

## II. "When Elephants Fight, it is the Grass that Suffers"-- Rural Transformation in Mozambique and After Independence Comments

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## COMMENT

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In this project on Rural Transformation in African Countries I am in charge of a case of Ethiopia. Therefore in comparison with Ethiopia I would like to comment on Dr. Egerö's paper and ask some questions.

There are many differences between Mozambique and Ethiopia in history, culture and social structures. However there are also some similarities between the two countries. They have nearly some years' experience of socialist regime. Drought causes serious food crisis in both countries. War is one of the main causes of economic and financial crisis.

I can point three major agricultural policies particularly related with rural transformation in Ethiopia. First is the collectivization of production such as state farms and producers cooperatives. It is hardly to say that they succeed at this time of stage. State farms need huge amount of running cost and show a deficit. Productivity is low and an incentive to work is weak in cooperatives. Second is a settlement program. Ethiopia has a long history of population migration from north to south. But planned settlement has only a short history since 1958. After the revolution this program developed quickly for saving drought victims and peasants from densely populated area. The settlement seems sound in its purpose. However implementation has been very much controversial due to inadequate preparation and the high cost of the program.

Third is villagization. It started in Bale and Hararge Regions since 1978. It became as a nationwide movement since 1985. It has many purposes such as enhancing extension services, facilitating access of rural people to schools, clinics and water

supplies, advancing the revolution and goal of collectivization and giving the government the political control needed to ensure socialism. However villagization causes many problems such as physical and sociological disruption, concentration of livestock and overgrazing, increased distances from fields and human health hazards. Dr. Egerö mentioned state farms and cooperatives in Mozambique. I wish to know about the implementation of the settlement program and villagization in Mozambique and their problems in comparison with Ethiopia. Dr. Egerö said that the spread of MNR was an expression of the worsening conditions of the peasantry in the country without which the South African destabilisation would have had far less chances of success. In Ethiopia the situation is very different. The war in Eritoria and Tigre has close relations with the central government policies against ethnic minorities. The government has been very oppressive. I would like to know about the relations between the spread of MNR and the worsening conditions of the peasantry more in detail.

In Ethiopia so-called liberalization in economy started from last year under the influence, or I should say pressure, of IMF and World Bank. Even the Soviet Union already advised a policy change to the Ethiopian government in 1985. Soviet advisers attached to Central Planning Agency gave strong backing to private peasant agriculture, and criticized the wastefulness of state agriculture and had very little to say about rural producer cooperatives. At the early stage of socialist development Ethiopia, one of the typical late-starting socialist countries, seems to change her policies and strategies because of not only serious economic crisis and the pressure from the international organizations but also various changes in the Soviet in recent years. I wonder if the revisions of the government policies in Mozambique mentioned in chapters 6 & 7 is just a structural

adjustment for national survival or they might go to more basic changes of the economic and political systems in Mozambique.