II. "WHEN ELEPHANTS FIGHT, IT IS THE GRASS THAT SUFFERS" - RURAL TRANSFORMATION IN MOZAMBIQUE BEFORE AND AFTER INDEPENDENCE

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Summary

Mozambique, like the majority of countries in sub-Saharan Africa, is today firmly caught in the net of foreign debt and food insufficiency. However, unlike most of the others, this potentially wealthy country is today the scene of extreme misery and suffering, with millions of Mozambicans living as refugees within and outside of their country. Apart from a short spell of genuine change in the first years of independence, rural Mozambicans have been subjected to, first an unusually repressive form of colonial exploitation, secondly a uniquely brutal form of banditry nourished by the South African apartheid regime. From this perspective, "rural transformation" can in fact be seen as a series of more or less traumatic interventions in the life of the rural majority.

Although some of the mechanisms behind this development are shared with other countries in the region, it is argued that three specific factors account for the extreme nature of the Mozambican crisis: The special character of Portuguese colonialism; the drastic transition to independence and the politics of the new government; and the South African and Western destabilisation of the state and economy.

The weak economic base of Portuguese colonialism meant, for rural Mozambicans, a subjugation under settler interests which largely prevented indigenous accumulation and differentiation. As a result, illiteracy was widespread and virtually no Mozambicans had acquired the skills required to run the economy. By independence in 1975, the new government made no attempts to seek

an alliance with departing settlers, and its nation-building project did not include support to the growth of indigenous petty-capitalist relations. The frustration of important segments of the rural population contributed to the failure of a grand state farm strategy, and facilitated the spread of South Africa-instigated banditry over the country.

Economic strangulation from South Africa undermined the economy, resulting in deteriorating living conditions for the peasantry. Exposed to drought and MNR attacks, several million are now displaced and dependent on food support. A generalized economic crisis has led the government to respond with privatization and the stimulation of individual entrepreneurship. Today, rural differentiation is increasingly visible, with prospects of the poor remaining in a state of semi-permanent poverty.

1. Introduction

The deterioration of the sub-Saharan economies during the 1980s has intensified the regional debate around the mechanisms behind the change. On one level, this debate centers on the rapid undermining of dependent economies by deteriorating terms of trade beginning in the 1970s (rising energy bills and falling prices on export products), and the effects of a World Bank/IMF Structural Adjustment package on short- and medium- term alleviation of the crisis (Onimode 1988, 1988a; Boratav 1988). On another level, the crisis of the state in post-independence Africa forces a rethinking of the state-market relations, not only in peripheral capitalist economies but equally in the socialist-oriented states (Mkandawire & Bourename 1987). Still another level of debate is that of internal adaptation/resistance to state domination, whether in the form of an "uncaptured peasantry" and withdrawal from state control (Hyden 1980), or as a

"subjective factor in African development" (Mamdani et al 1988, p.16). "For whatever the roots of that crisis - 'external', 'internal', or a specific mix of the two - its solution can only be the result of initiative by organised social forces inside Africa" (idem).

What emerges from this debate is a growing hesitance before the classical paradigms, be they modernization or dependency, and a renewed search for answers from the internal realities of the affected societies. Thus the interest in social movements, the increasing attention to democracy as a key factor of development (Anyang' Nyong'o 1987), and the growing debate concerning Third World socialism as a viable non-capitalist road to economic growth and distribution. A climate of non-dogmatism is emerging, holding the potential of analytical renewal in a direction which brings the peasant and his/her micro-level survival strategies closer to the macro-studies of state, power and class formation.

Mozambique is an important member of sub-Saharan Africa in several respects. Its liberation from colonial rule through a peasant-based guerrilla struggle, and the subsequent unconditional surrender by the colonial power, paved the way for a development strategy worthy of the label "Revolutionary Socialism" (White et al 1983). Impressive achievements were recorded during the first five years, simultaneously with a far-reaching support to the struggle for an independent Zimbabwe. The defence strategy against South Africa was built not as much on military armaments as on popular mobilisation in creating an equitable society.

Economically, the aim was to reduce the extreme regional and international dependency through economic diversification and industrialisation, using the country's largely

untapped natural resources and undeveloped human resources. This policy went hand in hand with an active participation in the creation of a regional instrument of economic liberation, the SADCC, whose aim is to change the external dependency, in particular on South Africa, in favour of increased intra-regional exchange among its nine member-states.

The loss of President Samora Machel in a plane crash inside South Africa in October 1986 marked the end of a glorious - and fatal - period in the life of the new nation. The downward trend of the economy had started already in the early 1980s, marked by a persistent drought accompanied by an unanticipated and rapid spread of MNR terrorism over the country. Directed towards economically strategic targets and the infrastructure of communication and trade, this terror increased the speed of economic decline. It will however be argued, that the spread of MNR in itself 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.

The roots not only of banditry but of the whole process towards the crisis of today are found in the historical regional and colonial domination of the Mozambique territory, and in the particular forms of resistance to which it gave rise. Resistance grows and changes in response to the kind of oppression it opposes. In turn, the two dialectically meet in the synthesis of a new state form, itself the beginnings of new internal and external contradictions.

2. Colonial roots of the crisis

> "It is essential to remember that Frelimo did not inherit a going concern, as did many new governments at independence. Instead it took over an economy with a massive and permanent balance of payments deficit, and

then faced the withdrawal of a major subsidy (by South Africa) and the dramatic fall in the prices of key exports that in colonial times could be produced profitably only through super-exploitation. Even a financial wizard could not have made that work, and radical restructuring was needed. However many mistakes Frelimo may have made, it is hard to blame it for trying one great leap out of the economic pit. But destabilization ensured that it was never given a chance." (Hanlon 1984, p.264f)

Mozambique is a large country, more than twice the size of Japan. By 1980, its population stood at 12 million, at least two thirds of whom live in a narrow belt along the long coastline. The peculiar shape of the country is the result of a series of conflicts between the European colonial powers at the time of partitioning of Africa. The capital Maputo (ex. Lourenço Marques) in the far south of the country developed as a major transit port of South Africa. In the centre, Beira was the main transit port for goods to and from Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (Malawi). Between them were large tracts of undeveloped land, from where tens of thousands of worker/peasants annually travelled to work in South Africa's mines. Where conditions were conducive, as along the Limpopo River in the south and the Beira corridor inland, land was alienated and turned into Portuguese farms or large estate holdings. Some settlers found their way north of the Zambezi river, where scattered Mozambican peasants survived on hoe-based agriculture.

The peasants were gradually drawn into the settler rural economy, as seasonal labour and on forced cash-crop programmes. Various forms of taxation were added to the chibalo or forced labour programme, to reduce the chronic shortage of labour in settler and plantation agriculture. Peasant production became increasingly dependent on implements such as seeds and tools, while their consumption needs

were satisfied by a growing network of small traders and rural shops. Towards the end of colonial rule, their contribution to the marketed production had become significant:

Table 1. Regional distribution of colonial agricultural production around 1970 (%)

	Southern regions*	Central regions**	Northern regions***
Agric. prod.;			
- subsistence	49	52	60
- marketed	51	48	40
Marketed prod.;			
- peasant prod.	20	19	65
- plantat. prod.	4	57	5
- settler prod.	76	24	30
Total agric. output	17	43	40 (100)
Total population	28	41	31 (100)

* Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane regions
** Manica, Sofala, Tete and Zambezia regions
*** Cabo Delgado, Nampula and Niassa regions

(Source: Wield 1983)

However, despite this participation in the money sector and despite the male labour migration, rural differentiation among the Mozambicans remained limited. Domestic starvation wages gave little room for investment, and the South African mine wages although higher were also to a large extent consumed in levies of different kinds. Those who remained at home to till the land were not allowed to market their products themselves. For products such as maize they were given half or less of the price paid to settlers, and prices for inputs were set so as to leave only a small margin of net surplus (Hermele 1988).

The settler bias in colonial policy survived right up to the end. In practice, it aborted the various attempts by

the colonial government to create a rural middle stratum of Mozambicans, as one way to counter the growing anti-colonialist movement. Thus, during the 1950s and 1960s the colonial government encouraged the establishment of cooperatives for Mozambican peasants. In all, 34 cooperatives were created, mainly dealing with input supply or agricultural marketing. As they developed, their activities brought them into competition with Portuguese settlers and traders. Settler reactions led the administration to retract and curb Mozambican entrepreneurship so as to eliminate the threat to settler and trader interests (Idem.).

This is only one example of the inability of the Portuguese colonial system to allow for any indigenous competition with its settler interests. The effect was the creation of an embryonic Mozambican middle stratum, frustrated by the interference and eager to draw the benefits of independence once the colonial imperium collapsed. This interference also ensured that peasant agriculture remained poor and unproductive in relation to the potential output given by natural resources and human ability.

Portugal's chronic need to drain profits from the colonies for many years left little stimulus for advancement in any sector of the economy. Usually substantial incomes from the transit trade and migrant labour revenues could rarely balance the deficit built into the compulsory trade with Portugal at grossly unfair prices for the colony. This was a serious impediment to technological improvements as much as human resource development, on both sides of the colour bar. Only in the last ten or so years of colonial rule, and under pressure of the war, were reforms made which allowed the economy to begin to flourish. (Egerö 1987, pp 50ff)

3. Independence and the new rural transformation strategy

The war ended in the midst of a growing crisis in the settler economy, fomented not least by the war itself. The settler community had grown rapidly in the post-war period, to reach a peak of 163,000 in 1970. Thereafter, following a big military defeat in 1970, net migration was negative - settlers began to leave in increasing numbers. The different Portuguese strategies of military action, white settlement schemes and Mozambican middle strata as means to contain the liberation movement had all failed. Nor did the settlers have any allies in the country, through whom a reasonable deal with the liberation movement could be expected.

In September 1974, FRELIMO concluded its guerrilla struggle by signing, alone and in practice uncontested, an accord with the Portuguese government for the transition to independence. The ten years of struggle had led to a radicalisation of the movement and its aims. FRELIMO had moved beyond the nationalist goal to a position where it wanted to create a society "free from the exploitation of man by man", a society where the oppressed classes assumed power in defence of their interests. In short, the aim was set for transition to socialism.

The implications were to be far-reaching. During the war, FRELIMO was indeed a front, collaborating with traditional chiefs and even clandestinely supported by régulos or other collaborators with the colonial regime. By independence, the class dimension took on prime importance. Could the transformation be carried on the shoulders of workers and peasants, the classes whose interests it should serve, or were other alliances necessary to maintain a productive base during transition? The choice made was strategically

crucial not least in the means it gave to powerful external enemies to act against a non-capitalist Mozambique.

Capitalist enterprises were obviously excluded, and the early measures by the new government were directed exactly at the "eradication of the national bourgeoisie". Further down the scale, there were the traders, the shop-owners, the artisans and workshops. Among rural settlers were found relatively modest or small-scale farmers, without much mechanization or other means to significantly increase their production and wealth. There were also thousands of Mozambican small-scale farmers, working their land in much the same way as these settlers and with a potential for expansion. Restricted by colonial regulations, some of them had also managed to establish themselves in trade or transport.

Neither one nor the other of these categories were, in practical terms, assured of any place in the new society. The position of FRELIMO was firm, already from the first day:

> - The enemy has no colour. It is not for being white that the colonialists were fought but for being exploiters. Hence, no new landlords or capitalists would be tolerated no matter what colour they might have;
> - The land would now belong to the "people" (it was to be realized through the stae), and those who claimed private rights had better follow the colonialists and leave the country.
>
> (Machel 1975 as summarized by Hermele 1988 p.26)

In terms of the settlers, the message was clear: they would no longer be allowed to continue as private farmers, using land alienated from the Mozambicans and exploiting their labour. In terms of the Mozambican small-scale farmers, the situation was more complicated. Many of them

were nationalists, and had supported the struggle. They had on the whole been deprived of their land, or parts thereof, and had been prevented from such accumulation as migrant wages or other employment would have made possible. They saw independence as a change which would set things right: give them back their land and all the rights which had so far been reserved for the settlers.

The policies adopted during the first years of the FRELIMO government were modified and formulated into a cohesive strategy by the Third FRELIMO Congress in February 1977. In rural areas, the population was to be concentrated in 'communal villages', where they would get access to schools, health services etc. The production was to be organised in state farms and producers' cooperatives. The cooperatives were to grow in the communal villages, whose members would also go for work in the state farms. This exchange would facilitate a step-by-step modernization and increased productivity of the peasant agriculture. Gradually, the peasants would turn into labourers and wage workers in a modernized rural society.

The state farm policy, which in fact came to virtually monopolise government investments and support, also had a concrete economic justification: when colonial society broke down it was no longer possile to uphold production by force and compulsion. In the short term, other ways had to be found to prevent a too drastic fall in production. The state farms were seen as capable of satisfying this need, with heavy investments in equipment and manpower.

State farm policy - the case of CAIL

But political factors were weighing heavily as well. The case of CAIL, well researched by Hermele (1988), is a

good illustration. CAIL (Complexo Agro-Industrial de Limpopo) was the most important of the state farms. It was created on the big Colonato do Limpopo, started in the 1950s. Peasant-farmers had been brought in from Portugal, reaching a maximum of over 1,100 settlers in 1968. They were truly small-scale farmers, each one initially assigned a maxmum of 4 hectares of irrigated land. Soon this limit was increased to 10, and in 1965 a total of 20 hectares per family was allowed.

The project affected Mozambicans in different ways. Already at the outset, around 2,000 families were moved to make room for the project. Although in principle the Colonato was intended for both whites and blacks, few of those who lost land were later allocated irrigated land. Access to pastures and water points were blocked by Colonato fences, and many peasants received no compensation for their losses. Tensions grew, and forced a modification of Colonato policy.

As a first step, Mozambicans were let in "on probation", with a few hectares of irrigated land each. In 1959, the first Mozambicans were given the status of Colono, on equal terms with the settlers. Although consistently behind the settlers in farm size, access to tractors and the like, their numbers rose to near 500 in 1964, when further increase was stopped by the Colonato administration. Even the probation offer proved attractive, and together with the Colonato inclusion of new land, this led to growing numbers of Mozambican families living inside the Colonato area. Applications for probation increased, and by 1974 over 2,500 Mozambicans were on probation:

Table 2. Colonato do Limpopo 1974: number of farming households and allocated land

	No of households	Area in hectares
Colonos	1,380	10,721
whereof Portuguese	968	8,273
" Mozambican	412	2,448
On probation (Mozambicans)	2,584	5,168
TOTAL	3,964	15,889

(Source: Hermele 1988)

The advent of independence increased the struggle for land in the Limpopo valley. The settlers, unsure about the real possibilities to continue, began to leave. The Mozambican colonos entered the local 'Dynamizing Groups' created by FRELIMO to organise and defend popular interests, to use them as a platform against the settlers. A rapidly growing number of peasants in the area demanded access to irrigated land, and without clear instructions from Maputo the number on probation was allowed to reach about 6,000 in 1976.

The Government showed no interest in retaining any settlers, whether big or small, and during 1976 and 1977 virtually all of the settlers left the Colonato. This increased the pressure from the two main categories of Mozambican peasants demanding access to their resources in land and equipment: On the one hand the Mozambican colonos, on the other the poor peasants on probation or without any irrigated land at all. The resolutions taken by FRELIMO at its 1977 Congress were to go counter to the interests of both of these categories. Firstly, state farms and cooperatives should have priority access to the Colonato lands, and were also authorized to incorporate more land where needed. Secondly, and following the flooding of large parts of the

Limpopo valley, the population should be resettled on high lands in communal villages. Administrative measures were if necessary to be used, to get the peasants to comply.

Hermele concludes: "No compromise was attempted with the middle peasantry. As far as the poor peasants outside the Colonato were concerned, the intention was to transform them into labourers on the state farm and cooperatives" (Hermele 1988 p.49). In CAIL, as in many other state farms, the administration went one step further, to integrate new land outside of the old colonial boundaries - some of which they never developed the capacity to use. The contradictions which existed in the colonial system, as exemplified above, were not resolved. Rather, "the implementation of the /FRELIMO/ rural strategy sharpened the existing contradictions and widened their base to an even greater number of ousted peasants". (Ibid p.28)

4. Political participation and rural development

Democracy did not exist in colonial Mozambique any more than in Salazar's Portugal. For Mozambicans, force and oppression left millions with no alternative but to bend their necks and adjust, if not leave the country altogether. FRELIMO saw the end of colonial rule not only as the end of chibalo and forced cashcropping, but also as the beginnings of nation-buiding based on democratic participation in the tradition of 'People's Power' from the war of liberation. Democracy was a central dimension of the constitution adopted by independence (Egerö 1987).

Like the war efforts, the transformation of Mozambique required participation based on a common understanding of the goals and the sacrifices needed to get there. Most of the country had in fact been left politically unaffected by

the war, which was conducted mainly in the northern and north-western, sparsely populated regions. A first measure to spread FRELIMO over the country, dictated not least by the necessity of upholding a minimal societal control, was the creation of 'Dynamizing Groups' or GD's. Formed locally in villages, neighborhoods and work places, they were staffed by militants and sympathizers of FRELIMO as well as opportunists and people anxious to hide their earlier collaboration with the colonial administration.

The GD's with their widely varying membership were the first experiences in democracy for the people. In 1977 a constitutionally defined system for democratic control of the government was erected when elections were held for people's assemblies at all levels from the communal village to the nation. Simultaneously, FRELIMO was transformed from a front to a vanguard party, accepting under a probation system only the most dedicated of those who had entered after the 1974 agreement with Portugal. Mass organizaitons were formed to embrace women, youth and different professional categories. Workers' councils were set up in the major industries, as a first step towards the creation of trade unions in the country.

The process of democratization was to prove slow and riddled with difficulties. From the beginning, the actions of the new organs were circumscribed by Party control and intervention. The GD experiences had shown that the de facto dominating orientation of a local organ depended on the nomination and election process, and Party influence was used to prevent traditional chiefs, régulos and would-be capitalists from entering the new organs. A strong party openly defending the popular interest was undoubtedly a prerequisite for century-oppressed simple peasants to stand

up against their old bosses from colonial days. But Party intervention circumscribed their choice, excluding even such traditional leaders as might have had the support of the community.

The Party intervention, inevitable as it may have been, was a contradictory element in a democratization process. The mass organizations, mandated to work for the wellbeing of their members and at the same time subjected to close scrutiny by the Party, showed signs either of stagnation or of centralized 'dirigista' tendencies replicating those of the Party itself (Egerö 1986). The work methods of the assemblies did not encourage open debate, except on the issues of implementation of directives from the Party or the Government. The process was in this sense a confirmation of the old truth, that democracy can not be extended 'by decree' from above, but has to be contested and conquered in mass action from below.

Whether intended by FRELIMO or not, the strategy of democratization under centralized control contains a fundamental contradiction, which may itself contribute to bring real meaning into the concepts of democracy and thereby over time strengthen the historical move towards democracy. A vivid example of this process is given by an account of the Women's movement, the OMM, during the 1980s (Arnfred 1988). OMM grew out of a Women's Detachment, created on the personal initiative of President Samora Machel during the war and supported by FRELIMO in its suruggle for equal rights with the men. After independence, Party priorities changed and so did its policy on women's struggle.

The principal tasks of the OMM after independence were no longer to be related to a change in gender relations, but to support the participation of women in production, and to

fight against traditional elements in social relations such as initiation rites, bride price and polygyny. Machel was quite specific, when in 1979 he said, that "the antagonistic contradiction is not found between man and woman, but rather between women and the social order, between all exploited women and men and the social order" (quoted in Arnfred 1988 p.11). Four years later, the economic - and social - crisis had brought a very different climate to the Party, expressed during the fourth Party Congress. A decision was taken that OMM should hold an extraordinary conference, as part of a revision of current policies on women's issues. The new emphasis was clear in the directives:

> "being a matter of concern to the whole society, the liberation of women is, in the first place, the task of women themselves. No one can liberate a woman. Women must take over the struggle for emancipation themselves" (see Arnfred ibid p.14).

Led in this spirit by a Party leader, the preparatory work sparked off intense discussions all over the country. Opposing drought, war and famine, women held thousands of meetings and interviews: "Once again it was demonstrated that when people, in this context mainly women, are allowed to speak out on the basis of their own felt needs and concerns, not in isolation but as part of a national movement and with the prospect of changing their own lives, amazing reserves of social energy are let loose." (Idem)

From the side of the Party, this development may have been interpreted as containing the embryo of a liberation from Party guidance and control. Be that as it may, shortly before its start the OMM conference was by Party decision postponed for six months. When eventually it was held, the President personally presided over all the plenary sessions, flanked by other top Party leaders. Few of the delegates

got a chance to speak, except in one day of group discussions. Consequently, "The final resolutions of the Conference are neither radical nor precise." (Idem)

Although similar close and systematic observations are not available on the functioning of the people's assemblies, there is no doubt that for several years they worked mainly to communicate decisions from top to bottom, and to resolve matters of organisation and resource use for already set priorities. Thus, the state bias towards big projects and state farms was often the subject of central Party critique and attempts at correction (Egerö 1988 p.97). However, the voice of those directly affected, the peasants, was not heard strongly enough to influence matters, not until they were given the special channel of Party committees moving over the whole country in preparation for the 1983 congress.

Party reports to the Congress told of the almost total neglect of the cooperative sector, as well as of the peasant smallholder who still was the main source of subsistence and reproduction of the people. Not only were consumer goods almost entirely lacking in the shops, leaving little incentive to the peasant to produce for the market, but vital implements such as hoes, files and seeds had for long been made available in highly insufficient quantities. Coupled with the employment crisis for migrant workers and all those linked to transit trade, this had undermined the peasant economies to the extent of eliminating their reserves against agricultural disruptions caused by drought or war.

Thus, it was the weak resistance to growing MNR banditry and the widespread starvation from the drought which alarmed the central authorities and led to the investigations preceding the Congress. The democratic institutions were an important part in rural transformation only in the

potential for participation thet were holding out for the peasantry. In the short run, they may just have added to the frustrations arising from a government policy contrary to their interests.

5. Destabilisation, its instruments and effects

Destabilisation has been the predominant feature of South African strategies to control regional development. This is however not the behavior of an extremist government isolated from the rest of the world. In its regional strategy, Pretoria is supported by USA whose 'constructive engagement' policy has a distinct bias towards South Africa in its non-recognition of the Angolan government and support to UNITA, withholding of assistance to Mozambique, violations of the UN arms embargo on South Africa etc. In a certain sense therefore, South Africa is acting as an agent of important external interests who would like to see a different regional development from that outlined by the majority governments themselves.

The Pretoria strategy against Mozambique has unfolded in a step-wise manner. During the first years, the emphasis was on economic levers. Returns from migrant labour and transit trade, which made up a substantial part of foreign earnings, were reduced through deep cuts in labour recruitment, new terms of reimbursement for mine labour and changes in volumes and composition of goods taken through Maputo. These steps coincided with Mozambique's decision to close the border with Rhodesia in support of the liberation struggle for Zimbabwe, which gave substantial losses in trade returns and a drastically growing unemployment especially around the Beira corridor.

With the independence of Zimbabwe, military means were

to become the major tools of destabilisation. The MNR terrorist organisation created by the Rhodesian security forces (Flower 1987) was moved to South Africa, recruitment was stepped up and in the years from 1981 increasing numbers were spread over the whole of Mozambique, equipped and continually supported by South Africa. Three principal targets were attacked: economic installations and infrastructure; government and party representatives; and education and health services. A fourth target was to become the defenceless peasants themselves. Subsistence production was increasingly interrupted, causing growing numbers of people to flock to cities and other centres for security and support.

Improvements in social services was a viable and highly appreciated gain from independence for the rural population (Saul 1985). The importance attached to this sector by the FRELIMO leadership was reflected in government budgets and added significantly to its popularity among the people. Thus the aim of the MNR banditry in attacking the social services was to undermine the legitimacy of the government itself. As a second step, MNR military activities were in the mid-1980s concentrated to an offensive to divide the country along the Zambezi river, possibly with the prospect of forcing the FRELIMO government to retreat to the northern parts of the country (Eduards 1988).

This threat to the very survival of Mozambique as a nation seems to have been averted, at least for the time being. It forms however an important background to government politics in relation to South Africa, in particular the Nkomati Agreement of 1984 and subsequent efforts to build economic relations between the two countries.

What has destabilisation meant to the rural population?

Today, some 4 million people of a total of 14-15 million are displaced inside the country or in the neighbouring countries. Almost half of the population lack a secure food supply. Some 150,000 Mozambicans have been killed directly in the war, and an additional estimated 350,000 have died from indirect causes. Over 2,500 schools and at least 800 health posts or clinics have been destroyed or closed down. The rural trade network has largely been destroyed. Mortality from famine and diseases remains very high; an estimated one third of all children die before the age of five. (Eduards 1988, Hermele 1988a, Mendonça 1988)

6. Towards a new strategy of rural transformation

The unfolding crisis has over the last 5-6 years led to a series of revisions of the government strategy and politics of the 1970s. In sum, they amount to the shelving of the goal to establish a socialist society, free from exploitation, in favor of a unification of all social strata in defence of national survival. The potential longterm effects are likely to be profound.

Three aspects stand out: the reduction in direct state intervention, the re-privatization and restoration of market mechanisms, and the removal of restrictions for capitalist ventures, both small and big, internal and external, in the country. In addition, the terms of rural/urban trade are shifted in favor of rural producers, not least the smallholders. In the process, the government is trying to create means to dampen the effects of the inevitable social differentiation.

The case of the flagship among state firms, CAIL, may illustrate the changes. Hermele (1988) argues, that the failure of the state farms cannot be blamed only on their

organizational complexity or the advanced technology used. A major contradiction was built into the state farm project in the sense that the same Mozambican colonos and poor peasants who had been deprived of access to the state farm land (see above p.18), were to assume key functions as foremen and administrators, workers and drivers, of the state farm. Their motivation led them to withhold their support to, or even actively counter, the success of the state farms project.

In 1983, CAIL was dismembered and a complete reorganization carried out. Based on the old colonato villages in the irrigated area, a new geographical division was implemented. Each village area was subdivided into land for a state farm, production cooperatives, "private" middle-level farmers and peasants respectively. In this way, 14,000 peasants have been allocated small plots in the area, in all around 10,000 hectares. 440 private farmers, with farms ranging from 2 to 200 hectares, together occupy 8,700 hectares. 13 cooperatives and 7 state farms have 2,200 and 7,500 hectares respectively. Since the reorganization was carried out, both production and productivity has improved considerably.

All land is still nationally owned. However, the redistribution of land, carried out even in areas such as the Green Zone belts surrounding the cities, is accompanied by improved security of tenancy, up to 50 years. In trying to reestablish a rural trade network, efforts are made to transfer trade from the state marketing organization AGRICOM to private traders. Most price controls have been withdrawn. Producer prices have been increased manyfold, leaving a distinctly better return on agricultural production despite the effects of radical devaluations of the Metical.

Many of these reforms were initiated in the period since the 1983 party Congress. They were all built into an Economic Recovery Programme (known by its Portuguese acronym as PRE), formulated during a period of preparatory discussions with the World Bank and IMF for the joint agreement signed in March 1986. This programme (Gvt. Moz. 1987) can be seen as the Mozambique version of the Structural Adjustment package. The social effects of this package are well-known; growing differentiation, increased hardships especially for the urban poor, deteriorating social services with at least part of the costs transferred to the consumer. This holds for PRE as well: staff cuts restrict the already limited capacity of existing services, and the pricing of services restrains the real access of the poor to education and medical care (Eduards 1988).

The effects are now increasingly visible. In the urban areas, today up to half of the rationed food supply, which earlier rarely balanced popular demand, remains unsold; the poor cannot afford it anymore. Enrolment rates for primary eduction are going down, and attendance at both clinics and hospitals is in many cases reduced to half or less (Hermele 1988a).

7. Trends and perspectives

The changes that are taking place in Mozambique today are only beginning to be reported. In a situation of war and social turmoil, systematic studies are neither a high priority nor very easy to carry out. Nevertheless, trends are now discernable which confirm the expected: the differentiation and class formation that was suppressed by the development strategy and policies of the 1970s, is now a conspicuous part of the new social reality.

In the rural areas, this process is facilitated both by the structural changes as such, and by deliberate action by the government. State investment is increasingly guided by expected economic returns, and scarce agricultural inputs are therefore given to the most efficient producers. These are in many cases the private farmers, who with their resources are able to respond better to inputs than the poor peasants still working their hoes. International assistance from sources such as USAID and the World Bank reinforces this process by being earmarked exclusively for the private sector.

What is there to counterbalance to this trend? Is the current potential of the cooperative sector, stepmotherly treated by the government at least up to the 1983 Party Congress, a factor of significance? In at least one area, the Maputo Green Zone belts, they seem to have taken root and be growing. The number of cooperatives has increased from 7 to 181 during the seven years from 1980. Of the 10,500 members, 90% are women. This is an important factor in the consolidation of the cooperatives. Supported by a special Green Zone Programme started in 1980, which also catered for the women's needs for social services such as creches, their conditions, motivation and methods of work bore rapid fruit. Already by 1982, the internal organization of the cooperatives had advanced so much, that they formed their own organization, which has since enabled them to successfully resist attempts by the Government and the Party to intervene and control their activities (Arnfred 1988, Economia 1987).

In the national context, this is likely to be an exception. Roesch's report from the Limpopo Valley in early 1987 demonstrates the current fragility of producers' coopera-

tives there:

> "Only a handful of the 40 or so cooperatives and pre-cooperatives formerly in existence in the Baixo Limpopo are still fully operational... ...the vast majority of members continue to be marginal producers, mostly old women, for whom membership offers a degree of subsistence security... Very little of the increased support promised the cooperative sector has yet been delivered. Though a few cooperatives are still holding their own, the majority are teetering on the brink of dissolution." (Roesch 1988 p.82)

The peasant or family sector in Baixo Limpopo is today subject to increasing differentiation. The poorest households are left with little support through the economic pragmatism of present government policies, and are effectively barred from the only source of income that would make a real difference, a contract for work in South Africa. By contrast, the small number of migrant workers still going to South Africa "are increasingly taking on the character of an economic aristocracy in the countryside, with all the potential for transforming themselves into a petty capitalist class" (Roesch op.cit. p.84f). The profits they make on consumer goods brought back from South Africa are invested in trucks for trade and transport, and in the hire of labour for increased agricultural production.

Within this dynamics of change can be observed the formation of alliances between those who are in control of resources, private or public: "This alliance of private and state bureaucratic interests was obviously already extant prior to the reforms, but the opportunities which they have created for private enterprise have given a strong impulse to this process, in both urban and rural areas." (Ibid p.88f) The links between the private and public sector opens the door for the new 'entrepreneurs' to the political sphere, where they are beginning to compete openly for

positions and influence.

Remains the social sector, at the heart of FRELIMO's relations to the people. Today, given the strained resources of the government, the costs of defence and the enormous needs for reconstruction and rehabilitation of social services, the privatization of these services would appear unavoidable and only a matter of time. The forms may vary - churches and missions are likely to agree to reopen their schools and clinics, which were closed down or nationalized by independence. Any other form of privatization will make access to the services dependent on the buying power of the household.

In sum, the development which FRELIMO in its grand nation-building project was determined to avoid is there today, set in motion by the failure of that strategy and now a necessity in the interest of national survival. The colonial society is reasserting itself, in new forms without Lisbon and settler control but in esence a continuation of the capitalist modernization started already before independence. The prospect of resumption of relations with South Africa can only reinforce this development.

The future of this process, like its past, is intimately connected to the internal developments within South Africa itself. Today, a rational capitalist development of the productive forces such as that envisaged in the PRE is effectively prevented by the war. The cessation of this war is unlikely without a major change within apartheid society itself. The longer the destabilisation continues, the more distorted will be the economic growth, leaving large segments of the rural population in a state of chronic poverty.

Beyond Pretoria, the future of Mozambique is today increasingly in the hands of the international community, in

its direct involvement in Mozambican economy and society, and - not least - in the contribution it is prepared to make to the transition to majority rule in South Africa itself.

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Addendum : On Rural Transformation

The concept of rural transformation was, as remarked during the January workshop, not discussed or defined in any of the contributions to the workshop. This may be seen as a sign of difficulties with the concept itself, its theoretical and practical utility in research.

Time does not allow me to do the library search of titles on "rural transformation", to see how the term has been applied in different contexts. As it was discussed at the end of the workshop, only one characteristic was mentioned; social differentiation. I understood the interventions to mean that rural trasformation implied increased differentiation. This is, in may view, neither necessary nor sufficient as a definition.

In its literal sense, "transformation" means change, from one state to another. A slow, continuous change would seem insufficient to qualify for transformation; rather the term should refer to a distinguishable qualitative change over a limited period and affecting the whole area/population under discussion.

"Transformation" could refer to changes in the social relations of production, in access to the means of production. An Ethiopian land reform or a Mozambican state farm/cooperative farming programme could both be called rural transformation. At the same time, the intended (and real?) effect of these reforms were to hold back on or even reduce rural differentiation. On the other hand, the current structural adjustment reforms in African countries contain incentives for increased differentiation which, if it materialises, would also justify the use of the term rural transformation.

Turning to the social sector, it is more debatable whether radical changes may be called a transformation. The successful

literacy programmes in Cuba and Tanzania have given people new means to comprehend and thereby act on their environment. But that is not enough for a change to take place. Rather it belongs to the field of causes or conditioning agents for such a change as could be called a transformation.

Implicit in the above is the need for an agent of change. Local initiatives can cause substantial changes for the local community (cf. the first ujamaa villages in southern Tanzania, created before 1967). In any context where a larger area/population is considered, an external agent would seem necessary for a transformation to occur. A liberation struggle leads to changes in state power, and the new state is the agent of change. A state coup may give the same result. A policy of privatisation is equal to substituting non-state for state forces; given the conditions the changes could be enough radical to be called a transformation.

Even if a general agreement of a definition along the above lines could be reached, a central issue remains unanswered (and perhaps unanswerable): what degree of change, over what period of time and what proportion of a rural area, would be necessary for the term "transformation" to be applicable? This seems to be an empirical more than a theoretical issue; the answer must be based on utility aspects in conceptualising different processes of change. Thus, the empirical work done in the IDE Africa Project could itself yield some of the inputs to such an analysis.

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