Mozambique: poverty in war and poverty in peace

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Abstract

Summarizing the political and economic evolution of Mozambique since the end of colonialism until the present time and cross-referencing it with narrations of Mozambicans who experienced these distinctive stages of the recent History of their country, this article starts with a reflection on the explanatory factors concerning the absence of historical framing and anthropological approaches in studies of poverty and an interpretation of the theoretical outlooks on which these studies are based. Some of the possible causes for the high rate of poverty registered in this country were examined and given explanation against the existence of direct link between war and poverty. In the end, the post-conflict period and some of features of the pursued policies were analyzed and the author concludes emphasizing the relevance of perceiving poverty in a contextualized manner, inserting it into the set of economic and social relations from which it is , globally and locally, a fundamental part.

Introduction

The current article is part of the research project Pobreza e Paz nos PALOP (Poverty and Peace in the PALOP)[1], focused on the links between poverty and war/peace in Luso-African countries and the way this connection is perceived by the social actors.

The research, predominantly anchored on the manner the association between poverty and war in Mozambique is perceived by social actors, is equally based on the result of analysis produced in preceding years focusing on the impact war and social and economic situations have had over Mozambican families in several dimensions (Costa, 1995, 2004, 2006, 2007). In this article, the previous reflections are coupled with those being developed throughout this last year, which implied the undertaking of field research in the city of Maputo in August and September 2008. In the course of field research, some additional documental and bibliographic investigation was completed and key personalities, who have produced surveys on topics regarding this project in various institutions, were contacted. With the purpose of obtaining some diversity, ten insightful interviews were done and five life stories from a sample of individuals from different social strata were collected. It was decided to reach people over 40 years old who lived through distinctive stages of Mozambique's recent history: colonial period, war and socialist period. We interviewed five females and ten males, all residing in Maputo, having the following professions: driver (3), university lecturer (3), economist (2), housekeeper (2), doorman (1), seller (1), healer (1), public servant/administrative (1), teaching assistant (1). In terms of literary qualifications, the subjects could be divided into two groups: one for those without formal education (1), with primary (7) or secondary education (1) and a second group composed by those with undergraduate college degrees (2), postgraduate Masters (1) or Doctorates degree (3). With the

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exception of two of individuals, all of them come from provinces in South Mozambique.

When proposing to study the social actors' perceptions regarding the occurrence of poverty and war, the historical perspective comes up as particularly relevant. The social perceptions are molded by former experiences which inscribe themselves into recent and past memories. One of the main requirements to the understanding of poverty in our times is to acknowledge the past by the way of narratives, contextualize them historically and simultaneously understand how these memories are currently recreated and recalled within specific contexts and process, informing the procedures and strategies of the social agents and consequentially their perceptions[2].

In this article, the occurrence of poverty, war and peace in Mozambique are examined throughout the period extending from the final stages of colonialism until present times. This analysis is preceded by a reflection on the features explaining the absence of historical framing and anthropological approaches in studies of poverty and an interpretation of the theoretical outlooks on which these studies are founded.

History and Anthropology in Studies of Poverty

Many studies of poverty in Africa are relatively recent but there is a lack of any historical focus that allows to relate the contemporary expression of the event to its evolution in the past and under a "long term" perspective. The examination of poverty in Africa begins on the date theses studies were initiated, which in Mozambique happened in 1989. But if poverty, akin to its definition by current literature and development policies, is a relatively recent construction (Green, 2006: 8), this terminology has been used to designate circumstances of precarious livelihood since immemorial times.

The relative "short term" these studies about poverty in Africa evoke has numerous explanations: scarcity and inadequacy of written sources[3] and oral sources who overestimate the prosperity periods. But the largest obstacle to a historical investigation of poverty in Africa comes from the notion that poverty would be mostly an outcome from conflict with non-Africans. Before this contact, there would have been a balanced situation, resulting from the security provided by the extended family to their members (Álvarez, 2001: 60). This outlook is emphasized in studies that refer to an economic crisis produced by the slave trade and, afterwards, on account of colonialism. Namely those concerning the colonial period in Mozambique, situations of poverty resulting from banning Africans from the best farming land and the negative impact it had on exportable production in family-owned agricultural businesses (cf. Fortuna, 1993).

Therefore, beyond the effects that the slave trade and colonialism had over the economic situation of the Mozambican populations – and depending on the period, region and social group under study, these effects were assorted and not necessarily conductive to situations of poverty – the most relevant fact to consider is the absence of studies providing appropriate answers related to the real capacities of societies in

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[2] The theoretical outlooks in "socio-anthropology of development" (cf. Olivier de Sardan, 1998) and sociology of development focused on the actors (*actor-oriented*) (cf. Long, 1992) have inspired this current analysis.

[3] Iliffe mentions written sources about poverty in Africa as scarce when compared to the existent sources about Europe, and many of them are by non-African travellers "using a categorisation of poverty foreign to the African people" (cf. Iliffe, 1987, cit. in Swiatkowski, 2002: 15)

Mozambique (or in the entire Africa) in fulfilling the basic needs of the population throughout different ages.

Studies of poverty as a specific topic of research have been arousing an interest quite restricted to Anthropology's ground (cf. Booth, Leach and Tierney, 1999)[4], although anthropologists have always been preoccupied in demonstrating the social construction of categories and the importance of social relations in sustaining inequalities (Dumont, 1970; Douglas, 1991; Hart, 2001; cit in Green, 2006: 4). However, as much for anthropologists as for the informants, poverty is viewed as a social relation, not an absolute condition (cf. Sahlins, 1972).

If there are few Anthropological works on this topic (cf. Ferguson, 1999; Englund, 2002), such does not imply that this science has not contributed to the construction of poverty, as a category of studies of development and as a concept pertinent to determinate social categories (Green, 2006: 4).

Meanings of Poverty

One of the difficulties in researches about poverty is related to their distinctive meanings, and no coincidence exists between universalist and relativist perspectives (cf. Swiatkowski, 2003). According to the first point of view, there are dimensions in poverty which are shared by all poor individuals in every culture associated to a basic functionality of the human body. The economic theory on poverty grows from this standpoint, based on a universal concept of basic needs founded on Baulch's pyramid (1996), sustaining the developmental stances followed by international institutions and poverty rates measured in different countries. Through universal parameters, destitute individuals from any cultural, economic or social system are standardized. *"The poor have much in common (…) and the proximate causes of their poverty are represented as being remarkably similar across geographical regions and national boundaries"* (Green, 2006: 10).

Simultaneously, poverty being a social construction of international organizations, means that everything constituting and defining it can be changed (and has been changing) according to the point of view of those who define it and dispose of funds to "fight" it. This indicates that poverty is not seen yet as an outcome of historical and social relations, but as something existing in societies and having to be eliminated in order to preserve social functionality (Green, 2006: 18-20).

The supporters of the relativist outlook, on the other hand, consider poverty as a complex social occurrence that presumes a relationship between those who have the power and means and those who do not. It implies by itself a situation of tension or conflict. To these authors, such definitions of poverty may vary according to relational logics and according to economic and cultural structures within societies.[5]

Green (2006, p.38) adds that "poverty is not a 'thing' to be attacked, but the outcome of social inequalities that must be confronted. (...) the poor are poor not because of 'poverty', but are poor because of other people".

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[4] Among anthropologists who specifically focused on the topic of poverty Oscar Lewis must be mentioned (1996[1966]).

[5] In Guinea-Bissau, for instance, many populations call "hunger times" to those occasions during the year when there is a shortage of rice, whether or not they have access to other provisions with equivalent or superior nutritional value.

Understanding poverty as a multidimensional event, as the outcome of social and historical relations and as a category through which social agents classify and perform in the world conciliates the universalist and relativist perspectives on this event. This happens for different motives: on the one hand, by historically contextualizing poverty, one goes beyond a perspective on the event as something that can only be defined in terms of determinate social and cultural contexts – these in their past and present moments are always the result of interrelations, dependencies and bonds of power, with other contexts more or less remote and are not, and never were, homogeneous and impermeable entities (cf. Geertz [1973] 1993; Amselle 1990, Olivier de Sardan 1998; Long 1992); on the other hand, since the current universal definitions of poverty stipulate the lives of those defined as such: the majority of "poor" resides in countries that rely on international aids and whose economical and social policies derive from development agencies' guidelines, consequently the dimensions and values that support the definitions of poverty become "universal references points" (Swiatkowski, 2002: 5 and 8). However, such does not entail the existence of a uniformed concept of poverty at a worldwide level. Quite the opposite, cultural and social specificities acquire a special projection in this era of globalization, and sharing out determinate characteristics of poverty between diverse cultures does not imply that only those characteristics can describe and explain poverty throughout the world.

In short, to understand poverty it is necessary to account for its "universal" definitions and the specificities by which it is defined in specific cultural contexts. Nevertheless, these different perceptions and categorizations of poverty are not, in the majority of situations, apprehensible through the selection of the same variables, as they are not apprehensible through the same type of research methodologies.

Studies of Poverty and War in Mozambique

The first study concerning poverty in Mozambique dates from 1989. It was then estimated that 60% of the population lived in conditions of "absolute poverty" (Oppenheimer and Raposo, 2002: 45). Before that, poverty could only be indirectly assessed, either by means of the memories of Mozambicans or by descriptions of travelers, or still by records referring to economy and demography.

Although there are no specific studies about poverty before 1989, in some investigations regarding the History of Mozambique (cf. Isaacman, 1979, 1983; Pélissier, 1984; Vial and White, 1980; Newitt, 1995, among others) the distinctive conflicts are viewed with more or less thoroughness: the colonial war, conflicts in the aftermath of the worldwide wars, conflicts resulting from peace-making campaigns and in conflicts in the pre-colonial period. Once again, a few mentions were made about the serious economic crisis originated by droughts that resulted in increased mortality rates, diseases, shortage of water and food supplies and a consequent migration of populations to less affected regions. All these lead to the escalation of conflicts and wars. Newitt (1995: 253) stated that Frei João dos Santos (1609) depicted these events in Mozambique in 1580.

More recently, some studies have been made about the colonial war and its impact on the economic advancement of Mozambique. For example, João Mosca (2005: 128) describes the situation after 1960 in the following terms:

Large public investments were made, with military and policing purposes: it went from a restrictive economic policy to an expansive one, with effects on inflation, allowing a short term economic growth (but only later). In a context of war, the growth and

emergence of several economic interests resulted in the acceleration of the revolutionary movements and of the economic crisis.

Anchored in a chronology by Balthazar Jr. (1993), Jochen Oppenheimer (1992-1994: 171) declares that the end of the colonial period (since 1973) was marked by a plunge in production with dwindled investments and capital loss. This crisis stretched until 1977, when there was a confirmed recovery which lasted up to 1981; still the declining trend in the gross national product was not reversed before the starting of PRE[6] in 1987.

From the colonial period until the end of the 80s Mozambique had sustained regular economical crises alternating with shorts periods of increased production. The consequence of these periods in the living conditions of the population was assorted and that assortment had been particularly noticeable in the last years of colonialism, in result of political options made by the colonial government within an atmosphere of warfare. Anne Pitcher (2002: 30-33) mentions that, in the end of the sixties, the monetary revenues represented about 44 per cent of the income of families in rural areas, the remaining obtained by subsistence agricultural production. The author analyzed the discrepancies in terms of social-economic development during that period, and declares that these discrepancies have formed an atmosphere of conflict and distrust amid the regions and population/social groups which had grown at disparate rhythms. Simultaneously, since the beginning of the armed conflict the Frelimo movement had contributed to the growing tensions between distinctive social groups and regions throughout the country[7].

Surveying the final stage of colonialism gives an insightful reply regarding the post-independence economic and military events. This ensues by reasons of continuity and discontinuity. If there is discontinuity in economic conditions (the "crisis" that falls upon Mozambique from 1977 onwards can be explained by the policies that demolished the situation inherited from the colonial period), continuities are found at the military conditions, relating the colonial war to the conflict between Renamo and Frelimo. Borges Coelho (2003: 177 and 180) says that throughout the colonial period there emerges a potential violence produced by the militarization of society, with universal recruitment for regular armed forces, mandatory grouping of the population into settling and formation of militias.

These militias (mostly youngsters) had developed, until the Independence, a culture of violence that finds fertile territory for expansion in those days. Most of all, the new leadership sees them as collaborators of enemy, joining the several thousands of ex-combatants from the colonial war armies who were not only refused an integration in the FPLM – Popular Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, but also pursued, punished and "purified" in reeducation camps (Coelho, 2003: 1998)[8].

Such potential violence was joined by external aggression (that, in a certain way, is internal, since part of the forces that Rhodesia supported are composed by Mozambicans persecuted and ostracized by the Socialist State), economic crisis and

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[6] PRE – Programa de Reablitação Económica or Program for Economic Rehabilitation, name used in Mozambique to designate the Program of Structural Adjustment.
[7] About this topic, see Abrahamson, H. and A. Nilsson, A (1995: 25)
[8] In the colonial army, there were about 30 thousand Mozambicans serving it. In 1975, a treaty was signed, in which the Mozambican army would be composed of ten thousand men who had fought for the liberation "so that the political trust could be assured", the compulsory military service was instituted since 1978 and around 1980 the army was composed of 70 thousand men" (Coelho Macaringue, 2002: 49 and note 6).

disillusionment with the rural development policies. (cf. Abrahamson; Nilsson, 1995; Casal, 1988).

Can the seeds of the economic crisis be situated in the Colonial State, nonetheless? Obviously they can, if taken into consideration the analphabetism rates, absence of Mozambican elites, and a violent colonial exploitation that by itself "imposed" alternative policies of development for the newly independent State. But were there no midpoint options between the extremes of a colonial policy and a nationalized and centralized economy? One interviewee tells about an experiment conducted after the independence on the topic of insurances, which he defined as a successful case:

> "I got into the insurance business. All insurance had been nationalized, and there was a single guideline for all country, the EMOZE (...) we signed some contracts that prevented the Portuguese from departing. We paid them a good salary, they guaranteed employment in Portugal after staying for five years in Mozambique, and then would leave with five thousand Dollars. There was a certain pragmatism (...) we had good results and it worked well for a long time. (...) In banking they did not do the same and suffered the consequences" (S.J. 6/9/2008).[9]

After 1977, the economic situation showed some recovery. Abrahamson and Nilsson (1995: 48) talk about the "euphoria of independence" that allowed mobilizing the population into taking part of "campaigns" and voluntary labour. Simultaneously real investments in social sectors were made, such as expanding the educational system, reducing illiteracy rates (from 93 to 70% in five years), increasing the number of health centers in rural districts (from one center for each 26 thousand residents to one for every 10 thousand residents). But a few years later, in the beginning of the eighties, the signs of economic retrocession became visible and the crisis became deeper until 1987 (launch of the PRE) (Oppenheimer, 1992-1994: 200). Mozambican leaders considered this economic crisis a consequence of war, coupled with the destruction of infrastructures and communication channels and the relocation of population inflicted by the conflict, in conjunction with natural catastrophes[10], another significant cause. The Bretton Woods Institutions blame the economic policies as the main culprit for this situation.

This last cause, or conjugation of two causes, does not embrace the complexity of features that may explain the poverty rates observed in Mozambique since the time it "became" a measurable occurrence (nevertheless clearly existing before this point) and induce the ranks this country has been reaching in worldwide development markers.

Although war by itself does not explain the occurrence of poverty, even if certainly contributing to exacerbate it, poverty by itself does not explain the occurrence of war. An all set of political factors are the most liable explanative causes for poverty and war, in our times and in the past. This set of political factors, present in the colonial stage and remained until the present time, merging year after year, have contribute to the low rates of productivity and socioeconomic development that have been registered, and also to the violence rates observed in wartime and that in peacetime still constitute a menace to the security of Mozambicans.

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[9] The anonymity of the interviewed is preserved.
[10] This theory was defended by Mozambican leaders up until mid 80s.

Given that it is impossible to analyze all these factors in detail, the most important ones will be emphasized on the following pages.

War: Interpretations and Perceptions

When approaching the last war in Mozambican territory, it becomes difficult to delineate its designation. In Mozambique, the war was publicly seen as something more than just "armed bandits" and terrorists pay rolled by foreign interests only after the decease of Samora Machel. The effects of this misinformation in the identification of the war become clear along the time, as confirmed by the field research. Immediately after the peace agreement, (Costa, 1995) the conversations were about "attacks", "bandits", troops (Frelimo's army), but afterward, in the midst of the consolidation of peace from 1999 to 2001, the designation becomes "war" or "this bandits war" or even "this last war". The expression "civil war" was spoken by one of the informants during the last field research as such: "During this last war, called the 16 years war, civil war, it is called a war of destabilization, but that is the political version of the event, but it was a civil war" (S.J. 9/6/2008 August 2008).

Another informant tells about his personal opinion on the causes of war:

> "That renegade (André Matsangaíssa) had no academic skills (...) and every single member in the Politic Bureau was a genius. Why did not they ask him "what do you want, a house, a car?" He remained there (in Rhodesia) and the government makes mistakes yet again, decides the cities are overcrowded and builds Reeducation Camps, captures people in there and that creates dissatisfaction, so they run to join the Renamo forces. Next there is people fleeing to nearby countries, most were joining the Renamo(...) When Chissano was nominated he announced "now we are going to form a commission for peace talks and those so called Armed Bandits will decide where we'll meet" "(...) Chissano became the president in 86 – many people died since that speech until peace arrived, the war wouldn't stop (…). People's suffering was motivated by war, by the Government, and isn't Frelimo the Government? "(S.T. 27/8/2008).

In this quotation, Rhodesia and South Africa are not directly mentioned, for this informant the guilty parts are the politicians and the Government.

Although there is no doubt about the role played first by Rhodesia, next by South Africa, as main motivators in this conflict, it is also evident that Renamo has relied on a source of internal support. This support came primarily from the rural populations which, because of the political and economic projects promoted by Frelimo, had felt marginalized by the same State which was supposed to integrate them (Geffray, 1991).

Other than the political changes taking place in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe and South Africa, which partially explain the discrepancies in war tactics along the years, the Mozambican populations had extremely diverse reactions throughout the conflict opposing Renamo and Frelimo (cf. Costa, 1995). Furthermore, this diversity is equally enlightened by strategies shaped by the populations which allowed them either to flee or to remain and appropriate the conflict (Lubkemann, 2005: 500-501).

Here are some transcripts of interviews where such diversity of situations is reported:

> "My aunt's children were killed during this civil war, and some other acquaintances were killed too (...), some took refuge in Zimbabwe, but my nuclear family never went away (...) they never wanted to go anywhere else,[11] (...) I was going there with the wife and children and we were attacked, thank God we came out safe, some were killed, others were injured, but not us. But I kept going back, if I die, I die, I need to go back to the land of my parents, never passed two or three years without going back." (B.C. 9/8/2008).

> "I made research on cotton in 1991 (...) They took me someplace and only after I left, I found out it was an area under Renamo's control. (...) I discovered that the farmers and the multinational companies had created a way to produce cotton in warzones, to later be traded in areas controlled by the Government. And all those were informal local networks, Renamo's guerrilla men had permitted the creation of a cotton-producing economy in the regions they controlled and everybody benefited from it." (S.J.6/9/2008).

The statements above mirror different strategies of "conflict appropriation", which combined individual/collective interests with the purposes of the conflicting forces in the field. This situation, in the case of cotton production, falls into a paradox of two conflicting forces reaching an "agreement" with corporations and farmers of a certain region in order to establish a local "peace" that contrasts the warfare condition inflicting the country.

This local appropriation of the conflict goes against reports that tried to elucidate the extreme violence of some attacks by Renamo forces as resulting merely from a "war tactic", planned by top of the hierarchy strategists (cf. Geffray, 1989; Vines, 1991; Finnegan, 1992).

Eventually, that would turn out to be truthful for some cases, but in many others, as it is referred by Lubkemann (2005:504): "Violence was an experience problematized and fundamentally shaped by the social formations and micropolitical matrixes in which it took place".

Lubkemann (2005: 505) clarifies this local appropriation of violence, since certain social actors could not be mobilized by projects the purposes of which meant substituting one centralized power for another, in opposition they have easily committed to projects that would bring a decreased influence of central powers over matters intrinsic to smaller communities.

The manner which conflict between Renamo and Frelimo had escalated, though not completely understood yet, has resulted from strategies required by distinctive politic, economic and social contexts at regional and chronological stages, from adjustments in the implicated foreign interests and from economic goals of leaderships on both sides of

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[11] Clearly, the reasons stated by the interviewee may not be truthful. For example, the family may have decided to remain in the region to join Renamo. But we are not analysing the veracity of the statement, but the fact that in a same region the population's coping strategies are so varied.

the court. But the changes also derived from strategies developed by the population to cope with the presence of soldiers and the possibility of appropriation by violent manners, as a way to solve disputes and local conflicts or to implement strategies to achieve power and/or autonomy. At last, these strategies are as well a consequence of assorted economic conditions, while such diversity was partially the outcome of opportunities that were inevitably created by the conflict.

Regarding this topic, Cramer (2006a: 400-402) condemns the event of all rural population of Mozambique being reduced to a homogeneous conglomerate, living of subsistence agriculture. The author claims that those managing to produce spare provisions or find additional monetary income might survive and even expand their activities, attracting extremely cheap labour since those who did not have advantages would accept to work for any wage, as long as it would give them some purchasing power. The author believes this situation has lead to the devise of economic networks that have persisted in the post-war (cf. Cramer: 2006b).

However, for most population in the period, the living conditions were unbearable. Meanwhile, converging war effects and socialist economic policies shunned, in many cases, a distinction between causes at the root of these conditions. For that reason, when the informants were asked about what effects war has had over their lives, the answers went toward this, or toward the economic conditions stemmed from socialist policies. Wartime is designated as "suffering times", of "big sacrifices" and "hunger moments".

> "My daughters would go to Maputo to forager and see if they could find anything, sometimes they would bring nothing, the supplies were only one kilogram of rice, half of sugar. My husband would go to the border and bring something, but sometimes we had nothing, no sugar nor tea. Then we got a *machamba*, but those were times of big sacrifices." (R.Z. 3/9/2008).

> "During childhood, things were good for me, in my home there was nothing missing, we had it all, we had cattle and milk, my father worked in South Africa and my mother worked in the farm (...). It was not nice the arrival of Frelimo, it was awful, they destroyed many things, it was bad, and they were obnoxious, when they found the village they started to do damages. (...) At those times, we had a lot of bovine cattle, over sixty heads belonging to my father, my brother and I, what ruined everything was that war, that civil war that lasted for 16 years. They came and took everything; we were left with nothing in a single day." (J.L. 26/8/2008).

Peace, (In) security and Poverty

When the informants were asked about the present situation, in terms of security (violence) and living conditions, comparing it to the situation endured during the war, those who have a lower education qualifications (most only attended basic school) answered in line with their life experience, with memories they recall from the past and expectations they have been assembling. In this group, the responses are generally positive, for them "life is better" although there has been plenty **of** violence and poverty.

The responses given by informants with higher academic qualifications were dissimilar, consistent with the perceptions they have of "the others", of "the poor". They rarely answered according to their personal experiences. This last group frequently replied that life conditions had actually gotten worse for the majority of population. The following transcripts of the interviews reflect this matter:

> "Things have changed, when I arrived here (Mafalala) in 1976, there were wick houses, now everything is in concrete blocks. Though there are cries for more money, there is already some around. (...) My son and I are not the same anymore, I suffered a lot. The oldest is in the 10th grade, he wears shoes, has a mobile. When I was that age, there were no such things (…) I wanted to but couldn't get to the 10th grade. My father worked so much in the mines, still he couldn't get all I have today. I have a stereo, he only had a small radio, he worked for nothing. I did not." (H.T. 10/9/2008).

> "In the times of Samora we had it bad, there was nothing, only cabbage, it was terrible. Now things are alright, are good (...). In our time there was robbery, but nothing like snatching things from other people. In Maputo, those ruffians don't want jobs, don't want to do anything. Those children of bandits, there are many of them around." (F.D. 9/9/2008).

> "I think living conditions are not improving absolutely at all (...) the crime rates have raised (...). I know some people who have become rich during the war, and in peacetime life has completely changed." (B.N. 28/8/2008).

> "It has been said that poverty has decreased, but it has not, it has boosted in the last three, four, five years. Now there is access to wealth, but there is a large polarization which is dangerous and will cause the next generation of conflicts. (...) and there is an already built scheme for not having security. It was a wise move to integrate the demobilized soldiers into security companies, put to use their knowledge of weapons (...)" (S.J. 6/9/2008).

The two topics mingle in these interview excerpts – (in)security and poverty/wealth – are interlinked, connecting to a recent past of wartime and to the policies implemented in the country from the Independence until the present time. It becomes particularly important to understand these issues related to security, to policies directly affecting all national forces with peace-keeping functions: the army and the police.

It became established in the Peace Agreement that this new national army would assimilate elements both from Renamo and Frelimo, and all remaining soldiers would be demobilized. The official records for demobilized combatants was 78.078, in a total of 92.881 soldiers officially recognized as members of these armies[12] (Coelho, 2002:

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[12] In the Peace Agreements it was decided that the FADM would be composed by 30 thousand men in equal parts from Renamo and Frelimo, but in December of 1995, the FADM only had 12.195 men (Coelho, 2002a: 61-67), in 2004 the number rose to 15,000 (Leão, 2004).

147), and according to a study conducted in Maputo (the city, plus suburban areas and two provincial districts with the same designation) (Coelho 2002), the majority found jobs as security guards. So these men, many still carrying their weapons, are involved in similar activities to the ones they had while soldiers, going against the "principle of reintegration of keeping ex-combatants disperse and away from armament" (Coelho, 2002: 195).

If there is not, as noted by Borges Coelho, a direct link among ex-combatants and violence, there is clearly a straight connection between insecurity and the emergence of security companies, as well as between insecurity and the efficiency of law and order forces: police, army and courts.

By 2003, the army was composed by a somewhat reduced number of effectives (15,000). This figure can be elucidated by not being a priority to the Government, since the compulsory integration of members from Renamo into the FADM – Mozambican Defense Armed Forces, it was decided to concentrate all attentions on the police, since this force had always remained under governmental control (and at the time, outside the supervision of ONUMOZ – United Nations Operations in Mozambique), transferring to the PRM (Republic of Mozambique Police) a large number of its own soldiers. This disinvestment in the army that during the war, for evident motives, had affordance to significant resources has generated difficulties which the security sector has to appease nowadays: "Discontented armed forces, with a reduced capacity to defend the territory although excessively armed, and a police force with disproportionate staff, constituted by men without suitable law enforcement training." (Leão, 2004:34).

The situation within the PRM is not much different, albeit governmental and private investments substantially larger than those received by the army (Leão, 2004: 39). However, as is told by one of the informants, on the whole "the police don't defend, the courts don't rule, there are no institutions here", so security companies constitute a lucrative private business, which elucidates their high and growing number[13] in a country where the police forces are unable to defeat transnational organized crime.

The fact that security companies are a lucrative business raises some questions on whether potential interests are pressuring the continuation of these circumstances prone to violence (unemployment, poverty, judicial incompetence, corruption and free-range illicit trafficking). These questions are also motivated by another point: various elements of the Mozambican elite are involved with these companies (Serra, 2007).

Other than the private security companies being financially advantageous to their "owners", in addition they perform an important "social function" by employing thousands of men. Meanwhile, their wages are meager[14] and several of them had to find a second income source.

In this description is manifested the relations between the economic situation which the country is facing and the insecurity and violence in peacetime. When asked about this issue, the informants told that the danger and violence have increased more in the peace period than during wartime: "in the period of Samora there was no danger, nobody stole anything, we had respect, and there was no corruption" (S.T.28/8/2008). But the interests established around these conditions of insecurity don't elucidate the low rates

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[13] According to Carlos Serra (2206), in the years 2005/2006, in the phonebook of the south region of Mozambique had registered 23 security companies, employing around 23 thousand men.

[14] "The average monthly wage for security guards is approximately 800,000 Meticais (USD 33), which leaves them vulnerable to bribes and criminal association." (Leão, 2004:45)

of human progress registered in this country, since other interests concerning International Aid[15] funds also partake of the circumstances.

Poverty and Development Policies in Peacetime

Resulting from ideological options, the international political layout at the time (following the Cold War), the colonial past, the socioeconomic condition on which most of the Mozambican population was standing after the independence, and the instability that directed to capital loss, departure of colonists and consequential loss of qualified labour and leadership (Newitt, 1995: 552), the political options had conditioned and have been still conditioning the rate of economic development in Mozambique. These options are consequently, more than conflicts or natural catastrophes, the direct causes of the poverty levels registered, since the first instance it was measured until the present day.

It could be argued, in opposition to the statement above, that the political and economic options made by the successive governments of Mozambique since the introduction of democracy and liberal economy have been constrained by guidelines derived from international development agencies and from donor countries and that they have imposed, since the middle of the 80s, a compilation of measures entailing a high social cost and have been further compromising with measures which caused (and keep causing) enormous imbalances in wealth distribution (cf. Hanlon, 2002; Hanlon and Smart, 2008). If such is accurate, then it is equally factual that the political leaders and Frelimo's elite have been openly benefiting from quite a few of these options for these have not been properly appraised by those responsible for implementing them.

Up to this moment, the features appointed as essential elements to economic growth and fight against poverty formulated in Mozambique (effectively and/or rhetorically) – such as political and economic liberalization, democracy, good governance , political and administrative decentralization, , privatization policies, promotion of employment (in the formal sector) capacity building (by incentives to education and health) – seem to fall short of the necessary results. The evident growth of the GNP (gross national product) rates is clearly the outcome, as declared by Jochen Oppenheimer, of "megaprojects like Mozal[16]" (2006: 12) and of "intensive foreign investment of capitals, with limited impact in either rising employment or reducing poverty" (UNDP, 1998, cit in. Oppenheimer, 2006: 12).

Therefore, even after the debt pardon under the HIPC initiative[17] and even after the agreement in line with the goals included in the Millennium Development Goals, the levels of human development in Mozambique are extremely low, despite more than fifteen years of peace and political stability and substantial developmental aid. The country occupies, according to the UNDP Human Development Report from 2007/2008, one of the last places in a worldwide ranking of HDI – human development

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[15] Jason Sumich (2008: 124) analysed the Mozambican elites, claiming that their legitimization happens more from the perspective of the international sponsoring community and multilateral organizations, and less from an internal perspective. Luís de Brito (2009: 8) underlines that "one of the perverted effects in this situation is that the government and political forces are more reliant on donors than on citizens, which weakens the process of accountability, reduces the essential possibilities for debate and negotiation in a pluralist democracy and conveys a paternalistic attitude from the government and the State".

[16] Largest aluminium producer in Mozambique.

[17] HIPC – Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative.

index (172 among 177, having dropped in comparison to the previous report, when it was placed 168 among 177 countries).

Concerning the present conditions in Mozambique on poverty and its evolution since it started to be measured, there is a whole discussion around its quantification and respective outcome (cf. Oppenheimer and Raposo 2002, Vieira 2005; Hanlon 2007, 2008).

The official reports express a diminishing poverty level in the last few years (69% of absolute poverty in 1997 versus 54% in 2003), but Joseph Hanlon declares: "Poverty is increasing and deepening (...). Some people are much better off, and some rise while others fall. But for half the population, poverty is deepening, and they are not benefiting from the record GDP growth rates." (2007: 15).

This author comes to a conclusion that in a way is starting to be shared by the Government of Mozambique itself (AIM, 2007) and by other organizations (MDG, 2007), but diseases, epidemics, draughts and floods are still being considered as main causes for the retrocession in this "fight against poverty".

Consequently, the features selected as causes for poverty aren't yet being associated to the economic policy pursued by the Government of Mozambique, which has been substantially inspired, sponsored and subsidized by international financial organizations and bilateral donors. The "liabilities" for poverty are nevertheless being attributed to diseases or to the aftermath of natural calamities. If somewhat these occurrences come equally as the consequence of policies, such does not surely contribute to design solutions that allocate an effective reduction of poverty and to the whole series of problems that have been addressed in this article and which are factors leading to violence and insecurity[18].

Conclusions

Along this article, war and poverty are seen as two distinctive occurrences which are not connected in a direct relation of cause and effect, but have nevertheless a profound influence over the Mozambican society. The complexity of theses occurrences and the plurality of explanatory factors require multiple approaches. If some of these entail an understanding of the logics, strategies and perceptions of the social actors that were involved at several levels in the conflict and that nowadays are categorized as poor and endure unsafe circumstances in their everyday lives, victims and perpetrators of all sort of violent acts, many other approaches are also as necessary. Namely, it becomes important to assemble contextualized studies and researches by various branches of the social and human sciences which focus on numerous features of reality influencing poverty, impacting over war and interlinking in current conditions of (in)security and violence. It is pertinent to analyze more profoundly the recent war without ideological prejudices and try to understand the accurate facts, with whom, when and where they took place. It is important to get a better understanding of its legacies of yet latent conflicts, of available artillery, of complex webs of connections lasting until the present time and where economic and political interests intertwine, connecting legal activities to

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[18] Another interesting feature highlighted by Luís de Brito while analyzing three speeches pronounced by President Gebuza, that poverty is mentioned in these speeches (and generally in many other political discourses and in the Mozambican press) "almost exclusively in terms of "fight against poverty". Meaning, there is a lot of talk about the objective, but very little about poverty itself, and practically nothing about the poor." (2009:12)

the underworld of organized crime, formal enterprises to informal businesses. At last, but most importantly, we need to reflect on the economic policies over which international aid rules. The present worldwide crisis presents a unique opportunity for such.

Poverty, war, insecurity and violence in Mozambique, or in the world, will never be understood and much less reduced, if they are isolated and considered as exogenous to the economic and social relations from which they are locally and globally an essential element. The relevance and liability of international organizations and donor countries in the manner how theses studies have been conducted are indisputable. As it was already mentioned, very little can effectively be done if the policies ruling these institutions are not altered. These policies, other than conditioning international cooperation and bilateral aids, also concern the theories and methodologies validating the studies that seek to understand the results of these same policies over the evolution of social and economic circumstances.

Will it be possible? To what extent are these organizations and countries themselves hostages of their own assembled development policies? At which stage there exists or not an implemented system of worldwide international cooperation which, to self-preserve, also preserves the problems it should supposedly be solving? These are topics open to discussion that eventually, in our times of fast change and particularly after the recent financial and economic global crisis, will have a prompter response than now predicted.

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