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Mozambique's "Land Grab": Exploring Approaches to Elite Policymaking and Neoliberal Reform

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Introduction

South Korea's Daewoo Logistics, using no discretion, announced its successful acquisition of 1.3 million hectares of farmland in Madagascar three years ago. One-half of the island nation's arable land was up for negotiation. Hypothetically, Daewoo could export all produce from the ambitious maize and palm oil plantations and import all personnel, as Malagasy investment laws stipulated no labor requirements.[1] With few taxable strings attached, meager job creation prospects for the Malagasy people and virtually no rental terms, the announcement of the 99-year lease stirred public outrage and proved consequential in the ousting of President Marc Ravalomanana in 2009. A Wikileaks cable disclosed the flustered attempt by the Malagasy Ministry of Foreign Affairs to deny the transaction, stating that the deal was not yet approved, nor had it moved past the first stage of "land prospecting."[2] Nevertheless, the swift *coup d'etat* followed after 130 people were killed during violent protests organized by an opposition party. Later findings, unexamined by news headlines, suggest that the "Daewoo affair" was an unseemly outgrowth of Ravalomanana's previous efforts to liberalize trade and position his own companies to reap the benefits in critical sectors.[3]

This phenomenon is not uncommon. Daewoo's notorious failure in Madagascar did not halt the successful, worldwide transfer of 45 million hectares of land to foreign investors by early 2011.[4] This paper addresses the global "land grab" issue exclusively in

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[1] Explained in greater detail in: "Marc the medici? The failure of a new form of neopatrimonial rule in Madagascar," by R. Marcus, 2010, *Political Science Quarterly,* 125, p. 111-131. Various news agencies also reported on the acquisition. See: "Daewoo to pay nothing for vast land acquisition," S. Jung-a, C. Oliver, & T. Burgis, 20 November 2008, *Financial Times.* Retrieved from: http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/b0099666-b6a4-11dd-89dd-0000779fd18c.html#axzz1gUPqYJk9

[2] For a link to the cable leak, go here: http://farmlandgrab.org/post/view/19168

[3] Marcus, "Neopatrimonial rule in Madagascar," 2010.

[4] "The politics of agrofuels and mega-land and water deals: insights from the ProCana case, Mozambique," S. M. Borras Jr, D. Fig, & S. M. Suarez, 2011, *Review of African Political Economy,* 38, p. 215-234.

relation to Africa, where over two-thirds of these mega-land deals transpire.[5] Foreign investments in African commercial agriculture are commonly discussed within the framework of neo-colonialism or, conversely, in prescriptions offered to investors by international organizations with attempts to make the investments more "responsible".[6] While bringing into focus both the investors and global trends driving the surge in commercial appetite for African farmland, popular narratives pay little attention to the host government's policies and role in facilitating the investments and expropriation of peasant land. This concern is central to my research question: why do African ruling elites choose policies that promote these investments?

In this paper, I contend that shifting the discussion would better shed light on the relationship between current investment trends and neoliberal reforms in Africa, without condemning foreign investment altogether or further polarizing international debates on the matter. To be more precise, in highlighting the role of the state, we will better understand both the real implications of "land grabbing" for African societies and how the pursuit of investment and related reforms fit into everyday state practices – that is, the very ways that governance is orchestrated in African states along local, global, formal, and informal lines. Determining the relative influence of external actors and organizations in shaping these practices requires an analysis of two approaches that will be explored in this paper: the externalist approach and the neo-patrimonial approach. I hypothesize that the project of Frelimo elites cannot be fully captured by the externalist approach and that the party instead makes deliberate use of these reforms as a tactic to

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[5] "Vast bio-fuel demand drives 'land grabs'", 28 February 2011, *America: Signs of the Times.*

[6] Among them: "Principles for responsible agricultural investment that respects rights, livelihoods, and resources," World Bank, 2010, Washington DC; *Land grab or development opportunity? Agricultural investment and international land deals in Africa*, L. Cotula, S. Vermeulen, R. Leonard, & J. Keeley, 2009, London: IIED, FAO, IFAD.

manage and control a network of domestic actors while maintaining the flow of external resources into a reorganized clientelist system – what Foucault called "governmentality" and what Bayart termed "extraversion".[7] Ruling elite factions happily employ certain neoliberal reforms, such as removing investment regulations, capital restrictions, and "inefficient" social service programs or state functions. These are but a series of practices that sustain financial support from IFIs/aid donors and paradoxically centralize party-state control over the economy, the political system, and access to socioeconomic mobility.

Layout of the paper

In the first section, I describe in greater depth the trends and actors driving the global land rush and the implications this wave of investments may have for African economies and citizens. A continental overview will be followed by current debates on the "land grab" question and a brief account of mega-land deals in Mozambique. The second section will review scholarly literature concerned with neoliberalism, economic reform across Africa, and theories on elite policymaking. This will introduce the two debates, as well as current work that transcends both approaches. Theory will then be supplemented by a third section recounting the historical shift of Mozambique's ruling party from socialist, one-party rule through a series of liberal reforms and brief stint as a multiparty democracy, followed by the return to a single party-state system. Both the history of reform and contradictory trends in current reforms (e.g. reversal of democratic reforms) will be discussed in regards to the externalist approach (where neocolonial

[7] "Governmentality" is briefly discussed in "The political economy of global neoliberal governance," M. De Angelis, 2005, in *Review (Fernand Braudel Center),* 28, p. 229-257. Gillian Hart expands the definition as "strategic interventions exercised delicately and at a distance to transform citizens into consumers and entrepreneurial subjects who will take responsibility for themselves," when describing neoliberalism in South Africa. (2008; pg. 689).

adherents would fall) and the neopatrimonial approach. External factors that hastened the transition to a post-socialist Mozambique in the 1980s and 1990s continue to influence the regime as it now expeditiously implements neoliberal reforms, but the degree has changed. I will then also apply the two hypotheses to current reforms to land and investment laws. Next, I will test the "externalist hypothesis" using measures of foreign aid flows, loans, and conditionality to determine continued foreign influence on policymaking. This will be followed by tests of the "neo-patrimonial" hypothesis, hearkening back to previous reform processes, interviews, NGO activity within Mozambique, and an inspection of how farmland has been leased to foreign investors. Both approaches will be evaluated and compared in relation to the findings and my thesis. In the final section, I will relate my findings to future research imperatives for analyzing neoliberal projects and foreign investment in other African states and what effects these studies will have on scholarly and policy-related discussions of Africa's "place" in the wider world.

Foreign commercial agriculture is an important topic to consider in current discussions about the African political economy. Foreign investment in this sector has become an integral part of current economic policymaking strategies among African ruling elites, albeit in an unprecedented fashion. For instance, governments have extended liberalization beyond improving conditions for investment to encompass sweeping reforms governing the rights and access to land. Consider Ethiopia and Mozambique, where foreign land leases were legalized in 1996 and 1997 respectively. Popular journalistic and activist accounts hold that land conflicts and other socioeconomic consequences for rural communities are precipitated by the external imposition of interests and reforms, an updated neo-colonialism. However, this approach gives only piecemeal attention to the current role of ruling elites and therefore does not fully recognize the inconsistencies of these reforms and state policymaking gestures that alone impede potential development opportunities foreign investment might otherwise bring. Neoliberal reforms have often been unevenly applied, though wholly encouraged by donors, the World Bank, and the IMF. Unsurprisingly, the bulk of academic literature analyzing African neoliberal reforms during the past few decades deplore the chilling effects of the neoliberal model on state institutions, economies, societies, and development. Given the troubling history and current public outcry in various African civil societies, the tenacious return to neoliberal reform *now* is perplexing, if we take "neocolonialism" as our vantage point. With that in mind, exploring why African states actively pursue large-scale foreign agricultural investments and broader neoliberal reforms bears upon questions of state practices, autonomy, and foreign influences in the current reform era. Again, these questions are inevitably tied up with current insights into *what* African governance or the African state looks like.

As many large-scale projects fail to pan out and investors close operations or withdraw completely, their very character reveals that Mozambique's neoliberal turn is in actuality, only partial and asymmetrical. In this way, the neo-patrimonial approach may better capture how the African state navigates reform while under some influence from external forces. However, like the dominant parties of other African states, in Mozambique there are clearly separate "factions" of Frelimo and it is unfair to surmise that elite orientations are homogenous. Though there is a dominant and identifiable "predatory group", there is also a faction genuinely working for development ends. This differentiation is also emphasized by Fairbairn (2011) and Buur et. al (2011) who conducted extensive interviews within the country. Unlike other African states, Frelimo has enjoyed its position as a one-party state since independence in 1975 and has created a patronage system first beholden to urban support from middle classes, support which has recently eroded. Scholars have pointed to a shift in Frelimo's support base, as the party increasingly favors a domestic capitalist class and foreign investors.[8] What emerges is a "neoliberal" non-governmental state in which access to state structures is still crucial but the state simultaneously withdraws from traditional functions (developmentalist work and social policies), outsourcing these functions to NGOs or private companies. This "neoliberal governmentality" involves a complex constellation of influences that is insufficiently accounted for in the externalist approach.

Snatched? An overview of global land grabbing

Universal crises involving food and energy security have coalesced to instigate a unique shift in strategy amongst governments and transnational firms to buy or lease fertile land in the developing world. The competition for preferential access to land is unprecedented. It is estimated that 15-20 million hectares of farmland in developing nations changed hands between 2006 and 2009.[9] Liken these figures to World Bank estimates in late 2010, which totaled 45 million, and now 80 million total hectares projected in 2011, and the escalating trend of these "mega-land deals" is striking.[10] Whether driven by profit, or a means to bypass the volatile global market for food prices

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[8] J. Sumich, "Politics after the time of hunger," 2008, p. 333-334; J. Sumich, "Frelimo and social stratification," 2010; J. Hanlon, "Renewed land debate," 2004.

[9] L. Cotula, S. Vermeulen, & J. Keeley, *Land grab or development opportunity?: agricultural investment and international land deals in Africa,* 2009.

[10] Borras et al, 2011, "Politics of agrofuels and mega-land and water deals," 215-234; Deininger, K. and D. Byerlee with J. Lindsay, A. Norton, H. Selod, & M. Stickler, 2010, *Rising global interest in farmland: can it yield sustainable and equitable benefits?*; *The Economist,* 5 May 2011, "Evidence is piling up against acquisitions of farmland in poor countries." Retrieved from http://africanliberty.org/node/1173.

and supply, or perhaps to seek viable avenues for bio-fuels production, these actors intend to grow and export crops on suitable soil – and predominantly African soil.[11]

Borras and Franco describe land grabbing as the "catch-all phrase to refer to the current explosion of (trans)national commercial land transactions mainly revolving around the production and export of food, animal feed, biofuels, timber, and minerals."[12] Governments and sovereign wealth funds from China, India, Saudi Arabia, and South Korea (among others) are also predominant actors; these regions are facing the intertwined crises of spikes in global food prices, population booms, desertification, and burgeoning middle classes demanding a diversified diet. Securing farmland in the developing world, where land is perceived as "underutilized", cheap, and abundant, is a new if controversial strategy for attaining food security. If the era of low global prices for grains is over, states with a well-developed agricultural sector and little land pressure are in an envious position for maintaining domestic stability; indeed a report released by the World Bank in June 2010 announced that 44 million people have been pushed into poverty due to the global price spikes.[13] Because the growing interest spans both food concerns and programs in Western Europe to cut carbon emissions and pursue alternative fuels, more cultivated land has also been diverted from food crops to biofuels. The United States, historically serving as the world's emergency reserve for grain, has been converting millions of tons of grain (now over ¼ of total harvest) into ethanol every year. If it becomes increasingly profitable to convert grain into fuel, the price of grain may rise

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[11] Over 60% of allocations took place in African states; in 2011 this totals approximately 48 million hectares alone in Africa. This figure appeared in "Vast bio-fuel demand drives 'land grabs'" in *America: Signs of the Times* (28 February 2011).
[12] S. M. Borras Jr & J. Franco, "Global land grabbing and trajectories of agrarian change: a preliminary analysis," 2011, *Journal of Agrarian Change,* 12: 34-59.
[13] "Let them eat bread: how food subsidies prevent (and provoke) revolutions in the Middle East," A. Ciezadlo, 23 March 2011, *Foreign Affairs.* Retrieved from: http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67672/annia-ciezadlo/let-them-eat-bread.

to match fluctuations in oil prices. Speculative demand for land then, is in part a consequence of the newly lucrative biofuels industry.

Perceptions of abundant cheap land, few overhead costs, and little government regulation have led to many ambitious and controversial deals or “land grabs”. While certain high-profile acquisitions have failed, these blunders have not short-circuited the approval of hundreds of other projects. This trend is by no means decreasing; nor has the scale of these individual projects been tempered. Daewoo’s attempt to lease 1.3 million hectares for 99 years to produce corn and palm oil and the ousting of the Malagasy president that followed was an isolated but powerful incident. Some governments will cancel deals where companies do not develop the land according to an agreed timeline; other projects may be downsized. Karuturi Global Ltd, an Indian firm, successfully secured 300,000 ha in the Gambella region of Ethiopia. But in May 2011, Ethiopia’s federal government reduced the allocation as agricultural ministers allegedly realized that a 1,160 square mile project is unmanageable.[14] Saudi Star has been more successful and plans to spend $2 billion acquiring 500,000 ha of land in the same country. Their newly erected greenhouses already supply wheat, rice, vegetables, and flowers for the Saudi market.[15] Other projects include “carbon credit” and timber farms– such as the Malonda Foundation’s 60,000 ha intended for eucalyptus and pine trees in the Niassa Province of Mozambique.[16] The array of actors from Western and non-Western states complicate the neo-colonial indictment.

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[14] “Ethiopian Government Slashes Karuturi Global Land Concession,” William Davison, 4 May 2011, *Business Week.* Retrieved from: http://www.businessweek.com/news/2011-05-04/ethiopian-government-slashes-karuturi-global-land-concession.html

[15] “How food and water are driving a 21st century land grab,” J. Vidal, 6 March 2010, *The Guardian.* Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/mar/07/food-water-africa-land-grab.

[16] *Lords of the land: preliminary analysis of the phenomenon of land grabbing in Mozambique,* N. Matavel & S. D. V. Cabanelas, 2011, Justiça Ambiental/UNAC: Maputo.

These projects are situated in states riddled with poverty and food insecurity. And though issues related to land tenure, rights, and access are still very controversial in most African states (where much of the land is state or community owned), large-scale agricultural investments are now actively endorsed by governments and facilitated by investment promotion agencies in these countries. [17] Moreover, and compounding domestic struggles in food production, many African governments don't seem terribly attentive to register their own communities in new demarcations, though some governments have been inclined to either partially or fully privatize state-owned land. For example, Ethiopia has avoided privatizing state-owned land but under the Derg reforms, ironically guarantees access to government-controlled leases for mostly foreign companies. On the one hand, most African states were previously reluctant to privatize land, not to mention leasing or selling it to foreign companies in a tense post-colonial era where doing so would look like the antithesis of independence and delegitimize the ruling party. On the other hand, not only is the history of neoliberal policymaking in Africa widely considered lamentable – as evidenced by innumerous academic accounts of African neoliberal "travails"[18] – but the global financial crisis seems to have compelled a global shift *away* from the Washington Consensus and post-Washington Consensus

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[17] Since the 1980s, "investment promotion agencies" or IPAs have been established and institutionalized in over 150 countries, a development encouraged in part by the UN and the IMF. We might say that the proliferation of these agencies reflects the competition amongst governments for FDI, though their role in investments varies across states. These centers serve as proxies for foreign investors, but more importantly, they often function as a state agency to monitor, screen, and restrict investment. Increasingly, they are used as a marketing mechanism to *attract* investment. If the role played by these IPAs has expanded in other states besides Mozambique - especially in regards to investments in farmland - there is little or no commentary by scholars on IPAs.

[18] "Economic faith, social project and a misreading of African society: the travails of neoliberalism in Africa," G. Harrison, 2005, *Third World Quarterly,* 26: 1303-1320.

towards a Beijing Consensus.[19] That is, state capitalism paired with regulation or restrictions on investment and the financial sector seem to be more widely preferred as policy options across the developing world and even in the EU.[20] Nevertheless, various African regimes are moving toward free-market policies that send a most fervent message to foreign investors and corporations: “We are open for business!” So paltry are the terms and tremendous the interest – “land grabbing” is but the newest manifestation driving and being driven by policymaking. But existing work on African politics and elite policymaking doesn’t seem content to discuss these issues strictly in terms of “rent-seeking.” What other frameworks have been offered?

Invoking a familiar stigma: neocolonialism?

Foreign, large-scale land acquisitions have led to a compelling accusation on the part of NGOs, civil society organizations, and international media: commercial agricultural investments (or “land grabs”) bespeak a new era of neo-colonialism. The neo-colonial thesis contends that former colonial powers and the international financial institutions under their control actively (if discreetly) continue to exploit former colonies, and that the skewed economic relationships characterized by colonial rule are left largely intact and consistently reproduced. This top-down phenomenon involves the

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[19] “Washington Consensus” refers to the set of neoliberal development policies promoted by the IMF and World Bank during the 1980s and 1990s, involving economic liberalization, privatization, export-led growth, and little government intervention in the economy. Some have argued that there has been a shift to a “Post-Washington Consensus”, or a move away from policy conditionality and toward a goal of poverty reduction and “country ownership” of policy-making. Nevertheless, the same neo-liberal policy package is unchanged, though there is new focus on governance and social policy. For more, see: “Toward an inclusive-neoliberal regime of development: from the Washington to the Post-Washington consensus,” A. Ruckert, 2006, *Labour, Capital, & Society,* 39: 34-67.

[20] The Beijing Consensus refers to the “Chinese economic growth model” widely defined as involving long-term strategies, greater government interference, corporate and bank allegiance to the government, and a more regulated market. Heads of State such as President Jacob Zuma have directly referred to the Chinese model of a “developmental state” as desirable where market forces alone may be insufficient for national goals of job creation and building infrastructure. See: http://mg.co.za/article/2012-02-03-zuma-adopts-chinese-model/

question of power imbalances between Western and non-Western governments as well as dependencies masked by the "trappings of international sovereignty" – where responsibility for developmental woes is ascribed to post-colonial governments, even as their political and economic systems are somewhat directed from the outside.[21] Foreign capital is thus understood to be used *not* for development, but for the exploitation of these less developed regions. Understood this way, "land grabbing" is an attempt by former colonial powers, their companies, and IFIS to *impose* policies on African states that allow for these investments and extraction of crops to transpire, under the banner of "development". Existing power imbalances leave African governments unable to negotiate the terms. Consequently, the static colonial relationship is maintained; African states remain exporters of raw materials – their land commodified, re-parceled. But neo-colonialism's applicability as an analytical and explanatory tool may not be very useful today if neoliberal reforms related to foreign agricultural investments are driven in large part by internal, local mechanisms and not simply imposed by external actors – be they investors, multinational corporations, or international financial institutions. Marking a stark departure from previous decades of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) imposed by aid donors and international financial institutions, the use of strictly "externalist" or "neocolonialist" accounts to explain the move towards neoliberalism in African states is insufficient to capture current realities.[22]

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[21] *Neo-colonialism, the last stage of imperialism,* K. Nkrumah, 1965.

[22] Recent scholarly work on farmland acquisitions and bio-fuels in Africa discuss the limits of the externalist account as well: "Indirect expropriation: the role of national institutions and domestic elites in the Mozambican farmland grab," M. Fairbairn, 2011 April 6-8, LDPI/Journal of Peasant Studies (presented at International Conference on Global Land Grabbing)*;* S. Borras et al, 2011, "Politics of agro-fuels in mega-land and water deal," 215-234.

"Development" and its discontents

FIAN International, GRAIN, and La Via Campesina (among others) represent small farmers and peasant communities across the developing world. These groups convened in the summer of 2011 to articulate the Dakar Appeal, which demands that all massive agribusiness land grabs be ceased and that mandatory guidelines for respecting peasants' rights to the land be established by the UN's World Food Security committee (CFS).[23] This appeal was then presented to the G20 Forum in France. Indeed, as African governments hand over parcels of land to foreign companies under the official banner of "development opportunities", allegations of villagers forcefully evicted from communal lands, left displaced and uncompensated, give credibility to the neo-colonial indictment.[24] In response to these ongoing accusations, a spate of reports were released by the World Bank, FAO, IFAD, and others to recognize the risks of these investments, provide data on various projects, and impart policy recommendations and conditions that would make these investments "work for development".[25] Pledging full-time jobs during consultations, recent surveys of the few projects actually running show little rural job creation. A World Bank report found one Mozambican project that initially promised 2,650 jobs was in actuality hiring only 35-40 workers.[26] Jobs may be seasonal and the location of the projects may spawn new trends in migratory labor. Given the outcry from civil society and unequal access to land tenure and credit, the acquisitions don't seem like

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[23] "G-20 agriculture: hundreds of organizations say STOP farmland grabbing!" 20 June 2011, *Food First: Institute for food and development policy,* retrieved from: http://www.foodfirst.org/en/land+grabs.

[24] See Al Jazeera's recent video release featuring the Ugandan case of 22,000 people allegedly forced from their land as UK's New Forest Company launches a 40,000 ha project. The video can be found here: http://english.aljazeera.net/video/africa/2011/09/2011922111515150690.html

[25] Deininger, K. et al, *Rising global interest in farmland,* 2010; L. S. Cotula, S. Vermeulen, R. Leonard, & J. Keeley, *Land grab or development opportunity,* 2009.

[26] Deininger, K. et al, *Rising global interest in farmland,* 2010; *The Economist,* 5 May 2011, "Evidence is piling up against acquisitions of farmland in poor countries." Retrieved from http://africanliberty.org/node/1173.

an "easy fit" for a sustainable *modus operandi* of national development. Lester Brown's commentary captures other limitations in sparking a culture for commercial agriculture in the developing world:

> It could take many years to realize any substantial production gains. The public infrastructure for modern market-oriented agriculture does not yet exist in most of Africa. In some countries it will take years just to build the roads and ports needed to bring in agricultural inputs such as fertilizer and to export farm products. Beyond that, modern agriculture requires its own infrastructure: machine sheds, grain-drying equipment, silos, fertilizer storage sheds, fuel storage facilities, equipment repair and maintenance services, well-drilling equipment, irrigation pumps, and energy to power the pumps.[27]

On the other hand, considering that these nations have suffered from decades of underinvestment, notable scholars, such as Paul Collier, lamented that watchdog organizations have dismissed the possibility of any benefit arising from these investments.[28] If not commercial agriculture, it is unclear what other promising channels are feasible that will reduce the dependence of African nations on foreign food aid and food imports. The romanticism associated with subsistence agriculture, African peasantry, and "self-sufficiency" is unlikely to prove –and hasn't proved – effective to eliminate poverty and malnourishment. Collier explains the inefficacy of smallholder techniques with the rising population of urban dwellers and urban slums; peasants seeking real wages in formal jobs have abandoned farming to head to the cities. Accelerating productivity by coordinating disparate smallholders is an unlikely strategy, though Collier does not go to great depths to explain why. But it's the very instance of these divergent positions that polarize the "land grab" debate that prompt us to ask critical questions about Africa's integration (or lack thereof) into the global economy, its

[27] "The new geopolitics of food," L. R. Brown, May/June 2012, *Foreign Policy.* Accessed from: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/04/25/the_new_geopolitics_of_food.
[28] "The politics of hunger: how illusion and greed fan the food crisis," P. Collier, 2010, *Foreign Affairs,* 87: 67-79.

status within that system, and the likelihood that increased foreign investment will bear fruit and for whom.

After the University of Sussex held an international conference on land grabbing earlier in April 2011, analyzing over 100 deals, experts seem to conclude that the "results are damning."[29] Because few states boast formal and transparent procedures that specify the rights and obligations of all parties involved and those that do often ignore longstanding laws on communal land tenure and use rights, its hardly unfathomable that the conference would reach such a bold conclusion. Yet as projects fail to develop or prospects disintegrate not long after investors acquire their land parcels, continued debates about whether or not to write off the investments don't seem quite *right* – and they don't seem to confront larger trends. The polemic atmosphere lingers, suggesting that new questions must be asked and more critical analysis undertaken. Though it is undeniable that the outlook for these investments is altogether rather bleak (both unlikely to take off due to problems of infrastructure and misperception of costs *and* likely to produce mixed results to the detriment of Africans), the trend begs for an explanation of *why* African ruling elites seem to be encouraging these investments within broader appeals for development. One might retort, point blank, "corruption!" and would sorely overlook how ruling elites justify their policies and negotiate their positions within market-inspired, neoliberal frameworks. It would also ignore the local and global intersections where strategies to encourage "land grabbing" are chosen.

From a Mozambican angle

In 2009, the Republic of Mozambique released the "National Biofuels Policy and Strategy", ironically mimicking the former Portuguese colonial administration by

[29]"Evidence is piling up against acquisitions of farmland in poor countries," 5 May 2011, *The Economist.* Retrieved from: http://www.economist.com/node/18648855.

encouraging farmers across the central and southern provinces to cultivate a single bio-fuel crop - jatropha. Unmatched by many Western governments, at first glance this policy move seems strikingly progressive for promoting alternative energy solutions. But unbeknownst to farmers at the time, jatropha hoards water that would otherwise be devoted to food crops. Moreover, its yields vary widely as the plant species have yet to be domesticated. Dismissing these complications, the plant was nevertheless "rediscovered" in 2005 as a low-emissive and cheap fuel alternative by energy research institutes in Japan and Indonesia, programs funded by car companies like Mitsubishi to honor the Kyoto Protocol.[30] Jatropha is one of the few biofuel crops that can be substituted for jet fuel and was identified by Goldman Sachs in 2007 as one of the best alternatives for diesel. Not long after this pronouncement, Mozambique was identified by the International Energy Agency as boasting one of the largest biofuels production potentials in Africa.[31] A new wave of interested investors from Western Europe and Canada took note, which in part spawned the Mozambican "land grab". As most of these products are not consumable by local markets and are wholly intended for export, it is unclear what benefits exist for its citizens, especially rural populations. This is but one crop of interest in Mozambique; others include sugarcane and maize.

At the outset, Mozambican elites spoke of "environmental protection" and "sustainable energy for domestic consumption" with optimistic, persuasive vigor. And farmers took to the fields, convinced that they would receive 10 meticals (1 met = 28 USD) for every kilogram of jatropha seed they produced. Recall that this is a country

[30] "Jatropha oil: a promising, clean alternative energy," Y. T. Suwarni, 2005 July 4, *The Jakarta Post.* Retrieved from *Energy Bulletin:* http://www.energybulletin.net/node/7114.

[31] *Biofuels, land access and rural livelihoods in Mozambique*, I. Nhantumbo & A. Salomao, 2010. Accessed from: http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/12563IIED.pdf

where 75% of the Mozambican population engages in subsistence farming and 35% of all households suffer from chronic food insecurity.[32] Outsourcing biofuels production to a developing country where the prospects for job creation and rural development are dubious has placed Mozambique among the countries under heavy scrutiny from NGOs that seek to protect the rural peasantry from the whims of investors.

By the end of 2009 and among sub-Saharan African states, Mozambique was second only to Sudan in the number of total hectares allocated, before the government froze all mega-land lease approvals pending the current Agricultural Zoning Process in 2010.[33] Between 2006 and 2009, over 2.67 million hectares of land, or 405 documented projects, were leased to investors in a country where all land is nationalized.[34] As Mozambique features prominently among states encouraging foreign large-scale investments and because the state was determinedly socialist following the immediate years of independence from Portuguese colonialism, it makes for a particularly curious case with regards to neoliberal reforms. Furthermore, the ruling party Frelimo was essentially forced (in desperation) to abandon its Stalinist-Leninist platform for Western aid and liberal reform during a brutal 16-year-long civil war. Upon first glance, the country's experience with externally imposed structural adjustment and the government's enduring dependence on aid donors for over 50% of its annual budget may give weight to the neo-colonial thesis. But Mozambique's unique experience with colonialism and its history as a Third World post-revolutionary regime suggests otherwise, as does the way

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[32] "Indirect expropriation," M. Fairbairn, 2011.
[33] "Understanding land investment deals in Africa: Country Report – Mozambique, " The Oakland Institute, 2011, p. 5. Also confirmed in a personal interview with the Economic Minister of Agriculture, Victorino Xavier, in which he also suggested that many more projects are awaiting negotiation and the government intends to continue with large-scale leases.
[34] *Rising global interest in farmland*, K Deininger, et al., 2010; "Indirect expropriation," M. Fairbairn, 2011.

in which current investments and reforms are being conducted. A deep-seated socialist ideological platform long upheld by “old vanguard” elites in ministerial positions today seems equally likely to affect the ruling party’s will to transition fully to a free market economy, which also complicates the neocolonial approach. Likewise, because neopatrimonial adherents hold that all African states are virtually indistinguishable in their statecraft; past or present ideological tensions within the ruling party – or whether the state’s experience is post-communist- are rendered inconsequential.

After reviewing the existing literature on neoliberalism in Africa, I will analyze how Mozambique’s 1997 Land Law and its degree of political and economic liberalization in general engender a more complex understanding of elite policymaking as tied up with the workings and worldwide diffusion of free market globalization. Current narratives would do well to incorporate how social actors (beyond states, companies, and IGOs) feature within a global economy that simultaneously centralizes control within state governments while rendering governments obsolete. “Land grabbing” is but a new site where issues of state-building come back to the fore and where governments use “free market” policies to reconstruct social, public, and private space and remake the means for accumulation and privilege.

Literature on (neo)liberal governance in Africa

Recent scholarship on governance and policymaking in Africa consistently employs neoliberalism to identify the forces that drive decision-making and reforms. Within the range of approaches experts have devised to explain African policymakers’ choices related to economic liberalization, generally one or both of these overarching axioms can be identified: the externalist approach or the agency approach. “Externalists” generally conceive of changes related to liberalization as directed from the outside, the most glaring example being the IMF and World Bank's imposition of structural adjustments programs (SAPs) in the 1980s as a condition of debt-restructuring. Thus changes to policymaking would be directly associated with external pressure from donor agencies, IFIs, and even various organs of the UN; African governments are perceived to have little control over their own social and economic policies – even today. Included in this camp are Marxists, dependency theorists, and most adherents to post-colonial literature. Conversely, the "agency approach" stresses the autonomy of African leaders in making decisions, and would relate changes to policymaking to the political interests of the state as well as the interests of influential groups within the regime's support base. These "agency" theorists typically accentuate the declining influence of external agents, instead alluding to an altogether new structure of political constraints and opportunities that has emerged within the current global political economy. As this structure affords elites greater power in pursuing their own policy agendas, outright intervention by foreign agents is minimal.

This binary opposition is admittedly problematic, like that of the structure-agent debate, because "agency" adherents are quick to acknowledge that chronic conditions of dependency *do* persist but stress the role of elites in maintaining those conditions. First and foremost, this particular debate in Africa takes as its starting point the framework of neoliberalism, which began and largely remains the model for development today. There are problems in identifying Africa's experience with neoliberalism as unique from other regions or the rest of the world (an African exceptionalism), and deserving of exclusive study and theoretical analysis. Patron-client relations are not unique to Africa. Yet this regional and sometimes continental focus is dominant among scholars and useful for the purposes of this paper.

Neoliberalism: an ever-elusive but powerful paradigm

Neoliberalism was also central to the critiques of interviewees from NGOs and the farmer's organization UNAC whom I talked to while in Mozambique. The proliferation of conceptual schemes used to define or evaluate neoliberalism is nearly dizzying. As the concept grew popular in various American and British universities and later as a policy package put forth in the Washington Consensus, it then stirred more stigmatized commentary on state anomalies stemming from decades of these policies - especially following their heavy-handed imposition during the 1980s. For instance, recent research identifies current African manifestations of neoliberalism as "antipolitics" (Buscher), hegemony resulting from the colonization of discourse (Adesina 2004; Peet; Ayers), a national or universalized "social engineering project" (Hart 2008 ;Harrison); and as market-based governmentality (Ferguson 2010; de Angelis). Others focus their critique on the effects of adjustment on state capacity (Oya; Matanga 2010) or the ways in which the African state has become a mouthpiece for global economic forces (Soderbaum; Taylor 2003). Similarly, where the term has been conflated with the notion of economic globalization, others associate African neoliberalism with the worldwide spread of a right-wing art of government and the demise of Keynesianism and the "developmentalist state" in the postwar era (Nasong'o 2004; Sassen 2010).[35] Some Constructivists call this seemingly uncontested hegemony and spread of market reforms the "neoliberal norm" or to put it another way, the new "common sense" (Chwieroth).[36]

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[35] "Toward a left art of government: from 'Foucauldian critique' to Foucauldian politics," J. Ferguson, 2011, *History of the Human Sciences, 24: 61-68.*

[36] Adesina, 2004, pg. 129. Chwieroth implies this in his research as well.

It's easy to get lost in the commotion. Nevertheless, as the concept has expanded from macroeconomic fundamentals (or straightforward policy prescription) to an adjective used to describe reconstructed governance institutions and the African state itself, scholars have collectively deplored the heterogeneous outcomes of these policy orientations – most notably the "complex and diverse experiences" in sub-Saharan Africa.[37] In this section, I will explore the history of neoliberalism and its uses, so to delineate which permutation is appropriate to employ with regards to current policy shifts in Mozambique accompanying mounting interest in the country's fertile land.

To start, we will trace the trajectory of the concept. The reshaping of neoliberalism over time is concurrent with shifts in scholars' understandings of political agency in Africa. A founding premise precluding the rise of neoliberal orthodoxy is that free trade, private property rights, and unfettered markets lead to a richer and more tolerant world. Furthermore, it was assumed that through the cooperation of states to maintain international economic organizations (founded on these very principles), these axioms would be spread worldwide.[38] The WTO is but one forum where state policymakers attempt to hold each other accountable to free trade agreements. But there occurred a gradual and important departure from the mainstream liberal discourse, which guided the creation of the Bretton Woods institutions in the late 1940s. "Embedded liberalism" in the immediate postwar era held that state intervention in the economy was necessary at times to support both national security and global stability, and indeed most newly independent Third World states pursued development within the rubric of import

[37] "The travails of neoliberalism in Africa,"G. Harrison, 2005, p. 1303.
[38] "Contemporary mainstream approaches: neo-realism and neo-liberalism," S. L. Lamy, 2008, in *The globalization of world politics: an introduction to international relations,* p. 131. Eds. J. Baylis, S. Smith, & P. Owens. Oxford: New York.

substitution industrialization. Colossal increases in capital flows and "petrodollars" allowed African states to borrow heavily in the 1970s and "embedded liberalism" fell away as the aftermath of massive oil price hikes in 1979 led to equally massive rises in the interest rates on loans that African governments were unable to pay back. Balance of payments deficits and spiraling debt was blamed on the state-heavy approach to development, and so it was that the "structural adjustment era" began and neoliberal orthodoxy was gradually outlined throughout.[39] Market triumphalism would further embed the neoliberal paradigm with the fall of the Soviet Union and what Fukuyama dubbed the "end of history" in 1989 – referring to the alleged end of competition between ideologies, giving way to the task and problematique of extending democratic and economic liberalism worldwide.[40] Widespread consensus on the unfailing robustness of these policies awarded the doctrine unmatched credibility, a phenomenon that intrigues scholars even today:

> The differences that remained among neoclassical economists were one of degree rather than kind. Debates persisted within the profession about the importance of the pace and sequencing of liberalization, but not of its long-run desirability…Remarkably, this neoliberal consensus developed in the absence of unambiguous evidence confirming the benefits of liberalization and persisted until the Asian financial crisis.[41]

Adesina would add that this consensus engendered an unprecedented "shrinking of policy space", which contrasted what maneuvering room developing governments enjoyed during the 60s and 70s.[42] Released by the World Bank in 1981, The Berg Report on development in Sub-Saharan Africa emerged concurrently with mounting popular regard

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[39] S. Nasong'o, 2004, "From political dictatorship to authoritarian economism: plural politics and free market reforms in Africa," *Journal of Third World Studies,* 21: pg. 107.
[40] R. Peet, 2002, "Ideology, discourse, and the geography of hegemony: from socialist to neoliberal development in postapartheid South Africa," *Antipode,* 34: pg. 63
[41] J. Chwieroth, 2007, "Neoliberal economists and capital account liberalization in emerging markets," *International Organization,* 61: p. 448.
[42] J. Adesina, 2009, Social policy in sub-Saharan Africa: a glance in the rear-view mirror," *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 18: p. S39.

in Western media that cajoled these policies as the sure route for underdeveloped countries to join the global economy.[43] At the outset of the 1980s, this unanimity pervaded development policy debates between the World Bank, IMF, and various UN institutions. Where the indebted African postcolonial state was concerned, it was deemed that market mechanisms were more efficient than state institutions in allocating resources and delivering services, especially as African government intervention was believed to be irreconcilably beholden to “rent-seeking, technological backwardness, and resource misallocation.”[44]

The adjustment and post-adjustment era

Structural adjustment can then be understood as one of the early fragments of African neoliberalism. It refers to the country-by-country intervention made on behalf of the World Bank and the IMF in the 1980s to prevent developing states from defaulting on their loans and to ensure repayment to the teetering international banking system in two forms: writing off or rescheduling the debt of countries that adopted market-oriented strategies. Among experts, it was believed that shifting to an export-oriented economy would incur the foreign exchange reserves necessary for these states to repay the debt.[45] Turning strictly to neoclassical economics, a system of policy recommendations was then doled out indiscriminately to countries, a package that became known (later, pejoratively) as the “Washington Consensus.” Standard policy imperatives include measures to “reduce inflation, government expenditure, and the role of the government in the

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[43] Peet, 2002, p. 64.
[44] C. Oya, 2007, “Agricultural maladjustment in Africa: what have we learned after two decades of liberalization?”*Journal of Contemporary African Studies,* 25: pg. 276.
[45] C. Thomas, 2008, “Poverty, development, and hunger,” in *The globalization of world politics: an introduction to international relations.* Eds. J. Baylis, S. Smith, & P. Owens. Oxford: New York. Pg. 475.

economy, including trade liberalization, privatization, and deregulation."[46] The public sector was to be compressed and reduced to make way for foreign investment and export-oriented growth. Later criticized for its narrow applications, adverse socioeconomic repercussions, and its dismissal of the social relations that constitute and determine how a "liberal market" works, it is also interesting to note that total African debt amounted to $14.2 billion in 1974 and actually *increased* to over $150 billion by 1992.[47] Though structural adjustment was intended to help African states *reduce* and pay back debt, governments during the era of adjustment became further and chronically indebted to the World Bank and IMF, the very institutions that imposed these policies. The removal of food subsidies that coincided with a contraction of government health and education spending would mire the urban poor, rural farmers, and other disadvantaged groups especially in relation to adult literacy rates and mortality rates. Instead of bringing Africa in line with the "global model", in 2001 Africa claimed only 1.1% of global GDP, 0.6% of global foreign direct investment, and its average GNP per capita shrank 92% between 1970 and 1998.[48] Average growth rates in sub-Saharan African states actively "adjusting" dropped to an average 3.5%, revealing that the region was falling far behind adjusting states elsewhere, a reality admitted by the World Bank in 1994.[49]

Policies that were intended to correct what was surely a significant degree of inefficiency and corruption on the part of state institutions was arguably a drastic

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[46] N. Woods, 2008, "International political economy in the age of globalization," in *The globalization of world politics: an introduction to international relations.* Eds. J. Baylis, S. Smith, & P. Owens. Oxford: New York. Pg. 247. Nasang'o (2004) offers another helpful list of policy imperatives: "reduction of the size of the public sector, deregulation of the international trade regime, elimination of public subsidies, greater reliance on markets for resource allocation, and general reductions in government spending on social programs such as education and health," pg. 115.

[47] Nasong'o, 2004, pg. 116.

[48] Figures cited by Ferguson (2006, pg. 9) from Van de Walle (2001) and Arrighi (2002).

[49] A. Gordon, 2009, "The World Bank and Ghana's poverty reduction strategies: strengthening the state or consolidating neoliberalism?" *Labour, Capital, and Society,* 42: 82-115.

wresting of sovereignty and what Ferguson describes as "governance from afar".[50] Compounding issues of debt is the degree to which African states became dependent on donors to finance a substantial chunk of their state budgets – even countries that were labeled by the IMF as "adjustment success stories". In 2000, two such success stories, Ghana and Uganda, depended on foreign aid for 98% and 76% of their budgets, respectively.[51] International financial institutions, reflecting on the catastrophe of structural adjustment in the 1980s, formulated a new strategy for the 1990s focused not on "getting prices right" but on "getting governance right." The shift to promoting democratic governance at first seems strikingly different from the Washington Consensus, but in reality only reinforced the same policy prescriptions and extended neoclassical logic to the political sphere.

Rolling back while rolling out

The Post-Washington Consensus was developed to incorporate the "social" by focusing on good governance and democratization in order to better correct for "market imperfections."[52] During this era, many African states initiated multi-party elections and the World Bank applauded democratic reforms, transparency, and accountability as irreplaceable preconditions for economic development. In effect, the economic pitfalls of the 1980s were directly and solely associated with the "extensive personalization of power, widespread corruption, denial of fundamental human rights, and the prevalence of unelected and unaccountable governments" in African states.[53] Pro-poor policies and improvements to the investment climate went hand-in-hand, though the IMF and World

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50 Ferguson, 2006, pg. 100.
51 Adesina, 2004, pg. 140.
52 Aptly described by P. Griffin, 2010, "Gender, governance, and the global economy," *Australian Journal of International Affairs,* 64: p. 93.
53 Nasong'o, 2004, pg. 109.

Bank wanted these efforts to be provided for not by governments but by NGOs through the widening of "civil society". The 1990s marked the extension of the neoliberal doctrine from sole economic core considerations to include and transform the very fabric of the "social", beginning with state institutions. Where the SAPs of the '80s had led to a retrenchment and "rolling back" of state functions and capacity, the post-Washington Consensus of the 1990s aimed to rebuild state capacity and "roll out" a new state that was more technocratic, a public sector that was managed and operated in a business manner, and programs based on incentives and output with the explicit goal to tackle poverty.[54] And so it was that the "commercial principle" was inscribed into every realm of traditional state functions and service delivery, not limited to health, education, social security, sanitation, basic infrastructure, and even "pro-poor" programs.[55]

Though this latter "Consensus" is less orthodox, ambitious, and concerns itself with interrelated issues of governance and poverty, most of the principles are vague and can be reduced to the mere continuance both of strict economic liberalization and a boost to the flow of loans, aid, and NGOs to cover what the private sector will not. Moreover, the current state of affairs seem to suggest that both adjustment eras eroded central state capacity and, contrary to one of its stated objectives, led to *increased* corruption, rent-seeking, and greater inequality and marginalization for the majority of Africans.[56] Richard Sandbrook is most concise in summing up the concerns of most scholars toward the dual adjustment era:

> The report (Post-Washington Consensus) largely ignores or underplays the socio-political realities that will shape the success of this ambitious enterprise. Nor does it analyze several difficult dilemmas and trade-offs that will ensue. Unleashing entrepreneurship in

[54] Harrison, 2005, pg. 1309
[55] Adesina, 2004, pg. 129
[56] J. Ferguson, 2006, Pg. 11.

> Africa – extending the sway of market exchange, in other words – involves nothing less than a Great Transformation in countries where, for many people, economic behavior is governed by the institutions of redistribution and/or reciprocity rather than (or in addition to) market exchange.[57]

Derived from a deductive model, neoliberal policies from the outset are not great predictors of what they set forth to accomplish. In the case of Africa, experts across the board have illustrated how the adjustments actually moved Africa in a direction that "separates it further from the rest of the world," giving us due reason to study African neoliberalism as a separate analytical category.[58] While it is unclear whether or not African states have truly entered a post-Washington Consensus era, conditions for policymaking have changed. We can draw three conclusions from these two "waves" of neoliberal restructuring: First, throughout the post-colonial era, economic restructuring has not transformed or altered Africa's role as a provider of raw materials to the global economy.[59] While still exporting cash crops, now there is a quasi-privatized market for farmland. Second, it is necessary to have a historically embedded conception of neoliberalism to begin to understand how related reforms remain imposed but also wielded by African state policymakers. Third, scholars have long discussed the effects of structural adjustment and neoliberalism in Africa and most accounts condemn these policies. While the current African "state" is itself an effect of neoliberal adjustments (as are trends in policymaking), scholars diverge in their analysis of how "strong" or "weak" the African state is while contributing different theories about the current pursuit of reforms. The next section will compare specific scholars' accounts of *why* neoliberal policies are still pursued, recalling the externalist and agency approaches discussed

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[57] Sandbrook, R., 2005, "Africa's great transformation?" *The Journal of Development Studies,* 41: pg. 1120.
[58] Chabal, P., 2005, "Area studies and comparative politics: Africa in context," *Africa Spectrum,* 40: pg. 471.
[59] Ferguson, 2006, pg. 8.

previously. Overall, how scholars interpret reforms in Africa will likely relate to their interpretation of elite politics in Africa. In analyzing why elites may pursue neoliberal reforms, I suggest that the "neopatrimonial approach" is most accurate – and that aid flows and conditionality have little impact on the decisions of elite policymakers.

Competing Explanations for Neoliberal Reform

Externalists

Scholars in the externalist cadre usually appropriate a "weak state" thesis to explain both the imposition of policies and African dependency on foreign largesse. Shadrack W. Nasang'o, while reviewing four decades of political and economic liberal reforms across African states, concludes that dictatorship has left the political realm for the economic realm, and equates new forms of authoritarian economism with external encumbrance. While states require more loans and debt rescheduling, IFIs use their "potent (financial) wherewithal to force their shock therapy measures on unwilling but vulnerable states."[60] His argument draws heavily from international agreements made in the 1990s on the rights of MNCs and banks, the entrenchment of trade liberalization norms in the WTO, and figures of debt and unemployment on the African continent. Similarly, Frank K. Matanga also emphasizes the African state's reduced capacity to govern; state leaders must continually acquiesce to adjustment conditions to contain their debt crises. However, Matanga focuses his somewhat vague analysis on the growth of NGO activity – organizations that have increasingly taken over basic social service provision - and suggests that where greater numbers of NGOs are operating in a state, their activities are a reflection of weak state capacity to meet the basic needs of its people.[61] Matanga challenges the popular perception that NGOs are "good", autonomous,

[60] Nasang'o, 2004, pg. 118.
[61] Matanga, 2010, p. 114-115.

accountable, and representative of civil society; instead, he surmises that NGOs are but an appendage of externally imposed anti-state development programs.[62] Ferguson likewise commented on the range of NGOs funded by Western agencies to sponsor neoliberal interventions and bypass uncooperative governments, revealing that NGOS may be less “non-governmental” than they would like to let off.[63] However, the roles of NGOs vary substantially and it would be misleading to group them together with other external institutions such as the World Bank.

A similar “weak state thesis” was advanced by Gyimah-Brempong and Asiedu to explain state policymaking in response to the declining flow of external aid, while making a case for the positive effects of investment liberalization on employment and FDI.[64] Because net development assistance to sub-Saharan Africa had fallen by 41% between 1990 and 2001, financially unstable governments are purportedly turning to foreign investment (and capital account liberalization) to fill the “resource gap” left by aid organizations pulling out.[65] Though their explanation is seemingly logical and compelling (certainly worth testing), the trend upon which their analysis rests is obsolete and not entirely useful today. According to the OECD, official development aid (ODA) to sub-Saharan Africa actually surpassed historic records in 2010 - $26.5 billion.[66] The figure in 1990 was only $17 billion. Furthermore, while Nasang’o and Matanga’s analyses are historically grounded, they do not draw from current trends, case studies, or

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[62] Matanga, 2010, pg. 117.
[63] Ferguson, 2006, pg. 101-102.
[64] K. Gyimah-Brempong and E. Asiedu, 2008, “The effect of liberalization of investment policies on employment and investment of multinational corporations,” *African Development Review,* 20: p. 49-66.
[65] Gyimah-Brempong and Asiedu, 2008, pg. 50, 52, and 63.
[66] OECD Development Cooperation Direcorate. “Development aid reaches an historic high in 2010,” *Aid Statistics.* Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/document/35/0,3746,en_2649_34447_47515235_1_1_1_1,00.html on 2 March 2012.

methodological work. Moreover, Nasang'o exaggerates the democratic gains made; many states have slipped back into one-party rule following multi-party elections.

To dispute the "weak state" thesis, Lauren MacLean's comparative work on patterns of non-state social welfare provision in West Africa compares the growth and spread of informal reciprocity networks in Ghana and Cote d' Ivoire.[67] Her findings suggest that the instance of neoliberal state retrenchment following structural adjustment led many scholars to overemphasize the growth of informal networks of reciprocity in the alleged "vacuum" left by the state; in many local areas, less and less people are actually participating in these voluntary associations. Her analysis challenges the portrayal of the retrenched African state as "weak" or "failing" by demonstrating how firstly, informal institutions often interact with the state and secondly, states have shifted policies to re-extend control into rural areas. She concludes that it is crucial to identify each state's idiosyncratic trajectory of social and economic policies to better grasp the variant experiences of state power at the local level. MacLean never suggests external imposition of policies, but instead highlights formal and informal linkages – how states will use policies to "shape the composition of the new groups of winners and losers and how they come together to change the unwritten rules of the game."[68] Matching up, Matanga and Nasang'o's "weak state" approach is insufficient to describe how African states use policies to regain control over non-state reciprocity networks.

Agency theorists and the neo-patrimonial thesis

MacLean's insights lead smoothly into the less subtle "agency" camp – in particular Taylor, Soderbaum, and Keen. In response to Matanga's claim – that African

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[67] L. M. MacLean, 2008, "The legacies of state formation and transformation of non-state social welfare in Africa," *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association,* Pgs. 1-28.
[68] MacLean, (2008), pg. 25.

state leaders have been forced in desperation to sacrifice economic growth for political survival – these scholars would claim that ruling parties are not necessarily victims but active agents pursuing one-party rule and skirting on development functions. Both Taylor and Soderbaum attempted to explain why African governments were pursuing regionalism or regional governance under the neoliberal umbrella. Soderbaum distinguishes between three types of regional governance strategies (separate political interests, effectively) and how these different political goals qua types of governance overlap, in the same manner that African political authority is shaped at the state, regional, and global levels.[69] Regional projects, he concludes, serve interests of the powerful and wealthy at multiple levels but may also be driven by a lack of resources left for African ruling elites to plunder within their own national economies.[70] In this way, he nearly accepts the "weak state thesis", but under the separate pretense of greater agency on the part of elites. Taylor, on the other hand, takes a less nuanced approach. He firmly begins his analysis by stating that African elites are the major causes of social and economic detriment on the continent, though they may often try to depict themselves as victims of adjustment, colonialism, or other externally-driven factors.[71] Using Millennium Development Goals and degree of aid conditionality as a reference point for his argument, Taylor asserts that ruling elites exploit neoliberal policies for political advantage.

However, in line with Soderbaum's argument, Taylor also posits that because elites perceive their national functions have eroded, they often look to regional expansion, identity, and complementary benefits from regionalism. Overall, though he

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[69] Soderbaum, 2004, pg. 421.
[70] Soderbaum, 2004, pg. 423.
[71] Taylor, 2004, pg. 411 & 416.

mentions South Africa as having a major influence on Mozambican economic policy with regards to regionalism and opening trade corridors, he ultimately concedes that these developments are all policy choices relating to "embedded neoliberal strategies of accumulation."[72] This stance is not unfamiliar in other scholarship. David Keen, perplexed by the resumption of neoliberal reforms following Sierra Leone's civil war (a conflict fed in part by liberalization policies), suggested that the country's so-called compliance to post-war restructuring – as guided by IFIs – was actually posturing on the part of elites. Drawing on the work of Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, he explains the move to reform with their concept "politics of the mirror", where aid partners and IFIs are placated by elites who give the impression or appearance of reform, but instead devote financial resources to private accumulation and violent preservation of power.[73]

Chabal's theory lies very close to the heart of the "neo-patrimonial" thesis, which grew popular in the late 1990s, holding sway among many scholars of African politics, while even oddly featuring "extensively and casually" in discussions conducted by IFIs, donor agencies, NGOs, and think tanks.[74] The basic premise is that state politics and the current state of African affairs can be explained by groups of elites competing with each other for political dominance through vertical clientelist networks.[75] Rather than inhibiting this form of politics, liberal and neoliberal transitions are known to *enhance* this behavior, even as adjustment policies and conditional aid are intended instead to dispel most government intervention and corruption. In contrast to the pre-adjustment developmental state, the neo-patrimonial African state is anti-developmental, predatory,

[72] Taylor, 2003, pg. 320, 317, 313.
[73] Keen, 2005, pg. 74-75.
[74] Bach, 2011, pg. 289.
[75] Sumich, "Critique of neopatrimonial interpretation," 2008, pg. 111.

colludes with business elites, and privatizes public resources for the personal enrichment of the party-state apparatus.[76] Jean-Francois Bayart helped to diffuse this line of scholarship with his seminal work "Africa in the world: a history of extraversion", published in 2010.[77] In this astute work, Bayart draws on both the history of the colonial era and the postcolonial era to claim that most new research on the African state points to the African elites' active role in maintaining conditions of dependency. They do so specifically through a strategy of extraversion, wherein elites shift their ideological orientations and policies to maintain a dependent relationship with the external environment, which simultaneously affords them opportunities to create and capture rent.[78]

The neo-patrimonial African regime was then widely viewed as institutionalized, specific to African states, and began to take on an ambiguous air of incurable pathology and totality. Critics have tried to move away from such generalizations, which often obscure the contrasting ways in which rulers establish legitimate authority and compliance from their citizens (not only along rent-seeking, clientelist lines) and how highly developed states in the Western world arguably share many of these so-called "African exceptionalist" patron-client characteristics.[79] Slapping a singular regime type across all African states does injustice to heterogeneous processes of state formation, the study of regimes (where does neopatrimonial become authoritarian?), our insights about how state reproduce themselves - a constant and fluid process that rearranges "public", "private", and systems of reciprocity and exchange – and offers few solutions.

[76] Pitcher et al., 2009, pg. 281 & Bach, 2011, pg. 282.
[77] Bayart, 2000, pgs. 217-267.
[78] Bayart, 2000, pg. 222.
[79] Pitcher et al., 2009, pgs. 126 & 134.

Nevertheless, it's a powerful paradigm to use for examining current trends in neoliberal reforms and does not, like many neocolonial adherents, omit the complex nature of global, state, and local interactions that complicate notions of a one-way street of influence and exploitation from former colonial powers to postcolonial states.

Pioneering paradigms

Externalists and neo-patrimonialists no longer have ascendency; one could say that each approach has enjoyed its height. Other scholars have offered equivalently sharp explanations. But new approaches, while casting an intricate depth to our understanding of African neoliberalism and policymaking, sacrifice parsimony and are more difficult to test methodologically. The first group uses Gramsci's notion of hegemony to describe how neoliberal policymaking has become engrained, driven by external and internal discursive practices. In this vein, Richard Peet attributes the adoption of neoliberal reforms and resonance in South Africa to what he calls the "colonization of discourse" by Western policy missionaries, who interact with and train South Africa's academic-institutional-media (AIM) complex.[80] As South Africa switched from pursuing growth through redistribution to a policy of redistribution through growth under the neoliberal program GEAR, Peet traces this switch through the ANC's discursive history ending with its entanglement with the globally hegemonic discourse of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism has become monolithic in that it enjoys "intensive regulatory power" and symbolic wherewithal in its "persuasive political ideals."[81] His argument, however compelling, seems to boil down to a sophisticated version of the "externalist approach" – his conclusion is laden with remarks about the IMF and World Bank's "stabilization" loaning to South Africa and the influence of global capital in shaping domestic business

[80] Peet, 2002, pg. 54-84.
[81] Peet, 2002, pgs. 55, 57-58.

interests.[82] Similarly, Alison Ayers studies neoliberal democratization under the Gramscian notion of “active consent”, first imposed but then actively internalized on the part of “subaltern groups” in African states.[83] Graham Harrison, detailing at great length the multiple ways in which neoliberalism has been defined, points to how the economistic core of neoliberalism is now firmly integrated into African development policy and is entrenched as a continuous project to spread free-market relations across society in a statist fashion.[84] In essence, it reminds of us of right-wing arguments about “self-governance”, rational decision-making on the part of autonomous individuals, and voluntary social service networks filling in the gaps where the state should supposedly withdraw. So internalized is this framework that it has leapt into all policy spheres. Harrison goes further:

> The result of all this is that a profusion of development policy innovations has emerged on the base of a consolidated institutional continuity largely defined by a nexus of institutions, ideas, and personal relationships between the IFIs, donors and debtor states. Thus the short history of neoliberalism in Africa is one of expanding and increasingly ‘social’ remit and the development of a cluster of agencies that advocate the neoliberal agenda – largely external but also based within African states themselves, and especially presidencies, ministries of finance, and central banks.[85]

Institutional continuity is a convincing paradigm, especially if we were to analyze the rhetoric and reports released by officials and measure the extent that ruling parties generate this discourse internally. Adesina follows Harrison’s lead. He writes that between 1980 and 2000, the neoliberal policy regimes were first imposed and directed by donor communities. However, now the level of intrusiveness is dependent on “the ideological affinity between local state-agents and external policy merchants, and the

[82] Peet, 2002, pg. 79.
[83] Ayers, 2006, pg. 322.
[84] Harrison, 2005, pg. 1307-1308.
[85] Harrison, 2005, 1307-1308.

fiscal vulnerability of the client state."[86] When analyzing the formation and "African ownership" of NEPAD in another article, Adesina also invokes neoliberal hegemony at the policymaking level and adds that because structural adjustment altered the class bases of African regimes and former movements, a bourgeois class emerged.[87] It is in the interest of the petty bourgeois to maintain its preponderance through the use of neoliberal policymaking and its connections with external business and political networks.

The "internalization approach" has another facet that emphasizes the role of technocrats in shaping policy. Jeffrey Chwieroth examined why governments in emerging markets were willing to liberalize capital controls, arguing that "one critical mechanism shaping policy decisions is the formation of a coherent team of neoliberal economists".[88] Even while financial intermediaries may disagree on the possible effects of liberalization, policymakers adhering to the "credibility model" may be swayed by liberalization to signal to foreign investors, creditors, and donors of the government's creditworthiness and commitment to a policy orientation.[89] These interests, mixed with political goals, make officials from a coherent party likely to appoint neoliberal economists. Following an "epistemic communities" approach and employing sweeping quantitative methods, Chwieroth highlights the pivotal role that a technocratic team of economists can play by diffusing policies and ideas to ruling parties where the salience of ideas depend on whether or not they complement political interests. It is incredibly insightful for understanding how policymakers come to understand what their interests are, and this may involve the lurking influence of external actors. Harrison also referred

[86] Adesina, 2009, pg. S39.
[87] Adesina, 2004, pg. 125, 139, 142.
[88] Chwieroth, 2007, pg. 443.
[89] Chwieroth, 2007, pg. 446.

to the shift of neoliberal cabals from external entities to bases within the state – presidencies, ministries of finance, and central banks.[90] Bram Buscher, in his analysis of conservation and tourist projects in Southern Africa came to similar conclusions: elites will shape debates about policy in market terms to avoid political stigma attached to "redistribution" or "inequality" – instead referring to the infallible, scientific expertise of technocrats.[91]

James Ferguson has written extensively about Africa within a "neoliberal global order", where membership in the world economy is less about seamless connection presupposed by certain meta-narratives, and more about status and privilege. To analyze neoliberal reforms in Africa, scholars must overhaul the opposition between the neoliberal state and the Keynesian welfare state, as both do little to account for the majority of Africans that are *not* formal wage laborers and operate in the informal sector or the "hard-to-categorize urban improvisers at society's margins."[92] New configurations of government power, where the state occupies certain functions and NGOs take over other crucial functions erodes traditional conceptions of governance as centralized within state institutions (it can be both "weak" and "strong" simultaneously). Perhaps the most crucial point that Ferguson makes, over and against a strict neo-patrimonial account, is that in regards to social policy and poverty, the government does not simply ignore these issues or leaves it to the "free market", but may instead have grown accustomed to and relies upon the welfare interventions of NGOs and philanthropic organizations.[93] A truly market-based governance. Moreover, in accordance with Opoku's work, a neo-

[90] Harrison, 2005, pg. 1308.
[91] Buscher, 2010, pg. 34-35.
[92] Ferguson, "The uses of neoliberalism," 2010, pg. 168.
[93] Ferguson, 2010, pg. 169.

patrimonial state would certainly not adopt reforms that would create an autonomous capitalist class; a group accumulating wealth independent of the state would prove threatening to the ruling party.[94] Only when there is a strong state-business alliance would the neo-patrimonial thesis hold water where economic reforms, ceding control and autonomy to a business class, are concerned.

Theories on neoliberalism as they relate more to trends in elite policymaking and less to the well-worn discussion of the effects of these policies show a fusion rather than a split between externalist and neopatrimonial analyses. Recent conclusions impart the picture of global forces and the African state interacting in a way altogether different from the structural adjustment era. *The African state uses neoliberalism in different ways - for productive and counterproductive ends - disciplined (also to varying degrees) by an influential transnational framework.* When analyzing Mozambique's neoliberal governmentality, I will attempt to analyze reforms related to commercial agricultural investments within both an externalist framework and a neo-patrimonial framework, while also noting how reforms are socially mediated within Frelimo's ranks and require an understanding of the party's relationship with the domestic business class.

Methods

Why do African elites choose neoliberal development policies? Also, do elites pursue them because they are dependent on external forces (e.g. IMF, World Bank, bilateral aid donors from former colonial states)? Or do they choose them because the investments are easy to control and distribute rents to the ruling party to maintain regime stability and a patron-client system? The instance of "land grabbing" provides new terrain

[94] Opoku, 2010, pg. 56.

for testing the degree of autonomy that African policymakers enjoy and the extent to which a neoliberal governmentality is tied to conditions of dependency. In Mozambique, I will first employ process tracing to illustrate how three waves of liberal reforms brought Frelimo from a Stalinist-Leninist state through multi-party democracy and back to one-party rule under the auspices of Western donors and international financial organizations. I hypothesize that foreign influence declined since the end of the Cold War and civil war in Mozambique, and expect to see the ruling party make decisions either against full liberalization or for strictly political ends. Second, I will analyze current reforms to the Land Law as well as the process through which the government appropriates land and approves foreign leases, relating these insights to the neo-patrimonial hypothesis. I would expect to see local and high-level elites using these policies to award themselves land and not fully privatizing land, as bilateral donors have pushed for. Third, I will test the externalist approach by comparing trends in aid/loans, conditionality, extent of liberalization using rankings from "Doing Business", corruption rankings, and reports on the relationship between the ruling party and domestic capitalist class. Based on these findings and the commentary of scholars reporting on aid and Mozambique, I would expect conditionality to be lax, corruption rankings to be high, rankings in "Doing Business" to be low, and a strong connection between the ruling party and business class.

"Orthodoxy" to "reform": post-revolutionary Mozambique

Liberal reforms, both political and economic, have appeared in fits and bursts throughout Frelimo's rule after independence in 1975. But we can encompass the adjustments within three identifiable waves: membership in the IMF and World Bank in 1984 (structural adjustment), multiparty elections in 1994 and neoliberal reforms in the late 1990s, and the current wave of neoliberal practices. But most curious in this recent junction is the simultaneous, systematic reversal of political liberalization and the more informal character of neoliberal reforms. Abandoning – however discretely – Frelimo's commitment to electoral democracy by enacting stringent regulations on the participation of smaller opposition parties, the ruling party seems intent to re-blur state and party lines.[95] Frelimo's historic transfiguration was at first guided by necessity and dependency on foreign donors and IFIs, in line with the externalist thesis. In the 1990s, it is clear that the ruling party challenges external influences to its policymaking. Frelimo's trajectory as a revolutionary movement and ruling party, first amenable to and later reaping benefits from liberal reforms, will be detailed in this section to demonstrate that for Frelimo's political survival in the 1980s and 1990s, liberal reform was a *sine qua non*. Frelimo's initial experience with liberalization laid the foundations for and offer important insights into current neoliberal reforms, where there is continuity (e.g. steady relationships with bilateral donors) and also discontinuity. Altogether, the blatant objective underlying the character of the latter two reform periods is consistent with my thesis: Frelimo pivots its position on policymaking to secure the survival and superiority of the party. Its tight relationship with a capitalist/entrepreneurial class enables it to pursue reforms without risking threats to its power base.

Figure 1.0: Frelimo & Three Waves of Liberalization in Mozambique

socialist orthodoxy (one party rule)	->	**Wave 1:** economic reform	->	**Wave 2:** political reform (multiparty rule)	->	**Wave 3:** neoliberal reform (one party rule – reversal of democratic reform)
1975-1984		*1980s-on*		*1990s and early 2000s*		*NOW*

[95] Manning, 2010, pg. 151.

Whither liberation or revolution?

After the assassination of Eduardo Mondlane, an instrumental leader during Frelimo's emergence in the 1960s, the younger "revolutionary" faction ignited a decisive ideological shift within the liberation front. As the anti-colonial struggle against the Portuguese intensified, the "anti-revolutionary wing" within the core leadership of the movement was abruptly subordinated to an explicitly Marxist-Leninist agenda.[96] Educated refugees returning from Tanzania sought to articulate a program that was not limited to mere political revolution and independence, but one that encompassed greater socioeconomic transformations for the country. Frelimo's "newly liberated zones" in the North served as experimental rehearsals for practicing desired forms of production – involving collectivist pilot projects, health clinics, and schools.[97] These projects broadened Frelimo's support base to include peasants, workers, chiefs, and elites. But Frelimo mistakenly confused the enthusiasm and anti-imperialism of the movement's supporters with consensus on its revolutionary agenda. Certain elements of centralized planning were widely accepted during the advent of the revolution. However, due to a variety of grievances and crises, support for the socialist regime deteriorated during its first decade of rule. Foreign and domestic hostility toward the increasingly isolated one-party vanguard state would conclusively, combined with poor economic conditions and drought, necessitate the first wave of liberal reforms.

Destabilization era

Widespread disease, poverty, a pronounced lack of education, racial/ethnic cleavages, and wartime debt were major and widely noted obstacles for Frelimo. Moreover, to forge national unity amidst ethnic and regional particularism was a chore,

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[96] Manning, 2007, pg. 183.
[97] Manning, 2007, pg. 185.

made more tedious by resentment to southern dominance in Frelimo's already privileged minority leadership.[98] And in 1975, 80% of the population lived in rural poor areas and 90% were illiterate.[99] With meager resources and few personnel, Frelimo struggled to extend its presence and basic services to each region. This made urban areas easier to manage but left rural communities – the majority – neglected (as mentioned above). The immediate exodus of 51,000 Portuguese people – that is, most of the skilled labor, managerial capacity, and economic advisors – also left the economy in shambles.[100] Yet these economic troubles were not, as Peter Utting suggests, the sole impetus for adopting pragmatic liberal reforms.[101] As the Third Party Congress sought rapid industrialization, modernization, and an expanded role of the state in all sectors – it largely imported foreign models of social and agricultural organization that did not resonate with most Mozambicans.[102]

Seeds of resentment sprung from unpopular social engineering schemes that uprooted rural populations and negatively shaped their perceptions toward socialism. Initially, grievances erupted when religious and oppositional groups were outlawed and party leaders from northern and central regions faced expulsion. But Frelimo went even further. Mondlane and his followers viewed Marxism as the proper antithesis of anti-colonialism *and* traditional African practices.[103] Following independence, Frelimo leadership thus dismantled and abolished these deeply-instilled traditional hierarchies. Archambault, in his review, noted that the forced demise of chiefly rule (more than any

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98 Carbone, 2005, pg. 424.
99 Time "Dismantling the Portuguese Empire".
100 Time "Dismantling the Portuguese Empire".
101 Utting, 1992, pg. 49.
102 Utting, 1992, pg. 50.
103 Panzer, 2009, pg. 804.

other factor) drove scores of peasants to support the brutal insurgent campaign of Renamo.[104] Additionally, these peasants were forced into a collectivized agricultural system involving poorly managed and resource-strapped state-farms, which also had little relation to previous ways in which production was socially organized.[105] On the one hand, nationalization of land in 1976 was applauded because it did not initially disrupt peasants' occupation of ancestral lands or the plots they used productively. On the other hand, attempts to organize peasants into collectivized, state farming schemes were met with noncompliance and defection to Renamo.[106] Though the peasantry had been the backbone of support for Frelimo's armed struggle, services and food staples were extended almost exclusively to urban classes, thus marginalizing rural communities. Frelimo was, throughout the first decade of rule, preoccupied with creating an urban working class and industrial sector as well as directing most agricultural investment into the large, capital-intensive state farms (former colonial farms) and leaving the smaller semi-mechanized collectives cash-strapped (Bowen 1993; O'Laughlin 1995). Though the colonial administration's legacies of forced labor and cash cropping were abolished, Frelimo's radical discontinuity with prevailing systems of social organization and production in the countryside would fuel insurgency and later, massive dislocation.

Rural grievances would prove ample for the foreign-backed Renamo to launch a violent campaign against the ruling Marxist-Leninist party. Other alienated groups in peri-urban or urban areas joined too, as social mobility became increasingly restricted to

[104] J. S. Archambault, 2007, pg. 615.
[105] M. L. Bowen, 1992, pg. 263.
[106] Before Frelimo seized power as a one-party Marxist-Leninist state in 1975, the movement was already experimenting with collectivized agricultural production in communal villages molded in the "newly liberated zones" of the north. What would later become a scheme to forcefully reorganize peasants into villages and large-scale farms was dubbed in Frelimo's agricultural strategy in 1976 as the "socialization of the countryside". It follows that land issues in Mozambique, during the wake of independence, can only be understood within the context of Frelimo's ambitious program for socialist development.

Frelimo party members. The sixteen-year-long civil war that ensued was fueled by the white minority governments of South Africa and Rhodesia and drained over 35% of Frelimo's already dwindling resources.[107] Nation-building took a backseat and the ruling party had to seriously reconsider its agenda as rebels moved swiftly through the Manica and Sofala provinces and closed in around the southern capital. Renamo posed a powerful threat; its movement defended traditional leadership, religious beliefs of rural and non-southern communities, and sought to paint Frelimo's socialist system as inherently hostile to African society.[108] However, this period of destabilization (1977-1989) would not prove entirely ruinous for Frelimo – the party would endure under the auspices of Western institutions and assistance.

First Wave of Reform: the 1980s

When a host of domestic grievances became infused with external aggression, the costly and bloody conflict that followed would force Frelimo to make its first liberal shifts. Frelimo was desperate for funds and assistance: over a 5-year period, Mozambique ran a trade deficit of over $40 million and a 17% decline in GNP.[109] Hence, the party was compelled to join the World Bank and IMF in 1983, and under that institutional guidance and pressure would later launch its IMF-sponsored PRE or *Programa de Reabilitação Económica* in 1987.[110] Austerity measures implemented during this phase of the civil war resulted in lower wages, a devalued currency, and greater economic downturn, even as aid and loans flowed in.[111] An infamous bundle of policies - "structural adjustment." SAPs were applied haphazardly and without critical reserve across the developing world,

[107] Sumich, 2010, pg. 686.
[108] Carbone, 2005, pg. 425.
[109] A & B Isaacman, 1983, pg. 145.
[110] Manning, 2007, pg.1 92.
[111] Bowen, 1992, pg. 263.

reflecting the World Bank's early stance in the 1980s – that African developmental woes are attributable to over-extended states and illiberal economic policies.[112] Obviously, this wasn't necessarily the case for Mozambique. Where Frelimo had made impressive gains in health and education before the war, during the mid-1980s, 35% of government spending was diverted to the conflict and social services became sorely underfunded.[113] Also, historical scrutiny suggests that the party reached out to the West for political and economic survival while caught in the throes of a nasty, foreign-backed civil war. During the late 1980s, with the pending dissolution of the USSR, Frelimo could no longer count on financial and arms support from the Communist bloc.

An outline of the Fourth Party Congress' reforms in 1983 largely centered on providing support to cooperatives, families, and private sectors, while reducing the large-scale state farms. Bowen details the four primary policy changes – that of "regional prioritization, administrative decentralization, liberalization of commercial activity, and allocation of resources on the bass of economic pragmatism rather than ideology."[114] Regional prioritization translated into directing more resources and credit to small scale farmers so to reverse the systematic neglect of rural populations and regain support for Frelimo. But policy is one thing and implementation another; combined with adjustment policies that deregulated markets and prices, major social and economic tolls hit rural and poor urban populations and new programs were hard-pressed to reach Renamo strongholds in the countryside. As aid pledges fell between 1987 and 1990, coinciding

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[112] Opoku, 2010, pg.156.
[113] Sumich, 2008, pg. 686.
[114] Bowen, 1992, pg. 262.

with an official break with military assistance from Moscow, Frelimo was forced to negotiate with Renamo in direct talks to end the war in 1990.[115]

Second and Third Waves

Consistent with the neopatrimonial thesis that takes the African state in the post-Cold War era as its focal point – that is, the state as embedded in social relations that span global and local spheres – democratic reforms would prove strategic for Frelimo to maintain its role as the dominant organization for political access and social mobility in Mozambique. At first glance, multiparty politics would appear to weaken the party apparatus, pursued not for survival but under the pervasive influence of external actors as a condition for the peace process. Nevertheless, when direct talks began between Frelimo and Renamo in July of 1990, the primary factors outlined by scholars to explain Frelimo's acquiescence to multiparty elections were varied: vulnerability due to the party's exclusivity and lack of presence across the central and northern provinces and its stalemate with Renamo (Sumich 683); chaos in the Soviet Union, which led to an official end to military and economic support to Frelimo in 1989-1990; and the need for legitimacy, authority, and power in the eyes of both the domestic population and international constituents. It follows that the new constitution adopted in 1990 would briefly break the state and party apart. As one-party rule dissolved and Marxist-Leninist principles were officially abandoned in the 5th Party Congress, Frelimo attempted to expand its membership and include religious leaders and business owners.[116] Under the mantle of the 1990 multi-party constitution, party and state were briefly separated and compelled Frelimo to reorganize its support base – namely, shifting from a working class-peasant alliance to an alliance with the domestic capitalist class (Simpson 1993).

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[115] Simpson, 1993, pg. 333.
[116] Manning, 2007, pg. 192.

Various multinational corporations negotiated with the state for concessionary contract farming schemes (often with local companies) and South African capital and goods flooded the country.[117] International donors, who had previously financed Frelimo's conversion to a political party as a condition of the group's full participation in the peace process, now pressured for privatization of land (Bowen 1992; Manning 2010; O'Laughlin 1995).

This pressure, combined with postwar reconstruction, resettlement of rural groups, and coordination of agricultural production merged into a national land law debate spanning 1995 -1997, and resulted in the approval of Lei de Terras 19/97 - the new Land Law. Changes to issues involving land were few; the 1990 multi-party constitution that Frelimo adopted as a requirement of the peace settlement permitted the selling or mortgaging of land. All land and soil was to be controlled by the national government, which would in turn determine conditions of land use (Articles 35, 46-47). Assessing how the Land Law has been applied since it was passed shows discrepancies that call forth explanations from both the externalist and neo-patrimonial theses. Factions of Frelimo wavered between creating a new system of individual land titles and reinstalling a system of communal tenure under the oversight of district administrations (*regulos).*[118] It is unclear which system would best spur smallholder production, though this was not the immediate concern for Frelimo. The latter route was finally chosen to re-extend state-party control; that is, current district officials or *regulos* are usually loyal

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[117] Dependence on South African capital became characteristic of the 2000s. Money invested in tourism mainly benefits South Africans, but little of it has supported building social infrastructure for Mozambicans.

[118] Frelimo is still divided on the privatization question; Guebuza has reincorporated figures from the old vanguard era, the very revolutionary purists still devoted to centralized control over the economy. Others have speculated that these placements are mostly symbolic and that Guebuza defers mostly to technocrats.

elites placed by Frelimo that act seldom on the part of the communities they represent but are placed for surveillance and to ensure the implementation of the party's agenda. For instance, in the case of foreign agricultural investments, district officials – in exchange for a facilitation fee - will often approve projects in spite of broader opposition within the community (dos Reis interview). A few South African ranchers, seeking only 1,000 ha in the Manica province along the Buzi River, were denied an allocation from district authorities until a friend of theirs had the provincial governor intervene on their behalf (McCarter interview).

Though the process was internationally commended for its transparency and democratic character, because the Land Law does not require local communities with "overriding" use-rights to request delimitation and receive a title (or DUAT) to their lands, investors must merely consult a village leader or district official, whose sole approval may secure the title or lease for the investor. Conversely, if more communities were formally registered – and approximately 16% are countrywide – their titles ensure that an interested investor must instead negotiate directly with the community whereby the investor would enter into a contract with the village and not the government (OI 2011; JA/UNAC 2011). But according to Hanlon, between 1997 and 2002, no contracts had been proffered (2004). It is now clear that: both formal titles *and* use rights are transferable, but because each is distinguished by a different process and because transferring unregistered land use rights is conducted by local officials (not communities), control over lease negotiations and transfers has been successfully centralized within Frelimo's internal structures (McCarter interview). Therefore, Frelimo party elites may benefit from the widespread ignorance and lack of community DUAT registration. The World Bank and IMF direct these concerns toward the behavior of MNCs and not necessarily the full implementation and regulation of government policies that would otherwise protect communities. It is no wonder that small-scale agricultural production cannot grow under such neglect and restraint, and it should neither be surprising that family farming is dominant – associations and cooperatives that register must pay taxes on the land, and many can't afford to. What little incentive families do have to organize on a larger scale to supply more to local markets is further impeded by the effect of food aid on prices for local farmers.[119] As foreign investors enjoy a package of tax-free benefits, no fees on imported equipment, and a 50-year lease, while swept along by elites posing as representatives at the district level, the growth of this informal market for land ineluctably reveals what Lunstrum calls a "seemingly contradictory type of neoliberal state space" (2008; Fairbairn 2011; Meikle interview).

Evaluating the Land Law

The Land Law, seemingly diffuse with the aim to strike a balance between encouraging investment and protecting peasants' rights and access land, has proved less than impartial. Though no interviewees, when asked, had heard of any land conflicts and were not troubled by foreign leases, they admitted that smallholders were systematically marginalized by a registration process whose procedures had become more complicated, if they were even familiar with the process.[120] And this tweaking, coupled with virtually nonexistent access to loans from the central banks, has made it impossible for many to

[119] Mozambique imports approximately 650,000 tons of rice every year and Frelimo only spends 8% of its budget on agriculture. That 8% is for the whole sector, meaning it must pay the minister of Agriculture, district administrative employees, *and* farmers (dos Reis interview).

[120] While in Mozambique, I was notified of only one case in the Matutuine District where a splinter group from one village claimed to have been forced to sign over their land and were, at that time in July, demanding it back. This village is located just south of Maputo and near the Limpopo River, but I could find no follow-up. On the other hand, Oakland Institute confirmed that 354 land conflicts had been reported to the Ministry of Agriculture this past year (2011).

move beyond subsistence farming. Vegetable sellers (many who sell produce from South Africa) spoke enthusiastically of working on commercial farms in the face of 23-25% loans interest rates and because funding for small/medium-scale farms is widely believed to be funneled to Frelimo party members (Meikle interview). Approval for new projects has been streamlined in recent years after much of the previous red tape has since been cleared. Fortunately, and in contrast to many claims made by NGOs and other "neo-colonial" adherents, they are required to conduct consultations and provide health centers, schools, and wells, but the government does not provide the personnel for those services (dos Reis interview; McCarter interview). Moreover, officials speak of the need for special treatment and incentives for large-scale investors and for infrastructural work to be done only so that skilled farmers from South Africa and Zimbabwe will also agree to farm in Mozambique, while mentioning nothing about strategies to increase incentives for smallholders (Xavier interview).

Over 2.67 million hectares of land were either transferred or in negotiation by 2009, or 405 documented projects in total (Deininger et al 2010). Many more project proposals are awaiting approval, following the current Agricultural Zoning Process (2009-2011) to revalue vast swathes of public land, during which time a freeze of large-scale investments has been imposed. Many of these leases are granted to Mozambican companies and investors, but the land awarded, while conveniently located near cities, ports, and crucial infrastructure is often transferred by party elites with DUATs to the prime real estate in question (McCarter interview). After the uproar at the Fifth Party Congress' removal of personal investment and accumulation restrictions for party members in 1989, now market-inspired policies newly justify removing restrictions and enable elites to expropriate land and seek new avenues for personal enrichment, while making it seem "foreign-driven". Having previously taken advantage of cheap land by registering their own claims to DUATs, party elites will often sit on valuable land and negotiate leases with investors themselves. South African investors have also bought land with similar motivations, and attempted to sell parcels at inflated prices – transferring money and documents outside of the government framework entirely (McCarter interview; Fairbairn 2011). Luckily, Frelimo has been clamping down on this activity and forcing companies out where they do not meet agreed timeframes for developing the land.[121] Nevertheless, are these processes better explained by the externalist approach or the neo-patrimonial approach? The latter seems to represent (to a more accurate degree) the balance of internal and external influences on reforms – especially how they are carried out.

The current situation in Mozambique is most precarious. While NGOs seem to be organizing in opposition to Frelimo's investment policies, UNAC directors are nevertheless engaged with officials to negotiate a new land law and seem to think of Frelimo as the only channel for changing policies (dos Reis interview). They work exhaustively to inform peasants of the registration process and even assist communities in claiming a DUAT. Under the CEAPGRI program, Mozambican banks are now working with foreign commercial banks to install a system of guarantees so that a long-term investment fund can be made available to commercial farmers, though there is still no "Land Bank" for smaller farmers absent the efforts of NGOs like TechnoServe (Xavier interview). Furthermore, beyond food, clothing, and oil subsidies (which the government

[121] Such was the case with the British biofuels investment, under PROCANA, which had leased 30,000 hectares in the Gaza province, but was not keeping pace with its 5-year plan. The government of Mozambique cancelled the deal in December 2009.

has been trying to remove), there is no program for the 20-30% of city dwellers that also engage in agriculture as a principle activity (dos Reis interview). When the question of smallholders and subsistence farmers is brought up, solutions are spoken of in terms of *encouraging* outgrower schemes or cooperation amongst farmers. Under the neoliberal framework, programs, funding, and services for small farmers are delegated to other organizations, creating a configuration of governance where certain responsibilities are no longer part of Frelimo's agenda. Lastly, where privilege has been reorganized in terms of credit access for foreign investors or wealthy domestic investors, the accompanying reorganization of space and land is also identifiable. The Zoning Process, mean to "better orient" investors by creating a more detailed map of the land in fertile provinces by increasing the scale of the map four-fold, will assess and redefine land in terms of commercial use (Xavier 2011). We have yet to see the full implications of this profoundly neoliberal governmentality, as it is being played out in Mozambique's courting of foreign investors today. However, it is clear that pointing only or mostly to external influences (investors, World Bank, IMF, and donors), who allegedly promote full democratic and economic liberalization and yet do nothing to rescind aid or loans when Frelimo does not meet these conditions, cannot explain why investments and the Land Law have obviously aided the party and its patron-client networks more than investors. It is also unclear whether or not SAPs succeeded in "rolling back the state" in Mozambique, besides eroding its sovereignty through enforcement of fiscal restrictions and other arbitrary controls on state policymaking.[122] Indeed, as Frelimo agreed to adopt liberal reforms in exchange for external funding, this served paradoxically to "roll out" state power or entrench its control over access to resources.

[122] Ferguson, 2006, pg. 100.

Assessing the externalist approach to elite policymaking

This paper previously explored current trends in foreign agricultural investment in Africa (dubbed "land grabbing") and their necessary association with neoliberal reforms pursued by African states to encourage the inflow of foreign capital. Using process tracing to detail the factors driving economic and political liberalization in Mozambique, it is clear that across the identifiable "three waves" of reform, the actors and forces that have historically influenced the implementation of neoliberal reforms have changed and are clearly more nuanced in the current era, as the neo-patrimonial thesis would suggest. For instance, changes to the Land Law and the ubiquitously informal process by which foreign investors are allocated land and receive privileged access to credit through local elites suggest that a purely "externalist" approach may be insufficient to capture the constellations of power and influence involved in "land grabbing" and neoliberal reform. State-sponsored contradictions, partial reforms, and informal practices taken by ruling elites to allocate land reveal a complicated portrait of reforms to land and investment policies as mediated by forces both "inside" and "outside" the state. Thus, in our investigation of the forces that shape policymaking/reform in Africa, a more robust understanding of the African state and governance is required. This has been described at great length in current literature on neoliberalism. The two approaches used predominantly in Africanist literature give disparate pictures, and it is my intent to test the externalist approach in this section.

I. The Externalist Approach

Neoliberal reforms associated with foreign agricultural investments are not pursued; they are imposed on African states via aid and loan conditionality. If this explanation remains rigorous today, we would expect to see a higher degree of aid conditionality, penalties, and aid flows that would change according to the extent of democratic and economic liberalization. Land and credit access would predominantly favor foreign investors. Conditions for liberalization will show continuity between the era of adjustment and current trends in reform.

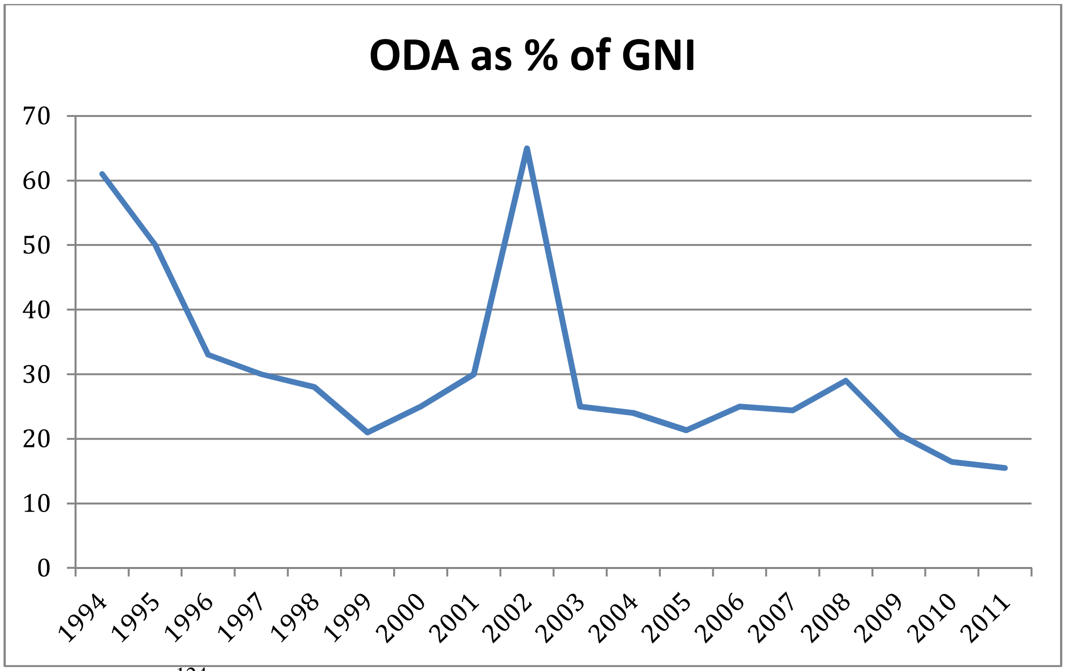
Independent variables

1. Degree of fiscal weakness of the state, measured by changes in the proportion of annual state expenditure provided by aid and changes in GDP/GNI
2. Degree of conditionality attached to aid and the presence/absence of penalties when a state fails to meet requirements for political and economic liberalization
3. Degree that changes to aid flows match changes in economic and political liberalization

Results

At first glance, the externalist hypothesis is compelling because Mozambique is among the most dependent of the "donor darlings", sporting a ratio of aid to GNI that is almost four times the average for sub-Saharan Africa.[123] Using data gathered from the OECD on General Budget Support and Total Aid in Mozambique, it is evident that when the % of aid as a proportion of GNI (or gross national income) increases, this in turn reflects the fiscal weakness of the state. Simply stated, a state that maintains a stable level of GDP growth - or shows increases in GDP relative to aid inflows - would be somewhat more fiscally "strong" as aid is intended to spur sustained economic growth in developing states with lower GDPs. A state that is more fiscally weak, under the externalist thesis, is beholden to more foreign influence in policymaking.

[123] De Renzio & Hanlon, 2007, pg. 2.



As this graph[124] shows, the % of official development aid as a proportion of Mozambique's GNI has been decreasing, not because aid flows have decreased, but because Mozambique's GDP has increased exponentially in recent years. Compare $4.2 billion in 2000 to $9.6 billion in 2010.[125] This graph can be misleading: although net flows of aid actually *increased* from approximately $60 million to about $90 million (per year) between 2004 and 2011, because Mozambique's GDP has grown and foreign investment has increased dramatically, the state is less "fiscally weak" than ever before.[126] This does not necessarily indicate that the government of Mozambique has more autonomy in policymaking (though there is more output unrelated to aid), but that

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[124] The spike in 2002 reflects debt as well as a surge in aid related to HIV/AIDS initiatives. Data for this graph was gathered from three sources: http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/47/37420133.pdf; http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/mozambique/net-oda-received; and the UNDP's "Mozambique: Quick Facts – Economic and Policy Analysis Unit" March 2011.

[125] World Bank Country indicators – Mozambique. http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org/ext/ddpreports/ViewSharedReport?&CF=&REPORT_ID=9147&REQUEST_TYPE=VIEWADVANCED

[126] Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries, Development Co-operation Report, and International Development Statistics database. Data are available online at: www.oecd.org/dac/stats/idsonline

the externalist approach, citing fiscal weakness, loses ground to recent trends. Indeed, GDP growth in Mozambique has been increasing between 6-9% since 2001.[127] Mozambique remains fiscally weak and heavily dependent on aid, but this does not necessarily translate into no control or sovereignty in policymaking.

Variables related to aid in Africa require deeper inspection, as the aggregate yearly flows of official development assistance are employed at the country-level in most scholarly work, while fewer scholars analyze aid allocated toward specific local projects at the sub-national level. However, empirical investigations into the more sophisticated data on aid projects still seem to conclude that because the bulk of aid remains dispersed mostly through capital cities and through the auspices of the national government, it remains merely a form of rent that empowers the ruling party. This literature was reflected in Findley and Powell's analysis, in which they created a detailed map of all aid projects across 24 African states, where geographical coordinates (varying by size and shade depending on the amount of money involved) were assigned for each project. Of all the states, Mozambique was the largest recipient of aid between 1989 and 2008, totaling $28.4 billion.[128] And though there are many smaller aid projects throughout the entire country, a greater portion of aid projects are concentrated in the southern province near Maputo and in the second largest city Beira. What does this mean for the externalist thesis? If more aid is directed at specific and dispersed projects, foreign donors have more control over how it is spent. Yet Carrie Manning's most recent analysis of Mozambique shows that trends involving donor support for specific projects has actually decreased since 1992 and has been redirected towards national budgets, giving the

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[127] http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/mozambique/gdp-growth#NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG
[128] See figure 1 in Michael G. Findley & Josh Powell (2011), "The localized geography of foreign aid: a new dataset and application to violent armed conflict," in *World Development,* 39(11): 1995-2009.

government of Mozambique more freedom and flexibility in determining how the money is spent – and thus reducing donors' ability to influence elite behavior.[129] Interestingly enough, Manning and Malbrough argue elsewhere that the role of donors is indispensable in immediate post-conflict states and in peace-building, but that it is unclear how efficacious conditional aid can prove later, especially in meeting development goals set by donors.[130] This isn't too surprising, given that Findley and Powell's article focuses on aid flows during years of conflict, specifically 1989-1991 in Mozambique.

We cannot dismiss the externalist thesis entirely because aid flows do remain high. How has conditionality changed? There are a few problems with conceptualizing aid conditionality. From the 1990s onward, "political conditionality" and democratic reforms replaced economic reforms as the more stringent requirements for continued assistance under the Post-Washington Consensus.[131] But various studies conclude that aid flows are known to fluctuate due to concerns not with the well-being of the economy in question or good governance per se but with the partisan-stance of the ruling party and its relationship with the foreign policy or geopolitical interests of donors (Gounder & Sen 1999; Cachel-Cordo & Craig 1997). Similarly, Randall Stone's analysis concludes that conditionality may be more or less political – that is, US aid will differ in its incentives, principles, conditions, and priorities from German or British aid.[132] Thus economic assistance policies may often shift depending on the party in power and domestic political

[129] Manning, 2010, pg. 162.
[130] C. Manning & M. Malbrough, 2010b, pg. 143-169.
[131] Robinson, 1993, "Aid, democracy, and political conditionality in sub-Saharan Africa," in *European Journal of Development Research,* 5(1): 85-99; Thandike Mkandawire. (2007). "'Good governance': the itinerary of an idea," *Development in Practice,* 17(4/5): 679-681.
[132] Randall W. Stone. (2006). "Buying Favors: the Political Economy of Bilateral Development Assistance," presented at the ISA Annual Meeting in 2006, pg. 1-35.

issues, as was shown in the two-game analysis of aid flows and policy by Rick Travis.[133] However (and perhaps luckily enough in this case), Mozambique has been under the rule of one party since independence. Consistent rule by one-party somewhat controls for variation in aid that could be ascribed to changes in party rule and power. Its medley of donors, on the other hand, is a bit more diverse. Its top donors are the World Bank (or its "IDA"), the European Commission, the United States, and the combined weight of Nordic states (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Ireland).

The most important analysis of aid conditionality in Mozambique does not lend itself to clear conclusions. Hanlon's exploration into the deep historical ties between Frelimo party members and its aid donors reveals a complicated picture: conditionality is more lax – that is, donors generally give budget support so that governments can "own" their own strategies. Yet while donors have realized that they cannot force their own political will to reduce corruption or spur governance reform, they are still ironically and heavily involved in the policymaking process – indeed, they withheld food aid in the 1990s when World Bank and IMF policy changes were not followed through on.[134] Harrison agrees with Hanlon, noting that is it "far less insightful to make distinctions between internal and external interests" because donors will in one instance care less about the 2004 rampant electoral fraud but successfully block the establishment of a development bank to provide rural credit. Still, Hanlon concludes that as of the late 2000s, Frelimo may accept donor demands for liberaliation but either won't fully implement them, quietly reverse them later, or will not be subservient at all when

[133] R. Travis. (2010). "Problems, politics, and policy streams: a reconsideration of US foreign aid behavior toward Africa," in *International Studies Quarterly,* 54(3): 797-821.
[134] Hanlon & de Renzio, 2007, pg. 11-15.

"political and personal interests are at stake."[135] Land reform appears to be one of the more recent outliers, as Frelimo refused to privatize land even while the party was under considerable external pressure. President Guebuza made very clear at a USAID meeting in 2006 that he would not privatize land, an action less passive than defiance behavior in the past.

When Frelimo presents the face of political stability and agrees to certain –but not all – neoliberal economic reforms, donors usually allow large-scale corruption to go unchecked. But because donors have recently been unable or unwilling to enforce its demands for political and economic liberalization and while Frelimo only meets demands that do not run against the interests of its highest members, it would appear that the neo-patrimonial thesis has better captured current relations in the internal-external constellation of forces that shape policymaking and foreign leases to farmland. The case of Mozambique runs against the conclusions of scholars who suggest that foreign aid and budget support is halted or frozen when democratic credentials are lost or political liberalization is not adhered to – this occurred in Ethiopia, Uganda, Nicaragua, Honduras, Madagascar and Rwanda.[136]

Conclusion: evaluating the approaches

Both approaches have their flaws and perhaps a synthesis between them would be most appropriate to capture the particular blend of influences that shape neoliberal reform in Mozambique. For instance, the concept of global neoliberal hegemony is certainly one of the most advanced conceptualizations in theory and in the field. The neo-patrimonial

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[135] Hanlon & de Renzio, 2007, pg. 8-10.

[136] Rachel Hayman. "Budget support and democracy: a twist in the conditionality tale," in *Third World Quarterly,* 32(4): 673-688.

approach can absorb this theoretical work within its own notion of dependency and post-colonial yoke.

While the externalist thesis rightly points to the deep and unbroken historical ties between international financial institutions, aid donors, and Frelimo, the influence of external agencies and actors has lessened to a considerable degree. This is evident in how the character of liberal reform changed (not to mention the blatant reversal of democratic liberal reforms) in the 1990s and 2000s. The neo-patrimonial approach does not suggest that there is *no* or even insignificant influence from external forces but rather that ruling elites often shift their positions and policies to maintain their dependency on foreign institutions while carrying out their own agendas and maintaining patron-client relations. De Renzio and Hanlon (2007) describes this aptly: "Mozambicans within Frelimo and in senior government posts have developed advanced skills at managing complex relations with a diverse range of international agencies, juggling their difference priorities and demands, and positively responding to their agendas, while at the same time maintaining internal political support." The literature from neoliberalism and specifically the more recent insights suggest that we must look at governance as *networked.* Where privilege has been formally and informally reorganized in terms of credit access for foreign investors and wealthy domestic investors, the accompanying reorganization of privilege, space (land), and accumulation favors a group of business elites *and* foreign interests. When the Fifth Party Congress removed restrictions to personal investment and accumulation for party members in 1989, now market-inspired policies newly justify and enable elites to expropriate land and seek new avenues for personal enrichment, while making these policies seem "foreign-driven".

Future research might employ different theories and may also find that neoliberal governance and external influences vary across African states. Other frameworks, such as Wallerstein's "world systems" theory and "negotiated peripheralization" could be employed to more carefully evaluate what may be the co-optation of African states into a world-system, a system that affords their economies a lesser status in the wider global economy. Other work might unseat traditional views – such as the notion that the state conflicts with the informal economy – and instead analyze the ways that African states engage in "informalization strategies", whereby governance is established through connections with non-governmental entities (rebel groups, private militias, NGOs) and through informal practices of its own elites. This may better explain how governments "partially privatize" where they meet the demands of both their clients internally and donors externally.

Finally, I want to stress that while a neoliberal strategy of foreign agricultural investment for Mozambique's food security is wildly inappropriate, rural development strategies must be met with foreign investment. More engagement of family cooperatives or larger associations will prove most beneficial for Mozmabique's precarious and gloomy food crisis.

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