

[Spying on Muslims in Colonial Mozambique, 1964-74](#)

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NOTE: The First Book Grant application form may have been updated since this proposal was submitted.

Proposal Summary *The research's aims, methods, contribution to knowledge, and value in realising the goals of ISRF*

The project *Spying on Muslims in Colonial Mozambique, 1964-74* is a scholarly monograph grounded in meticulous archival work on Portugal's counterinsurgency that targeted Muslim communities during Mozambique's liberation war. It tackles the role Muslims played in colonial Mozambique paying particular attention to lived realities that they as colonial subjects faced during the colonial war, and their response to Portuguese initiatives to solicit their support as a bulwark against armed nationalism. Centred in two fields of inquiry, the collapse of European imperialism in Africa and studies in counterinsurgency, the monograph has mined a trove of historical documents from the Portuguese archives. In doing so, the study combines historical and anthropological methods of inquiry, marshalling qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate Muslim communities' responses to Portuguese counterinsurgency. The monograph offers a nuanced and non-binary assessment of Muslim responses to the colonial conflict, highlighting how complex and intersegmental these responses proved to be during the period under review. Simply put, Muslim communities' responses were split between protagonists of Portuguese counterinsurgency in Mozambique, opponents of Portuguese conduct of the war in the colony, supporters of the national war of liberation for Mozambique, and self-preservationists, unwilling to come out in support of either party in the colonial conflict. A variety of complex reasons underpinned this reluctance, ranging from the tightly knit structure of dominant Muslim society and culture, the inefficacy of Portuguese intelligence-gathering practices, to the failure of Portuguese propaganda to co-opt influential forces and leaders of the Muslim society to assume a leading position in counterinsurgency. The monograph is uniquely positioned to make an original contribution to the literature in this field of inquiry in counterinsurgency by enhancing our understanding of the legacies of colonial security strategies in Mozambique's colonial and post-colonial era.

Thesis Abstract *An abstract of your PhD thesis*

The dissertation, in the field of Historical Anthropology, focuses on SCCIM (Information Centralisation and Coordination Services, f. 1961), and in the articulation between the

enforcement of knowledge devices, the establishment of accumulated and centralized knowledge(s), and the implementation of colonial governance strategies, targeting Muslim populations. Built upon a case study, this research aims to: i) outline SCCIM's historical trajectory, its mandate and relations, as well as its modes of operation and knowledge devices; ii) analyse a significant corpus of knowledge produced by SCCIM regarding Muslim populations; iii) discuss the ways and the processes through which the formation of such knowledge(s) sought and/or influenced policies and practices of governance, during the late colonial period, especially in the context of the liberation war in Mozambique; iv) scan reactions and coping strategies developed by Muslim populations. Empirically, the research is based upon the gathering and systematic scrutiny of a wide assortment of historical sources, which are complemented and articulated with the collection and analysis of oral memories, collected from privileged interlocutors connected to the colonial administration.

Theory & Methodology *What theoretical and methodological framework your doctoral research deployed*

As stated earlier, my doctoral research combined historical and anthropological methods of inquiry, entailing Portuguese archival research and oral fieldwork interviewing former security agents, military officials, and policymakers. This two-pronged approach proved invaluable to analyse Muslim responses to Portuguese counterinsurgency aided by qualitative and quantitative data and circumvent the inherent risk of biases when studying intelligence exclusively through written documents (Hughes et al. 2009). This approach allowed for a nuanced and non-binary analysis of Muslim responses in this historical context.

The research drew inspiration from two theoretical sources: Martin Thomas' seminal work on British and French colonial intelligence, which emphasized the close relationship "between intelligence gathering and the colonial state;" (Thomas 2008); and R. Gerald Hughes, Peter Jackson and Len Scott Hughes' work which provided compelling insights on the heuristic potential of studying the interrelationship between culture, intelligence, and policymaking (Hughes et al. 2009).

With specific reference to Portugal's counterinsurgency strategy targeting Muslim communities, the research was structured around four axes. The theoretical model of "High Policing" (Brodeur 1983, 2010) was crucial to examine the Mozambican branch of SCCI (Serviços de Centralização e Coordenação de Informações/ Information Coordination and Centralization Services) and situate it within the shifting inter-organizational landscape of Portuguese late-colonial intelligence community. On the

other hand, the concept of governance (Treib et al. 2005, Maussen et al. 2011) proved priceless to evaluate Muslim communities' responses to Portuguese counterinsurgency, considering the interconnectedness between internal and external dynamics underpinning such responses. Whereas the governmental knowledge engendered by SCCI was approached as the outcome of a particular "will to know" (Foucault 2011) that often embodied "ideology in the making" (Wolf 1997). Katherine Verdery's notion of "knowledge practices" (2014) was remarkably useful to explore the service procedures of intelligence-gathering, the flaws of their empirical foundations, and resultant derivative policies and actions. Finally, James Scott notions of "public transcript" and "hidden transcript" (1990) were critical to illuminate why and how Portugal sought to exploit Muslim communities to back its counter-insurgent war during the liberation struggle in colonial Mozambique.

Key Findings *The key empirical and/or theoretical findings of your doctoral research*

The SCCI, which formed part and parcel of the Portuguese colonial intelligence apparatus, displayed key features of "high policing" organizations. As such it was devised as a local civil service, tasked with gathering, analysing, disseminating, and coordinating intelligence on colonial politics, administration, and defence. Notwithstanding its ambition to play a pivotal role within the intelligence community its mission was eventually curbed, making way for the Mozambican branch of SCCI to assume the role of a main provider of strategic intelligence. Along with PIDE (Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado), SCCI was critical therefore in shaping security measures governing Mozambique's Muslim communities during the liberation war.

The scrutiny with which the Muslim colonial subjects faced during the colonial war and their responses to Portuguese counterinsurgency was rather revealing. The Portuguese intelligence community depicted Muslims and their religious identity as a pathognomonic symptom of political dissent, which in turn attracted harsh sanctions and repressive actions targeting Muslim leaderships, particularly before 1968. Repression proved counterproductive and eroded Portugal's hold on this community. After 1968, Portuguese counterintelligence switched from absolute repression to wooing the Muslim community as a bulwark against armed nationalism. This change of focus yielded mixed results. While some elements of the Muslim community aligned with the Portuguese, others proved less ready to embrace the Portuguese cause to defend the motherland's overseas province from a communist-inspired insurgent threat. Muslim reluctance to embrace this cause defied SCCI expectations,

demonstrably exposing the inefficacy of both Human Intelligence and Psyops operations in counterinsurgency.

Background *The scholarly debates and/or disciplines addressed in your research, and the contribution your thesis offers*

My doctoral research is interdisciplinary and centred on two fields of inquiry, the collapse of European imperialism in Africa and counterinsurgency. Thus, it intersects historiographical inquiry and debate on European imperialism with Portugal occupying its margins, while advancing an evidence-based, granular and nuanced analysis of the role played by intelligence and propaganda during Mozambique's late colonial period tussling with a liberation war. The dissertation has to it three key features: it is a ground-breaking work that uses an extensive trove of historical documents gathered in Portuguese archives; it combines historical and anthropological methods of inquiry, tapping archival data both qualitatively and quantitatively to evaluate Muslim communities' responses to Portuguese counterinsurgency; it offers a nuanced and non-binary assessment of such responses, highlighting how complex and intersegmental these responses proved to be in the face of Mozambique's liberation struggle. Such an approach brings novel insights to the established analysis of counterinsurgency, draws scholarly attention to view intersegmentally this period of Portuguese colonial history, and enhances our understanding of the legacies of colonial security strategies in Mozambique's post-colonial era.

Work Plan *How the work of adapting your thesis for publication will be organised over the award period, with special emphasis on any further research that is needed*

Planned to take place for 12 months, the work of adapting the doctoral dissertation for publication will come about in three phases.

Phase 1 | Preparation of the Publishing Proposal (Months 1 and 2)

Month 1: Finalize the first draft of the publishing proposal to be submitted to Bloomsbury Academic Press (BAP) via its acquisition editor, Mr Rhodri Mogford, Publisher, at Rhodri.Mogford@bloomsbury.com; and secure a BAP contract. BAP requires authors to consider submitting a proposal of approximately 90.000 words. To this end I shall be organizing my proposal to include the following structure for the book:

Introduction

Chapter 1. Administration and Intelligence in the Portuguese Colonies, 1870-1974

Chapter 2. Muslims in Mozambique

Chapter 3. Spying Muslim Communities in Mozambique

Chapter 4. Portugal's Tug of War with Muslims Over the Liberation Struggle

Conclusion.

Month 2: I will then send the draft of the book to two or three informal referees for comments and reviews. In the meantime, I shall explore service providers to copy-edit, proof-read, and index the monograph, while undertaking archival research needed to fill any unforeseen lacuna in the narrative. As an aside I have already identified an excellent and highly capable copy-editor and indexer willing to undertake the project.

Phase 2 | Re-writing of the Manuscript following internal referee reports (Months 3 to 9)

Months 3 to 8: Re-draft the monograph to incorporate suggestions from the internal referees and follow this schedule for the works ahead:

Month 3 | Chapter 1

Month 4 | Chapter 2

Month 5 | Chapter 3

Month 6 | Chapter 4

Month 7 | Introduction

Month 8 | Conclusion

Month 9: Digitise high-resolution images to be included in the monograph; secure image rights and permissions; and prepare the following list of inclusions in the monograph:

List of Illustrations

List of Maps

List of Tables

List of Acronyms

Glossary

Works Cited

Archives and Unpublished Papers

Secondary Literature

Phase 3 | Final Editing and Proofreading (Months 10 to 12)

Month 10| Send the monograph to the copy-editor and indexer.

Month 11 and 12| Initiate a plan B, namely, create a list of alternative academic publishers focusing on European imperialism and history, African colonial history, and counterinsurgency, and cultivate contacts ready to be activated should it prove necessary. minutes) and would aim to convey the research project in digestible segments while also directing the viewers' attention to the book, the film, and the additional resources made available on the website.

Plan for Publication *Which publishers you are planning to contact, and why*

I am planning to contact the Academic division of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. The reason for doing so is elegantly simple: Bloomsbury Publishing is a leading printing house in the field of humanities and social sciences, renowned for its catalogue of excellent, cutting-edge, and original scholarly works, and its history acquisition editor is expressly committed to developing Bloomsbury's offering in Luso-African historical literature. BAP has a rigorous blind-review process, which ensures the publication of award-winning monographs grounded in empirical research. Their texts are priced with affordability in mind. Furthermore, BAP operates on a global scale thereby offering appropriate conditions to widely promote the monograph, expand its outreach to a worldwide audience and given its previous track record in this field, secure this proposed monograph's publication in a Portuguese edition.