of the social and political order. Interestingly, Bodin also saw such transformation giving rise to sovereignty as, indeed, integral to a struggle against sorcerers, witches, and "demon-maniacs"—beings that were to be violently defeated but whose powers sometimes were, in Bodin's view, appropriated by kings and rulers (Bodin, Scott, and Pearl 1995 [1580]).

The case of AMETRAMO is, thus, not unique, and similar situations have been conceived in other empirical contexts. On a general level, these cracks, so to speak, in the edifice of the (postcolonial) state have also been recognized by Hansen and Stepputat (2005: 4), who argue that "although sovereign power always seeks to project itself as given, stable and natural, it never completely manages to achieve the status of a 'master signifier' that can stabilize a social order and a set of identities."[34] Empirically, one might compare the dynamics of AMETRAMO to another postcolonial context—as analyzed by Taussig in his *Magic of the State* (1997). His work analyzes the state order through focusing on intersections of "state magic" enshrined in national narratives of liberation or national monuments devoted to the Liberator with the popular magical practices of a character Taussig calls the Spirit Queen. In explor-

ing state imaginaries, institutions, paraphernalia, and practices, Taussig claims that "it is not the healer who is mystical, but the state" (1997: 125). Specifically, Taussig in a number of ways evokes how the potentialities in the imaginaries of liberation and statehood, commanded and created by the state, constantly transcend its institutional and discursive frameworks.[35]

Taussig's work—although given a specific experimental shape and theoretically steeped within the specific optics of Bataille and Benjamin, among others—shows empirical instances of how the state creates and is dependent upon magic, i.e. imaginaries. At the same time, the project and intrusion of the state into the realm of the social will routinely be met with processes of appropriation destabilizing the cosmologies of state sovereignty.

These visions of sovereignty, from Bodin through Hansen and Stepputat to Taussig, indicate practices that destabilize, appropriate, and re-/deterritorialize the statal project, and can be further understood through Deleuze and Guattari's vantage point in seeing the state as an ordering dynamic, oriented toward striation, sedentarization, legibility. A case in point can be AMETRAMO's propelling itself into the social formation of the healers in order to create a legible, well-ordered space, catering also for multinational donors seeking to attain "recognition" of benevolent cultural forms, which I have identified as being a project of AMETRAMO. Such a project of ordering is also in line with Cerveija's attempt to make the *n'angas* and *profetes* stay clear of *uroi*. The project of the state order is, however, nonabsolute in the sense of comprising a project in the becoming. Adapting to constant novel and rapidly changing social realities and orientations, any state order will always already constantly reorient itself and its strategies in order to meet, control, and reterritorialize these circumstances. To invert Bodin's classical notion of sovereignty, the perpetual character of sovereignty needs rather to be conceived as the perpetual *becoming* of sovereignty of the state. Moreover, at any point in its creation of striated spaces and arborescent hierarchies of subjects, the state order is constantly challenged by lines of flight. These lines constantly imbue—within the state order itself—a dynamic that is unsettling. Further, lines of flight, as we also saw previously on the becomings of regimes of state in Manica Province, are also generated *by* the state order itself—its actions, or rather, the *effects* of its actions generating new forms of dissent, disorder, and challenges to the hierarchies, systems of empowerment, and accumulation and bureaucratization that the state logic commands, directs, and is defined by.

In this sense, sorcery can be conceived as such a line of flight—cutting through the fantasies of absoluteness and perpetuality and challeng-

ing the very state order. A similar argument has also been launched by
Geschiere (1988) on the basis of his material from the Maka in Camer-
oon, pointing out that they exert a form of *revanche on* the state or state
elites by engaging in sorcery. Following Bayart (1993), he comments on
the relationship between sorcery and the state that "a basic ambiguity
seems to be that the less structured these popular modes are, the more
they remain 'invisible' and therefore the harder for the state to combat"
(Geschiere 1988: 37).

In being a particular form of the rhizomic, a character of which is also
invisibility,lines of flight are changeable and *unreignable*—in the sense of
both rei(g)ning in and be governable.[36] The Maka case corresponds in
various aspects to how both AMETRAMO and bodies of state attempt
to contain sorcery. They have failed, however, also as sorcery is at once
exacted against the state and *by* the state—in that the state, also, creates
its own sorcerers to combat. Further, sorcery is uncontainable due to its
rhizomic structure by following a multitude of potential lines of kinship
and sociality and transforming these, possible configurations are at the
same time also, to a large extent, unpredictable. This feature of sor-
cery haunts all polities seeking to control its force—from Ngungunyane
to Samora Machel. Moreover, these features of the state engaging in,
co-opting, and seeking to control *uroi* imbues the state with lines of
deterritorialization. Geschiere is partly right, therefore, in ascertaining
that sorcery can be a popular mode effecting a *revanche* on the state by
society (Geschiere 1988).[37]

In a reassessment, Bruce Kapferer (2002: 3) pointed out that a sig-
nificant virtue of Evans-Pritchard's *Witchraft, Oracles and Magic among
the Azande* (1976 [1937]) was that "magical practice is not here [in the
book] reduced to terms that are external to it." Kapferer's support for
such a position that make accessible and demonstrate magical practice
in itself has also guided the writing of this chapter. Similarly, I have
tried to show how an approach that largely understands the practices of
n'angas and *profetes* in terms of effects of commodification in the wake
of neoliberalism is flawed, as it reduces these practices and realities to
be purely reactive to external processes. In the contexts of Honde and
Chimoio—and, indeed, the wider Mozambican context—the potenti-
alities of magic and sorcery are thoroughly embedded in processes of
state-making. This also entails the state propelling itself into, and also
to some degree constructing, its sorcerous opponents. Further, what I
demonstrated is that the assemblages of state and the traditional field in
the domains of sorcery and magic are both intertwined, and that these,
therefore, constitute crucial empirical sites for analyzing potentialities,
dynamics, and tensions within and between them.

Notes

1. The change in official Frelimo discourse as well as (partly) state practice was also related to decentralization drives coming into vogue in the early 1990s with the increasingly important international donor community, including the Bretton Woods institutions. As these had become integral to the Mozambican economy, the international reorientation effected a change in Frelimo rhetoric as well as practice. See Adam (1996: 128ff) especially for documenting these aid flows and their influence in Mozambique in the 1980s and early 1990s. For two critiques of the "Washington consensus"–driven decentralization drive, see also Abrahamsson and Nilsson (1996: 139–99 esp.) and (Orre 2010).
2. On AMETRAMO compared to other African associations of so-called "traditional medicine," see particularly Green (1996), and on its relations with the Mozambican state, see also the many important contributions by Meneses (2000, 2004a, 2004b, 2006).
3. All numbers provided by an organization with an interest in aggrandizement could, naturally, be questioned—although it reflects a national figure often cited of seventy thousand healers. Here the point is not the number's accuracy, but rather that it indicates the importance of this field and, moreover, reflects the numbers of members encountered in various settings during fieldwork.
4. As Mr. Cerveija is a high-ranking public figure in Chimoio, his name will not be anonymized as this would be a near impossibility without "fictionalizing" to an untenable level. Further, it was also made clear with Mr. Cerveija that these were interviews and he explicitly gave permission to use the material collected. See also "A Note on Anonymity and Fieldwork."
5. The card reflects the Frelimo state's obsessions with identification and bureaucratic tokens, as also identified and analyzed by West (2003).
6. The concern with *confusão* is also a legacy of the organizational, territorial, and political dimensions of the postcolonial *bairro* associations, wherein all households would be included in a group of five houses with a leader, integrated into a unit of twenty-five houses with a head, and again reporting to the overall chief of the area, the *secretário do bairro.* Further, movement between *bairros* or areas would in much of the early postindependence era be subject to permissions provided in a document, the so-called *guia de marcha,* that had to be presented to the leader of the area one was traveling to (see, e.g., also Kyed 2007b: 72).
7. Actions by AMETRAMO to reorder the field of *n'angas* and *profetes* include suspensions of members and are regularly reported—as in a case from 2013 where fifty members in Inhambane were suspended for, among other things, having meddled in sorcery, having been involved in the transfer of children as payment for debts, or for having exorbitant rates (see Iva 2013).
8. For other interesting framings of "modernity" and Africa, see Moore and Sanders (2001), Meyer and Pels (2003), Macamo (2005), and Kiernan (2006).
9. For two additional critiques of the "modernity of witchcraft" approach, see also Ashforth (2005:116–21) and Ellis (2007). See also Pierre's (2006) quite unfair critique of the Comaroffs' work (1992) as embedded in a historical process

of "othering" and "racializing" Africa and, thus, their approach to the topic of witchcraft as integral to what Trouillot (2003) has argued to be "savage slot" topics.

10. Buxton (1963: 120) and Middleton and Winter (1963: 10, 25) make similar claims.

11. Societies of witches are the subjects of various ethnographic accounts in Southern and Eastern Africa. In H. A. Junod's classic account, he writes that "these *baloyi* [sorcerers] know each other. They form a kind of *secret society* within the tribe, and they assemble during the night—in their spiritual bodies—to eat human flesh in the desert" (Junod 1962 [1912]b: 506, italics retained). Also, LeVine (1963: 226) describes how Gusii witches in Kenya operate in groups to sate their lust for human flesh, while Marwick describes a "guild" of witches in his Cewa material (1965: 77–79). This sociality—or perhaps "asociality"—of sorcerers in the invisible realm is also key to West's (2005) analysis of current and past sorcery from the Mueda plateau in northern Mozambique.

12. The use of plants is yet another instance in which material objects (plants), spiritual beings (*mhondoro*), and healing capacities (*n'angas*) emanating from Gorongosa (and as referred to in previous chapters) are seen to be more potent than those pertaining to Chimoio, Honde, or the immediate surrounding area.

13. For a similar transition from naming the witch by a *nganga* (*n'anga*) or a community in Zimbabwe to indirect treatment or indirect accusation, see Gelfand (1964: 46f) and Bourdillon (1987: 187ff).

14. As West (2007) has pointed out in a critical methodological self-reflection relating to researching sorcery, one treads so near to one's subject of study that after some time one might be regarded as a practitioner of its arts oneself (see also Favret-Saada 2015 [2009]). As such, *uroi* is a dangerously elusive force, and during fieldwork different, often contradictory pieces of evidence of its dimensions emerged—also in my work in Honde and Chimoio.

15. Bourdillon (1987: 74) provides details as to the *djangano* practices for Shona peoples in general. For a classic study of the institution of the beer party and social change, see also Barth's (1967) study of Fur in Sudan.

16. West (2007) notes an instance where the throat meat of a slain lion is used for similar purposes.

17. However, eating alone does not, unambiguously, signify antisocial behavior: in popular corruption discourses in several African countries, the metaphor "eat" (*comer* in Portuguese) covers both the physical act of consuming food as well as engaging in systems of corruption (see, e.g., Bayart 1993; Argenti 2007: 88f). Eating with others can then, paradoxically, also index specific antisocial, colluding, and predatory forms of consumption. The community of corrupt consumption, if we may call it that, to many people's minds is more akin to the nocturnal necrophagous feasts of a society of *muroi* than households sharing their daily meals with members or visitors—as indicated also in Geschiere's book *Modernity of Witchcraft* (1997), whose original subtitle in French reads *Sorcellerie en Afrique. La viande des autres* (1995), a title more directly addressing the aspects of human flesh, labor, and corruption than the English edition. Conversely, therefore, the former Mozambican president, Samora Machel, is

hailed in popular and Frelimo discourse alike as one who always "ate alone." His solitude was, thus, seen as evidencing his noncorrupt character—in opposition to popular perceptions of today's prolific and profitable networks of politics and business. On food taboos, social organization and cannibalism in Mozambique in general, see Huhn's insightful work (e.g. Huhn 2016).

18. See also Hilda Kuper's analysis of two main types of so-called "murders for doctoring," namely "agricultural fertility" and "personal aggrandizement" (1963: 66). When describing "agricultural charms," Burbridge (1925: 26) also notes this aspect: "Perhaps in no instance does the sinister influence of this man [the 'witch doctor'] appear in darker colours than in the conditions annexed to the use of this agricultural charm *divisi.* These conditions, sometimes incestuous, sometimes murderous, always inhuman and unnatural, were eagerly complied with by the superstitious idler, not witting that by the sweat of his brow he must eat his bread. In sloth he sat with his friendly benefactor by his side pulling the right string to set the mechanical forces free which were to fill his grain-bin."

19. Enslaving others for agricultural work is documented already by H. A. Junod (1962 [1912]b: 514f; see also Beidelmann 1963: 66; Marwick 1965: 76; Ellis and Haar 2004: 123) while Gelfand (1964: 71–72) and Marwick (1965: 809) explore sacrificial killings of kin and use of their body parts or *mutombo* to augment yields. Several analyses also relate agricultural or economic productivity to incestuous and sorcerous relations (Aschwanden 1982 [1976]: 101f; Jacobson-Widding 1989: 40, 1990: 54). However, enslavement and zombification imagery is also frequently analyzed as reflecting histories of capture, slave trade, and forced labor—as, for instance, Argenti (2007: 93–120 esp.) has argued for West Africa and Zimba et al. (2006) have for East Africa.

20. Though differences in how male and female *muroi* operate are acknowledged, in my material there are no clear indications of numerical predominance for men or women. In this chapter I have therefore not elaborated on the gendered facets of *muroi,* spirit possession, or related aspects. I will, however, return to gendered and bodily dimensions in chapter 6 in the context of accumulation, production, reproduction, and economy.

21. The person is here referring to *Força da Intervenção Rápida* (FIR)—a national rapid intervention police force under the national police (see also Bertelsen and Chauque 2015).

22. Putrid, smelly, or otherwise contextually revolting matter is frequently linked to forms of moral transgression—also in Chimoio and Honde. For instance, as will be dealt with in chapter 6, the water used to wash corpses in Chimoio's provincial morgue is regularly stolen by thieves who, it is believed, will consume this liquid in order to render themselves invisible—invisibility being a well-known trait of *muroi.* See also Telle (2003) for an exploration of relations between theft, sorcery, and odor in Lombok, Indonesia.

23. See also Kyed 2007a for a case of the Mozambican state agents' use of *confusão* to assert state authority.

24. As argued in chapter 4, differences between *profetes* and *n'angas* are frequently overstated in many analyses. Although, of course, the increase in the *profete* category is interesting, the great number of similarities between practices is

often misrepresented when analysts subscribe to the dichotomy vigorously professed by their interlocutors. Pfeiffer (2006: 81), in a sense, also confirms and reproduces this imagined schism between the *n'angas* and the *profetes,* writing that "the extraordinary expansion of Pentecostals and African Independent Churches (AIC) … in Central Mozambique represents a dramatic shift away from reliance on 'traditional' healers." This claim is unsupported by my material and contrary to the analysis undertaken here.

25. See C. Taylor (1994) for an academic proponent of the "recognition trend." However, the term "recognition" and its African policy implications has been, rightly, critiqued for a failure to appreciate complexities such as the politics of identity, ongoing formations of hierarchy, gendered inequalities, and the hybrid and fluid nature of cultural institutions. Englund and Nyamnjoh (2004) and Englund (2006) offer some general critiques of "recognition" within Africa, while Nielsen (2007) provides a useful critical reading of the Mozambican politics of recognition.

26. See Lundin (1998), Bertelsen (2002), Schafer (2007), and Wiegink (2014) for some critical works. There is, however, both a danger in simplifying trauma (see Broch-Due and Bertelsen 2016) and overstating the potential of nonstate capacity. As Alden (2002: 353) wryly remarks, this focus may translate (too) easily into an inexpensive manner in which reintegration is achieved: "A sort of utopian methodology of reintegration becomes possible which is self-administering and entails virtually no costs for the international community."

27. Although I will not develop this here (as it is part of the overall argument of this book), it may also be made into a case against the "invention of tradition" thesis by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1992 [1983]), where the force, violence, and apparatus of colonialism is seen to dislocate and refigure the traditional to such an extent as to sever the relations between past and present forms and formations.

28. At one level AMETRAMO also represents what one may call the *exteriorialization* of the mystical foundations of the state and authority—an argument well-known from Foucauldian (1977, 1980) interpretations of Benthamian panopticons to the perennially violent state at the heart of Agambenian (2000, 2005) understandings of sovereignty. Applied to postcolonial Africa, Werbner (1998a, 1998c) in particular has pointed out for Zimbabwe the political significance of the state's perpetual cultivation of statal and national *lieux de memoire* (Nora 1989) furnished with national cosmologies where inherent spirit-making and the invocation of divine support from national unknown dead (the grave of the unknown soldier) and the fathers of the nation (leading figures of the liberation movement) are prominent (see also Lan 1985; Fontein 2015a). The contradictions inherent in the state's celebration of national heritage sites devoted to past battles and present political purposes, often at odds with local understandings of these events and protagonists, have been explored well by Celso Inguane (2007) at heritage sites in southern Mozambique. These nationally and locally celebrated heritage sites continuously reconfigure and rescript time and space into national cosmologies that form repositories of symbolic and political capital to be used pragmatically by the wielders of statehood—in Mozambique the Frelimo party. More broadly, of course, the specific configurations of time and

space from Zimbabwe and Mozambique also exemplify the trope of the epic employed in narrating the nation (Bakhtin 1981, 1986), testify to the mystical foundation of state, and indicate the necessity of a cosmological undergirding of sovereign power. This latter point—far too often overlooked by political scientists preoccupied by attempts to locate political games of "strategems and spoils" (Bailey 1980 [1969]) or in portrayals of an Africa-wide "politics of the belly" (Bayart 1993)—is an important backdrop for understanding the various configurations of state, hereunder the flourishing of a state organ for dealing with spirits and sorcery such as AMETRAMO.

29. Crucial links between sovereignty, royal bodies and cosmology is also well-known outside Africa, as within a Hindu royal context treated, for instance, in Terje Oestigaard's (2005: 7–45) detailed analysis of how king sacrifice, cremation rites, and cosmologies are closely related within the Nepalese context and to the death of the country's last king, King Birendra.

30. Ripping open the belly of a killed rainmaker is also described by Seligman (1932: 293).

31. A similar analysis of *wei*—"breath" or "life"—is made by Schnepel (1991: 46–48) in his reanalysis of older material by Frazer, Seligman, Evans-Pritchard, and others on the Shilluk. The containment and correct treatment of *wei,* and its safe transference to the king's successor, he argues, is a key to the practice in the foundational myth of kingship of smothering or burying alive the king. See also de Heusch (1982b [1972]: 33) and Seligman and Seligman (1932: 91, 292) for cases of plugging the orifices of killed kings and rainmakers.

32. Simonse (1992: 383) exemplifies: "The Lulubo (and the Fajelu and the Nyang-bara) removed the leaves for plugging the body (*imuture*) before the grave [of the king] is closed and take them to a stream or to a cave in the mountain. The *imuture* is removed from the corpse by old men, preferably a sister's son to the deceased, and given to old women. These receive it kneeling in an attitude of intense respect. They carry it to the river or the cave in a solemn procession, kneeling at stations during the procession, their heads bent down and singing royal mourning songs (*owilara*) and they move their hands as if they were harvesting sorghum and millet."

33. The relations between the figure of the sovereign and fertility is, of course, well-known from a host of anthropological literature, including the classic analysis of the *Incwala* first fruit ceremony by Gluckman (1938). Further, Frazer, for instance, in his sweeping encyclopedic style, also includes the "Quiteve" king (building on Theal 1964 [1898]) in a summary of different African and non-African kingdoms in which the ideal of a king's unblemished body is vigorously guarded, and regicide or the king's suicide is expected if the ideal is breached (Frazer 1993 [1922]: 265–74). However, for an incisive critique of Frazer's style of reasoning and analysis relating to divine kingship, see Leach (2011), while Evans-Pritchard's (2011) critical engagement with Frazer remains more cautious.

34. A vision of an excess of power is also central to Mbembe's (2001) notion of the postcolonial state, and in his perspective its subjects are seen to connive and toy with power and its symbols.

35. Specifically, Taussig underlines similarities between national monuments in the form of statues and spirit possession (1997: 166): "A statue is a site for philosophical meditation, where force and image lock together. Spirit possession shares these properties of the statue." Describing how popular magical practices in terms of bodily posture, visions of the Liberator, violent potentialities, and the death at the center of sovereignty are all invoked and appropriated in rituals of spirit possession, Taussig argues how these reflect dimensions of statehood enshrined and ritualized in national memorials. Another example of such mirroring is in the case of the M-19 guerrilla movement stealing the Liberator's sword from a national museum in 1974 (1997: 189–95). Appropriating the sword from a sacred site of the state, the museum, was a revolutionary act seeking through the imaginary of the Liberator to recast the nation by appropriation and redefinition of a key state fetish. As such, the sword-taking, a potent symbol of state sovereignty, challenges key magical workings of the state and its sovereign symbols.

36. This point is argued in Deleuze's (2006 [1975]: 66) highly accessible *Two Regimes of Madness* and summed up in a quote celebrating the potentiality of escape from arborescent structures: "The secret is to become invisible and to make a rhizome without putting down roots."

37. An aspect not pursued here but worth mentioning is Tilly's (1985: 171) relevant argument about the state, protection and threats: "To the extent that the threats against which a given government protects are imaginary or are consequences of its own activities, the government has organized a protection racket." The AMETRAMO case seemingly both supports as well as challenges Tilly's assumption about "imaginary threats," as the state here is embroiled in dynamics both external and internal to its workings—the borders between the two being highly negotiable, contextual, and, for analytical purposes, almost indistinguishable. However, by leaving the politics of "obscurantism" behind through forming AMETRAMO to engage sorcerers on different planes, the state is increasingly locked in and integral to dynamics in which it has less and less control.