

**COLONIALISM, LIBERATION, AND STRUCTURAL-ADJUSTMENT
IN THE MODERN WORLD-ECONOMY:
MOZAMBIQUE, SOUTH AFRICA, GREAT BRITAIN, AND PORTUGAL
AND THE FORMATION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
(BEFORE AND UNDER EUROPEAN HEGEMONY)**

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

The starting point of the present dissertation is the study of the historical formation of Southern Africa as an integrated region of the modern world-economy. This is considered through the analysis of the main forms of successive, unequal relationship between the core and the peoples of Southern Africa in general, those of present-day Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and South Africa in particular. The forms of relation analyzed are models of domination and control defined by the core: slavery, colonialism, decolonization, neo-colonialism, and present-day neo-liberal structural adjustment. In Southern Africa, they assumed also specific structures as forced labor, apartheid, and the Rhodesian UDI. As a form of anti-colonial, anti-systemic response to the imposition of those models a specific process of national liberation was developed. It assumed new strategies of anti-colonial and anti-apartheid armed struggle creating, at the same time, specific structures of direct and indirect resistance; of regional and systemic geo-strategies; and of cultural and post-colonial collective identities. Most importantly, it originated coherent projects of development for the future. After the early 1960s, “national liberation” was regionally assumed. It led to the military defeat of Portuguese colonialism and Rhodesian UDI. However, its illusions and initial implementation were smashed under a complex, highly destructive process of regional, military and economic destabilization led by Rhodesia, first; by South Africa, afterwards. This collapse made possible the end of apartheid in South Africa. But it resulted as well in the imposition of structural adjustment to the totality of the region. A concluding elaboration of possible, alternative scenarios to today’s situation is presented.

The study of slavery, colonialism, and structural-adjustment as succeeding models of relationship between the core and the peoples of Southern Africa implied the need to consider the region before European hegemony and as part of the Indian Ocean human space. Arabic, Indian, and Chinese primacies of maritime command and trade; the multiplicity and characteristics of the trading networks and flows defining them; their secular influence on the coastal peoples of East-southern Africa; and the local impact of the development of the world-economy leading to the formation of Southern Africa are equally discussed and analyzed.

Para Maria Rosa; Jose Eduardo; Jennifer Marie; Ethan Jose; Kal Jose; e Adriana,
com muito amor.
Mas, tambem, recordando meus pais; meu irmao; Maggie; AB; CG; SMM; e TKH,
com muita saudade.

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I

INTRODUCTION

For quite a long time I believed, with Walter Benjamin, that History must also be the history of the marginalized, of the subaltern, of the exploited multitudes, that, as he stated, “not man or men but the struggling, oppressed classes themselves are the depositary of historical knowledge” (1940: 260). In the Mozambican colonial situation I lived in and, in particular, in the years following the mid-1960s, it would be impossible to have doubts about who were the marginalized from history, the subaltern and the oppressed. And there was no doubt about what kind of history was necessary: a radically different history, to start with, from that being thought, learned and manipulated not only at the level of the colonial educational system, including a newly-created university but, as well, through all the other ideological apparatuses of a simultaneously colonial and fascist Portuguese administration. Educational system and apparatuses using, in the sometimes elegant superficiality of their arguments and as a kind of pseudo-ethical, social self-justification for the continuation of control and oppression, historical references constructed and presented to reflect dominantly the point of view of

Europe as being that of man or men -- that is to say, and as Aime Cesaire was already denouncing in 1955 (72), the perspective of colonialism. Colonialism was used as the main justification for colonialism.

One of the starting points of the present work is the evidence that more than forty years after the beginning of what became known as the decolonization process such a perspective continues to be very much alive. As much as the insidious and omnipresent reality that is racism under all its forms. The perspective of colonialism is, to be sure, a specific form of racism. It is also a manifestation of Eurocentrism or, perhaps less precise but more correctly, of core-centrism.

Racism and Eurocentrism are the result of the same social and historical process, that of the geographical development of the modern world-system. They are creatures of the same brood. Consciously or more often unconsciously they are based on an assumed conviction or principle of racial and cultural superiority. The principle that, for instance, a racial or ethnic group, a geographical origin, a culture or a civilization, a national belonging or a religion is or can be better, truer, greater, more powerful, and more desirable than all the others. That it can be superior to them, in short. And that consequently it occupies or must occupy the determinant center of knowledge, the core of everything else. Racism, the colonial perspective, core-centrism or Eurocentrism are manifestations determined by that conviction of superiority either in its more vulgar forms or in its more hidden manifestations. Besides the fact that Eurocentrism can usually be seen as the racism of the erudite, there are not many differences between them. They are equally intrinsic elements of the dominant geo-culture of our times

and its ideology. They are characteristics of our modernity. As such they are as well prevalent in the best social science being produced today. As they are present in its classics, in the writings, reflections and daily life of its founding fathers. We have to be aware of this and this is the reason why such awareness must always be one of our starting points.

Notwithstanding, it is also within the social sciences as humanities and in all their expressions that the analysis and denunciation of racism, Eurocentrism, colonialism and core-centrism has been more often attempted. Sometimes this has been made with a remarkable success. A handful of references, some of those that I personally try to keep present, will be enough to illustrate this point. To start with, the unavoidable work of Jean-Paul Sartre using what he called philosophical anthropology to characterize in 1946 anti-Semitism as an ordinary form of racism and, as important, at the same time or in other writings, teaching us the multi-faceted expressions through which it manifests itself in the daily life. Some years after, the Tunisian Albert Memmi to a certain extent complementing Sartre's approaches, rendered with precision the social and cultural portraits of the colonizer and of the colonized. Giving a new impetus and new foundations to the study of the overwhelming influence of Eurocentrism, Edward Said denounced Orientalism. Complementing it, Said expanded his findings by applying them to the media and the formation, by so called "opinion-leaders", of a racist, Eurocentric public opinion. Based on his work a new generation of scholars involved itself with the study of racism sometimes expanding its findings to new fields, like those of feminism, literary theory, postcoloniality, or whiteness studies. In the work of Immanuel Wallerstein we find, finally, the in depth analyses of racism, Eurocentrism or core-centrism as it consistently affected and, to be

sure, continues to affect social sciences and, because of it, our ability to understand social reality¹.

A causal result of those seminal approaches and denunciations is the fact, as Coetzee contends (2001: 33), that the perspective or perspectives of the Other(s) is today generally accepted, has become a prevalent preoccupation in social sciences. To a certain extent, there is no doubt that Benjamin's demand is today a reality. It is, as well, an important achievement. The truth seems to be, however, that perspective by itself is not enough, **it does not change much** (²).

To a great extent, this starting point was determined by what became the main objectives of my analytical research: the formation of Southern Africa both as a result of an evolving world-economy and **before it**, that is to say, in the centuries preceding its systemic incorporation and existence as a regional, more or less integrated territorial entity of our world. When I started this work, my objective was if not simpler at least a more limited one. It was basically an attempt to characterize in world-historical terms the social and economic transformation of what I will call below "southern Africa" into the "Southern Africa" of our days. To do so, I assumed as main observation points, *as my perspective*, the eastern Indic coast first; today's Mozambique afterwards. The need to detect, confront and revise the ever-present, dominant

¹ Edward Said (2004: 52-53): "Immanuel Wallerstein has, over the last couple of years, been writing a sustained intellectual critique of Eurocentrism that serves my purposes here very well, so let me draw for a time on him. In doing so I shall elide the social sciences that Wallerstein speaks about with the humanities since the problems in the latter are exactly the same as in the former".

² Two important works of two referential authors of world-systems analysis will help me to exemplify this assertion. They are Fernand Braudel and his incomplete *The Identity of France* (1986 (1988)) and Ludwig Dehio and his *The Precarious Balance* (1948 (1962)). What is also interesting when reading those two works side by side are, precisely, the perspectives or angles of vision assumed by their authors. To a certain extent, they exist as a kind of mirror-like images of one another. While Braudel looks and studies France from the perspective of the world-system, Dehio considers and analyses historically the modern world-system from what is an assumed German perspective. In both cases the results are not only equally important for our general knowledge of the system but, also, equally impressive for the in depth and rigor they manage to achieve.

influence of a core-centric perspective or way of looking at the historical and sociological realities I was trying to understand, soon became however a research imperative. Because, as I soon understood, to give free rein to such a perspective, to let it roam free and uncontrolled in our work is not only a consciously or, usually, unconsciously arrogant and racist choice. It is, as well, a highly distorting and falsifying element in our research. It is one of those epistemological elements which, once tolerated, will decisively affect our methodological possibilities to understand and, perhaps, to change social reality for the possible better.

The so called structural adjustment programs (SAPs) since the late 1970s imposed all over the periphery by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) is a good example to dramatically illustrate what I am trying to say. As their designation itself indicates, those are economic programmes of development and growth that were conceived within the core to be applied in a periphery in need of “adjustment”. It is also from the core that, since the late 1970s, they started to be applied and are regulated. More than that, they are all uniformly shaped by a single, common analysis of what within the core is considered to be the main economic problems being faced by the peripheral states. Amazingly, because this was done after more than half a century of world experience with economic development and its theorization, that common analysis originated solutions and measures that were uniformly the same for all those states. They consequently advocate the same solutions and the same measures to overcome them. They are all, in short, clones of a single blue print. A blue print put together in Washington, where the headquarters of the IMF and the WB are located, with inputs from all the others financial centers of the core. They do not take into consideration, minimally, the realities of the countries or states to which they were destined. On the contrary:

specificities, like details, are where the devil dwells. They have to be put aside, ignored. Moreover, it was precisely their different political and economic choices as independent states that, to start with, caused the problematic relationships of those countries with the core (³). That was the reason why they had to be “adjusted”: to make them behave and exist as part of the structures of the capitalist world-economy. In other words, they had to be *formatted* according to a single project of change, that of the IMF. As such, the SAPs are, primordially, core-centric in their conceptualization and imposition. As a direct consequence, they have failed uniformly all over the periphery. On the other hand, they are also core-centric in their objectives. For the financial centers of the core in whose name they are implemented they are not failing: on the contrary. This paradox is fundamental to understand Southern Africa today. I will come back to it more extensively in the fourth part of the present work.

Before that, however, I will have to be more precise about the research objectives of the present work. I will have to discuss their genesis, the strategies I followed in the attempt to achieve them, and the way they changed and became more or less precise as new avenues of research and interrogation were opened up in the process. Essentially, those objectives began with the observable fact that although the basic characteristics of the modern world-system have stayed uniformly the same since its beginnings in the long sixteenth century, there are substantial transformations in the modes or mechanisms generated through the historical evolution of its core-periphery interrelationship. It is these mechanisms, the changes they bring

³ According to Immanuel Wallerstein, “The world-economy is divided into core-states and peripheral areas. I do not say peripheral states because one characteristic of a peripheral area is that the indigenous state is weak, ranging from its non-existence (that is, a colonial existence) to one with a low degree of autonomy (that is, a neo colonial situation)” (1974: 349). My contention, to be discussed below, is that with the so called decolonization most of the states of the newly-independent African countries assumed forms of a too strong foreign policy. For a while, a periphery of African states was a systemic reality. One of the objectives of the imposition of SAPs, a political objective, was to uniform those states, changing or aggregating them into a peripheral area.

about and their structural meaning, their nature and their impact on the periphery that interests me. Moreover, their knowledge is essential for the ongoing debate about the eventual construction of socially more just and reasonable alternatives to the present world order. I will try here, consequently, to analyze and understand the world-systemic meaning and relative importance of the chronological succession of different forms of social and economic relationship between social formations usually considered as colonial or peripheral and their respective centers or center of dominance and exploitation; centers that are as well the dominant world locations of capital accumulation.

This reflection started, consequently, by covering little more than 150 years of the social and economic impact, of the repression, resistance, conflict and, necessarily, of the mutual cooption or cooperation resulting from an evolving and increasingly incorporating world-system and the peoples of a determined geographical context, that of Southern Africa, in general, of Mozambique, in particular. Basically, it began by an attempt to characterize, in systemic and regional terms, what I see as being three succeeding and, at least apparently, distinct forms of political and economic peripheral dependence thus constituted. I will here designate those forms by their usual systemic aliases as **colonialism**, the period chronologically extended in the world-system till at least the mid-twentieth century; **post-colonialism** or national liberation, coinciding and sometimes following the end of metropolitan or settler forms of colonialism and bringing together the generalized affirmation of projects of peripheral political independence of new states and the attempts to materialize them -- with their hopes, utopian certitudes, socio-political experiments, strategies of survival and places in the interstate system; and neo-liberalism or **structural adjustment**, the period that in particular after the late 1970's

became characterized by the imposition of renewed economic forms of organized systemic domination and institutional control over the periphery. Once again, this intensified to unprecedented levels, the previous processes of a continuing and generalized core-appropriation of peripheral surplus.

In my transposition of those three succeeding models of political and economic organization to the concrete case of Southern Africa, some adjustment was, to be sure, necessary. Colonialism, to start with, assumed there not only its classical form, such as in Zambia or Malawi but, also, that of a double colonial subordination, to Portuguese and British interests, as what historically happened in Mozambique; that of apartheid, in South Africa; and that of settlers' independence, in Rhodesia. Post-colonialism or liberation, on the other hand, was present as a basic idea of social change or as a project in all and every program of anti-colonial struggle of the different social movements towards national independence in the region. In an even more clear characterization, it constituted the beating heart of the projects of struggle of their liberation movements, some of them involved in what became protracted anti-colonialist armed conflicts.

In different forms of formulation and, at least in the cases of Mozambique, Angola and Tanzania, of its concrete, although incipient materialization, the dream of an anti-colonial regional reconstruction with its correspondent political, social, economic and institutional objectives was however aborted. This was the result of the systematic application and progression of different core-sanctioned processes. They included not only the permanent threat of economic and social sanctions but also the tragic reality of military aggression, of the

generalized formation, financing and use of what is known within the various military and intelligence agencies as counterinsurgency groups and, through them, the generation of more or less artificial but highly lethal and destructive civil wars. The destabilization and generalized collapse of a region, already deeply depleted by the slave trade, by colonialism and apartheid, was one of the consequences. Another, and as an imposition made possible by the convergence of all of the above factors and aggravating them, was the new regional burden, in particular after the mid-1980's, of the so-called **structural adjustment programs** by the IMF and the WB. Since the onset of colonialism in the late nineteenth century, those programmes and their generalized imposition constitute, consequently, the third and to this date the last of the models or processes of economic, social and political world-systemic organization and control of Southern Africa in the context of an evolving world-economy.

The characterization and world-historical analysis of that triple succession of colonialism, post-colonial projects and structural adjustment in Southern Africa will constitute a central aspect of the present work. However, the methodological questioning of the different meanings possible to be detected in such a progression implied the need to go back in time according to two different but chronologically continuous strands of reflection and, most importantly, of possible comparison. In the first place, those three successive modes of regional organization and control are part and parcel, simultaneously, both of the history of southern Africa and of that of an evolving capitalist world-economy. Their outcome happened, consequently, in the continuity of other, previous forms of relationship between the European colonial core and the peoples of the region. What forms of relationship and what type of continuity or continuities are those? Or was there some kind of systemic rupture between the two periods, between the

before and after of those different forms of core-periphery relationship? Most importantly: what is the nature of such a relationship and how did it change with time? On the other hand, it was through the successive imposition of those models of social organization and economic control by the core that a geographical region, southern Africa, perhaps more correctly defined as south-eastern Africa, was structurally transformed and became an economically and politically integrated political region -- through the natural or re-created complementarities of its different colonial units and through its incorporation, as such, in the capitalist world-economy. In other words, it was through it that southern Africa became Southern Africa.

The study and analysis of the processes and forces involved in such a transformation as well as its systemic nature and meaning became consequently important objects of research. And that implied, first, the in depth discussion of the processes leading to and the conditions and objectives of the European expansion out of Europe in the long sixteenth century with emphasis on the role and motivations of the Portuguese in it; secondly, an attempt to re-think in such a context the simultaneous demographic transformations in progress in sub-Saharan Africa, in general, in southern and eastern Africa in particular; and, thirdly, a more in-depth reflection about the central and determining function of the slave trade not only in the triangular context of the dominant interests of the European expansion in Africa: those of space, spices and slaves -- but also as one of the fundamental platforms of capital accumulation that made possible the gestation, development, expansion and consolidation of the modern world-system.

In short, I tried to look at southern Africa in general, at the social formations of its eastern coast, today's Mozambique in particular, since the late fifteenth century according to the impact on it of the arrival by sea and from the south of the Portuguese. To be sure, this was the beginning of a historical trajectory that resulted into the incorporation of the region as part of the periphery of an evolving world-system.

This approach gave me a more interesting insight about what were my previous objectives of research but, at the same time, it complicated them. Because, to say the least, it placed the beginnings and evolution of the modern world-system and its history as the central, overriding, dominant aspect of my approach. I have no doubt that this constitutes a reality that must be taken into account in any reflection about the region, its historical past, its present and its future. But such an overwhelming and often fascinating presence of what are core-based processes tended, however, to override what was in the context of my objectives, the principal: the impact and consequences of those systemic processes. In other words, they tended to hide, to transform into epiphenomena, to take precedence over the peripheral-based processes locally put on motion, as responses to them or as initiatives, over the different modes of their rejection or acceptance and over all forms of local social and economic change and agency.

How to overcome such a conundrum? The response was, it now seems to me, as easy as its application was complex: to go back in time once again to try to characterize the region, its social formations and its peoples as they existed **before the arrival of the Europeans**. And, to start with, as part of what I will call, to a great extent applying a descriptive concept found in the work of Fernand Braudel, the Indian Ocean human space. This move back in time and into

the northern Indian Ocean constituted, consequently, my second strand of research that led to the present work. It went as far back in time as possible. It was necessary to describe the type of contacts, the relationships, the impact and the mutual influences that throughout the centuries and till the late fifteenth century characterized the interaction between the various trading and navigational networks of the sea and the peoples and social formations of the eastern coast of the African continent.

The results and main conclusions of those two incursions into the distant past of the Indian Ocean human space and its secular impact on southern Africa are presented in the first part of this dissertation. The relations possible to be established between that impact and the formation of Southern Africa as well as with the characteristics of its systemic organization and control through colonialism, liberating post-colonialism and structural adjustment, the object of the second and third parts of the present work, will hopefully be, as well, made there clearer.

In the remaining of these introductory remarks, I wish to bring to the foreground and discuss a handful of theoretical and methodological questions whose formulation and response became essential for this work. As such, they were simultaneously present at the beginning and confirmed or deeply changed at the end of the long trajectory of research I have followed. Two of them became particularly important. The first, and as already indicated above, is related with the Eurocentric bias that I believe has haunted social sciences, including History, Philosophy and Economics, since their inception in the late 18th century. It continues to be deeply present in the way we think about the world as can be easily detected in so many recent and not so recent works. The second, resulting from a consistent attempt to confront and overcome that

Eurocentric bias, is related with the hypothesis of a 5000 year-old world system, as defended in a small but influential body of research about the modern world and its historical genesis. For common reasons, that of detecting and confronting our generalized and often unconscious propensity to Eurocentrism, I tried to reconstruct some of the same steps leading to that hypothesis. I arrived, however, at a diametrically different conclusion. That exercise will be presented below in necessarily brief terms. It can be read as a kind of general introduction to what constitutes, as stated, the main objective of the present work. I must add, however, that this is a less ambitious and more limited exercise than the long distance running required to a more in depth empirical and historically based discussion about the impossibility of a 500 years world system.

Before entering into a more detailed presentation of some of the methodological aspects and objectives of such an endeavor, I will have to discuss, however and even if in an epigrammatic way, what I believe are questions that must always be addressed or, at least, have to be objectively implicit in the research strategies and methods founding our attempts to better understand the social reality of the modern world-system, in general, those concerning the relations between its core, semi-periphery and periphery, in particular. As suggested above, these are questions that will dangle in the background of this work.

On the other hand, and to a great extent, they are implicit in my reading of Benjamin's thesis about the need for a different historical knowledge, for a different perspective of history – history and, I must add, sociology which will be here basically considered as being, more than institutional disciplines, important components of the modern consciousness of the social

sciences, their necessary and main empirical reference. To be sure, it is from here that what I believe constitute two of the central problems today affecting not only history and sociology but, more vastly, social sciences in general, can and should be derived.

The first of those problems is, exactly, a direct consequence of the recognition that various and different perspectives of the Other(s), of the same historical, social or economic reality are possible and that, often times and according to systemic location, the exercise of political power, social classes, gender, nationality or race, those perspectives are or can be mutually exclusive. What then is the correct or acceptable one? In other words, we can say that this is a problem not only related with the older and vaster question of the possibility or impossibility of historical truth, but that, at the same time, gave it more and more complex epistemological arguments. In so doing, it deeply affected as well all the other social sciences. On the other hand, does the utilization of approaches based on different perspectives really solve the problems of Eurocentrism or, rather, complicates them while artificially trying to overcome it?

The second and perhaps the more complex and influential of the two problems is related with the fact that, in explicit and, probably more often, implicit ways, modern structures of knowledge are, *a priori* and intrinsically, modes of thought that emerged, in at least two distinct but continuous and interrelated phases of so-called modernity (⁴), from more than five

⁴ With Dussel and his interesting work about modernity “from a peripheral perspective” (his words) I believe that it is important and historically accurate to consider the sequential occurrence, in the long term history of the modern world-system, of at least two different modernities, of which the earlier, Mediterranean, first, Hispanic or Iberian, afterwards, evolved with and from the Renaissance, and lasted till at least the late seventeenth century. It was, namely, able to question and deny, in ethical and political terms, what we today call Eurocentrism, that is to say, the right of Europeans to occupy, dominate and manage the recently discovered cultures. The second modernity, still according to Dussel, was specifically determined by profit-seeking and accumulation of capital, and consequently based on efficiency, on the exercise of power as management and on the ability to govern an expanded world-economy with the least

hundred years of the long term historical processes that changed Western Europe into the core of an expanding, evolving capitalist world-economy. In a word, they are basic and dominantly, Eurocentric, that is to say, and perhaps more correctly, they are core-centric modes of knowledge, understanding and, often, of transformation. In those processes, and unambiguously after the eighteenth century, the generality of the structures of knowledge which were, to start with, derived from European culturally based ideologies, traditions, myths, methodologies and theoretical approaches, were gradually changed into self-affirming universal values. As such, they were extended and ideologically imposed to the rest of the globe by the strength of profit-seeking, by the logics of capital accumulation, by their institutions and, when necessary, by the force of arms. It is such a transformation of what was local and specific into new, universal values of a self-proclaimed modernity and their extension and imposition as its ideological justification that constitutes one of the main foundations of

costs. It was the later that constructed, in the second half of the seventeenth century and from the eighteenth century onward, what we today call Eurocentrism as a superideology capable of legitimizing domination, resource and labor control and exploitation of an evolving world-system (Dussel, 1998: *passim* and, in particular, 12-14). Namely, and with the second modernity, Eurocentrism “will no longer be questioned until the end of the twentieth century – among other movements by liberation philosophy” (Idem: 14). In fact, the reading of coeval sources and authors (for instance Bartolomeu de las Casas, but also, in what concerns Portuguese authors, Fernao Lopes, Zurara, Alvaro Velho, Camoens, Antonio Vieira, etc) makes quite evident that, while the Iberian modernity is inclusive, recognizing (although not accepting always and, in particular, after the late fifteenth century) the need to bring together Jewish, Muslim and Christian cultural and technological contributions with those of Asia, Africa, and Amerindia, the second modernity is exclusive, constructing the European as the modern in permanent situation against the Other - - a necessary condition for its own self-characterization, self-legitimization, and self-affirmation -- while denying, as one of its main antithetical references, many of the strands of the first modernity. We can perhaps add that the first modernity started to collapse with the Jewish expulsion from Spain, in 1492, with the imposition of that measure and its extension to Portugal, with the creation of the Inquisition and with the collapse of both France and Spain, resulting from the disastrous resolution, in Italian territories, of the war between the two European powers. In theological terms, as well, the reality was that Sepulveda prevailed over Las Casas. The Portuguese Jew Barouch de Spinoza had also his fundamental work banned and excommunicated by the community of Portuguese Jews in Amsterdam. Looked at in this perspective, his philosophy, today being rediscovered, was by excellence an inclusive philosophy. Until 1640 a Spanish province Holland was already by then the source of the new, second European modernity. The end of an inclusive modernity coincided also with the economic crisis of the mid sixteenth century, the loss of Portuguese independence and its quicker decline under the Habsburgs, and with the beginnings of the systemic strengthening of Holland. The recognition of more than one European modernity is also defended by, among others, Peter Taylor (1999) whose findings, although different, do not totally contradict Dussel’s approach.

the deep crisis today affecting the social sciences. Because, and even if those “values” have been questioned and deconstructed as such since at least the late 1960s, they continue to be today, and perhaps in an even more pervasive way, generally assumed as such. That is to say, they are an integral, dominant part of our **habitus**. As such, they continue to be dominantly present not only in our individual and collective everyday practices and ways of doing or operating, but also in the theoretical questioning, methodologies, approaches, concepts, categories, theoretical contexts, fields, and research strategies of the dominant forms of thought and reflection about the social reality of the modern world-system. They make obvious and evident that the expansion in space and time of the capitalist world-economy implied as well the transformation, expansion and global imposition of its structures of knowledge and of the general historical perspective determined by them. And they are dominant not only because they serve and consolidate the dominant power of the modern world-system, namely today through the so-called neo-liberal economic projects of structural-adjustment and their overall imposition on the periphery, but also because they are commonly accepted and used without questioning. This means that they have to be seriously interrogated, contextualized, and confronted **always and every time** they become present or, if not, they will distort irreparably our capability and possibility to understand concrete reality in an irreversible and permanent way. Euro- or core-centrism is not a geographic category. It is not also a racial, ethnical, class or gendered attribute. Easily, we find the deep influence of Eurocentrism in the less expectable places. For instance, we find it often extended to its limits, in the poetry of Leopold Sedar Senghor, of Senegal, or in that of the Cavaleiro Lopes da Silva of Cabo Verde. More interestingly, we find the heavy, undercover presence of Eurocentrism in what became one of

the foundational studies of western sociology, that of Alexis de Tocqueville **Democracy in America** (1835 and 1840 (2004).

This is, without doubt, one of the most perceptive, insightful, and interesting descriptions ever written about America in the 19th century. It was, as such, that it became equally a very influential book. Re-reading it, my doubt is however if it is primordially a study about the United States. Often, it appears, rather, as a book about post-revolutionary and “democratic” France written by a member of the aristocracy, a threatened class. That is to say, in writing about America, Tocqueville is indeed writing about France. And it is through his European, French gaze and political agenda that he considers or is interested in the politics and society of America (⁵). Three years after the second volume of *Democracy* was published in France, a contemporary of Tocqueville, Victor Schoelcher published his **Colonies étrangères et Haïti** about the Haitian Revolution. According to Dale Tomich who has recently discussed this forgotten author (2004) this is a remarkable book, a hymn to the outcome of the Saint Domingue slave revolution for freedom and dignity. But what Schoelcher does is to apply, in name of the equality and freedom of all men, categories, references and circumstances that are proper and specific of the French situation of his days to a reality that is, to say the least, radically different. To a great extent, thus, what he is doing is to think about France through the Haitian reality. And depict the later accordingly. In doing so, to be sure, he is replicating the same procedures followed by his contemporary Tocqueville. And it was it that often distorted

⁵ Why, then, has *Democracy in America* become such an influential book, in particular in the United States? For two main reasons, I think. The first is related with the fact that to a great extent it legitimizes in an interstate context the nature and conditions of so-called American democracy. Moreover, it is probably the first important work to point out the “specificity”, the “American exceptionalism” that in the following century and a half was going to become a fundamental attribute of America’s national and imperial collective ideologies. Secondly, because Tocqueville introduces and somehow validates in scientific terms with his writing many new conceptual categories from then on considered necessary for thinking and understanding the United States as “the Home in the Hill”.

his ability to understand and take further his support to the revolution. What other conclusions can we take from these examples? The confirmation, I think, that Eurocentrism is an ontological characteristic of the modern world-system, globally present as part of its geo-culture and, consequently, globally needing to be confronted (⁶). In fact, these two questions, in their intrinsic interrelationship, haunt social sciences today. And, as already stated, I believe that they have to be always confronted and elucidated at the threshold of all and every research project as the one I am proposing here. Consequently, they will be here addressed as such.

1.

I have quoted Benjamin in its relevance to my own preoccupations and life experience in the colonial situation (⁷) of Mozambique of the 1960s and early 1970s. I must add, however, that he was one of those many authors who, even at the university level, were part of long, official lists of theorists and writers considered “forbidden”, censored or banned by the Portuguese state. This happened both in the colonial metropolis and in its “overseas provinces”. Consequently, Benjamin had to be read and kept in the relative secret of the heart and mind. More adequate for the same political context, Raymond Aron, then already a main reference for the European intellectual Right, was a more “acceptable” author and so, we briefly believed, could be used as an authoritative reference in the defense of a different type of social, historical and, consequently, political perspective. In fact, and since at least the late 1950’s, he was also stating, very clearly, that the “evaluation of past upheavals depends on the point of

⁶ Can Eurocentrism be confronted and overcome? I think so. For instance, in contrast to Tocqueville’s “Democracy” one can read with profit Simone de Beauvoir’s “America Day by Day”.

⁷ I use the term colonial situation here and throughout the present work with the meaning given to it by Balandier (1995 (1970): 52) as designating “a totality of conditions” affecting both the colonized and the colonizer.

view from which we survey them. Whereas a European may lament the decline in Western power that resulted from the apocalyptic “great” wars of the twentieth century, a Chinese or Indian observer will rejoice that those conflicts hastened the end of an unnatural tyranny. Westerners remember the benefits they brought to non-Westerners; non-Westerners still resent the humiliations they suffered. One side talks of the breakup of empires, the other of the liberation of nations... (W)e cannot escape our own time and all that goes with it, nor must we exclude from our assessments the points of view of other(s)” (1950 :3-4).

The fact that such a statement was no less acceptable by colonial power in Mozambique at the time does not invalidate the fact that Aron, as plainly as Benjamin, was emphasizing as central to our knowledge of social reality, in order to better confront or strengthen it, the necessity to take into account what are indeed different historical, cultural, or political perspectives. A necessity that, constantly, is collectively and institutionally forgotten by Eurocentric dominant elites of the world-economy, and not only within the core, leading often to severe misunderstandings that end up affecting as well more efficient or profitable possibilities of control and domination – as the outcomes of the Portuguese colonial war or, even more strikingly, the attempts by White Rhodesians and South Africans to make eternal their respective systems of apartheid very clearly show. That is why it has to be regularly recalled as, for instance, in this recent Aronian statement by Huntington: “The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion (to which few members of other civilizations were converted) but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence. Westerners often forget this fact; non-Westerners never do” (1996: 51) (⁸).

⁸ It is interesting how, in this phrase, Huntington to a great extent denies its own thesis about the clash of civilizations: the clash is indeed that resulting from organized violence because it is in organized violence

To be sure, and at least since the beginnings of the mid-twentieth century what can be described as the histories, the points of view, the perspectives of the working classes and women, first; of the colonized and post-colonized peoples of the periphery, afterwards, have slowly but consequently made their irruption and as such were generally accepted as part of a systemic sociological imagination. This happened however after the almost generalized self destruction of the European metropolitan powers; with the emergence and consolidation of the geo-strategic interests of the United States as a new hegemonic power in the world-system; with the so-called decolonization process and with the national liberation struggles within the periphery. It required, as well, the 1968 revolution with the brief but effective strengthening of the working classes and feminism within the core. In Europe, usually within the capitals of the colonial empires, in the United States, and within all the other continents, the voices of the struggling peoples of the periphery, including those of Africa, in general, of Southern Africa, in particular, started to burst all over. Generally, they assumed an important role among the ways and means of the generalized struggle against colonialism. In many cases, for instance in those of South Africa and Mozambique, they were already being expressed since at least the 1920s. But it was only after the late 1940s that, increasingly, they started to be heard within the core of the world-economy. And, for those within the core who were able to listen to them, the messages were not what perhaps they were waiting for. Jean-Paul Sartre recognized and knew how to capture that moment, at the same time implying, in terms that indeed reflect the shock of a colonial world confronting its denial, the question of the different perspectives of history: “When the gag that was keeping these black mouths shut was removed, what were you hoping

that resides the only superiority of the West and its power of aggression and repression – not on values, ideas or religion, that is to say, not on “civilization”.

for?”, he asked his Western countrymen, “That they would sing your praises? Did you think that when they raised themselves up again, you would read adoration in the eyes of those heads that our fathers had forced to bend down to the very ground? Here are black men standing, looking at us, and I hope that you – like me – will feel the shock of being seen” (1964: 291).

Sartre, of course, was referring to the liberating voices of a large group of African poets writing in French but, to them, we must as well add many other voices, in all the other European colonial languages. Ignored or, more often, gagged and repressed in the colonial settings from where they originated and which they struggled against, those voices needed metropolitan contexts to express themselves with a relative liberty. And metropolitan contexts they used, from the creation of *Presence Africaine* and its “surreptitious speech” (Mudimbe, 1992) or the publication of the first texts by Franz Fanon (1963, 1965, 1967 and 1991) or Amilcar Cabral (1969, 1973, and 1975), in Paris, to those of Luthuli (1962), Eduardo Mondlane (1969) or Nelson Mandela (1965 and 1978), in London or to the work of W. E. B. Du Bois (1901, 1903, 1965, 1968 and 1996) and L. R. James (1963 and 1992) in the more distant Americas. Conceived within and directly reflecting the impetus of the struggle against colonialism, apartheid and institutionalized racism, those texts articulated and mediated the denunciation of the situations where they had originated with protests, claims and demands for liberation. They were soon followed by their scholarly expression in paradigmatic and highly innovative texts among which, and somehow towering over them, *L’Histoire of L’Afrique Noire*, by Ki-Zerbo (1972), but also by those by Diop (1958 and 1971) or C. L. R. James or, later on, by the monumental Unesco’s *History of Africa*. At the same time, and everywhere in the continent, from Algeria to Zimbabwe, new historical narratives about the past and present

of the new, decolonized countries, started to be re-created, written, published and consumed in great quantities. I will come back to all this in one of the next chapters but, for now, what interests me here is to underline that a common aspect to all those emerging voices and texts that started to be heard and read after the late 1940s was the fact that, clearly and perhaps for the first time within the context of the periphery of an evolving world-system, they translated, as well and primordially, the historical and political knowledge, the perspectives or the standpoints of the wretched of the earth, as Fanon called them, of the subaltern, of the oppressed, of the struggling multitudes of the periphery. And this is indeed what, throughout the following sixty years, has been happening, not only all over the periphery but, as well, within the core. To an extent that has allowed Coetzee to point out, in his recent discussion about Benjamin and his historical thesis, that “his call for a history centered on the sufferings of the vanquished, rather than on the achievements of the victors, was prophetic of the way in which history-writing has begun to think of itself in our lifetime” (2001: 33).

It is within such a context of a generalized recognition within the core that the Other(s) have the right to their own angle of vision, that also in the social reality things seem to be different according to the perspective from which they are looked at or looked for, that most of our recurrent questions about the radical distinction between a history from the top and a history from below, about a core-centric history hiding or denying the history or histories of the periphery, of a history of the West transforming the history of the rest of the world into a mere epiphenomenon, have their roots. But it is here, as well, in the presence of the important body of scholarship that grew out of such roots, that a deep sense of dissatisfaction, of disappointment, of frustration has taken hold. As Coetzee says, the balance is not, not at all, a

negative balance. But it allows the conclusion that the simple assumption of different perspectives, the historical perspective of the Other, is not enough to change the way we think, write and live history, in particular, social sciences in general.

Do not read me wrong: the introduction of new historical perspectives was an important, a decisive achievement: but it is not enough. Strangely, it seems to exist in the continuity of what it wanted to tackle and confront to start with: the Euro-, core-, ethno-centrism of traditional depictions, descriptions and explanations of the world-social reality. In many cases it is little more than the simple change, the mere substitution of one sign with its opposite, of a minus with a plus or vice-versa. The number in itself is not affected, stays the same; and, to be sure, the deeply Eurocentric, core-centric nature of contemporary history and social science-writing continues to be there, present, apparently motionless, still distorting our attempts to understand the historical and social reality of our world. In other words, the perspective is always present but, core-centric or not, it does change little or nothing of the way we look at and try to account for the reality of an evolving world-economy. It is always the core that is prevalent and present. New paths or, better, new strategies of research capable of surmounting this state of things are consequently needed. And, to be sure, they have sometimes been tried.

Namely, we can find an important attempt to overcome the insufficiency of the general introduction of new, peripheral, non-Euro-centric, historical perspectives in the work of Enrique Dussel and, in particular, in his **Beyond Eurocentrism** (1998: 18-20). What he defends there is that not one, but two perspectives or positions in the face of a formulated problematic must be sought: one, the perspective proper to the management of the European

centrality in the world system; the other, the correspondent position from the periphery but taking into account the process of modernity as the indicated rational process of management of the world-system (18-19). In short, what he seems to be defending is the need to place side by side or, better, facing one another, those two perspectives, say, that of the core and that of the periphery. Instead of one perspective we now have **two** perspectives.

It is in the geography of such a proposal that the concept of border or frontier thinking, so creatively presented by Walter D. Mignolo (2000: 49-51), can start to find its full meaning and theoretical import. Two perspectives placed side by side, looking at one another, complementing one another, recognizing the existence of a line of separation in-between the two. I tried this approach in part of the present work and it no doubt allows a more satisfying access or approach to the reality being depicted. To a certain extent, this is a methodological device that allows the observer, I in this case, to occupy a position **on** that line separating the two perspectives and to look simultaneously at both sides of it; “standing”, as the excellent Marie Louise Pratt pointed out recently, “on *la linea*, looking both ways” (2004: 417, emphasis in the original). Actually, and besides social-historians and cultural theorists we find there many other characters: journalists, to start with. But we find also, as Fanon was already claiming more than forty years ago, police precincts, garrisons and military barracks located on *la linea*, on that line of separation. Anyway, we started with the need for the perspective of the Other; advanced to the need of two confronting perspectives; we have now the border, the frontier line between the two as the ideal locale for journalistic, military and world-historical observation. I believe, however, that even this position, this type of approach, is not, yet, the solution we need.

We must consequently go even further in the definition of a possible strategy to surmount the deep influence and permanent infiltration of Eurocentrism on our work. And, namely, because such a strategy must as well respond, at the same time, to what I characterized above as being a second problem haunting social science today, that of the relative truth of different historical perspectives that are, oftentimes, mutually exclusive. What, then, is historical or theoretical or methodological truth in the kind of work we do?

In Terence Hopkins courses on method two main, pragmatic (⁹) solutions about such a question were often presented and discussed. The first pointed out that all knowledge is provisional. This means that knowledge is transitory. It means also, as stated in the Editorial Policy and presentation of the journal *Review* of the Fernand Braudel Center, that we have to recognize not only the holism of the socio-historical process but also the transitory and heuristic nature of theories (*Review*, all issues [except (I) 1], page 2 of the cover). Secondly, that truth is not only provisional but that it emerges or is provisionally recognized as such by consensus (¹⁰), by a consensus of practioners, a community of scholars. And, as Hopkins liked to repeat to his students, in this we are luckier than the members of a liberation movement whose truth of analysis is rather confirmed or not in the practice of the armed struggle, often and consequently, through the barrel of the gun.

⁹ Pragmatic, I now add, not only in its dictionary meaning of the term but also as related to the great ideas of pragmatism found in the works of John Dewey on science and democracy and on those of Charles Pierce, as Joyce Appleby et al (1994) discuss in depth; Cf also Hollinger (1994: 16-19).

¹⁰ The ontological problem, here, is of course the nature of such a consensus and the fact that it is sought where it is known to be found -- not anywhere else; see Hollinger (1994).

What this means in the present context is that the consideration of a peripheral historical perspective or, for that matter, of two perspectives, a core and a peripheral perspective facing one another and separated by a borderline, are important theoretical or methodological devices but that we have to go further to be able to assume the full meaning that world-systems analysis allows or makes possible. To be sure, a world-system is not only, by nature and definition, the opposite of a Eurocentric, core-centric or, for that matter, peripheral-centric perspective. It represents as well the relationship of core and periphery, mediated or not by a semi-periphery. This is intrinsic to the definition of system: when we think in systemic terms we have to think in terms of a constant, dynamic, evolving relationship among its constituent parts. In the case of the modern world-system the mutual formation and the permanent interrelationship between its core and its periphery constitutes its historical, concrete, structural reality. One is not possible without the other. They are not, to start with, dissociable. This is why, I contend, the objective of world-systems research and analysis is not, consequently, to reconstruct or assume the perspectives of the periphery, of the dispossessed, or that of the core, of the centers of capital accumulation, but rather to look at, to analyze and to try to “understand” both at the same time, simultaneously, in their permanent, necessary, indispensable interrelationship. To remember once again the teachings of Terence Hopkins, we have, as he used to say, to be relational in world-systems analysis, to be **always** relational.

This type of approach, on the other hand, can change significantly what I described above as being the geography implicit in the two-perspectives-solution found in Enrique Dussel or in Mignolo’s concept of border. When our perspective is the perspective of the world-system what we have is not a face-to-face confrontation of different perspectives. What we end up

with are rather, vast and constantly changing areas of geo-economic and cultural coincidence of the core and the periphery, areas where all types of social, economic or cultural relations take place: relations of exploitation, to be sure, but also of resistance; relations of conflict, of denial, of difference and of divergence but also of mutual adjustment, of co-option, of permanent cultural exchanges, and of convergence that are an intrinsic part of, which evolve into and determine a single, common, systemic trajectory -- a trajectory that, in the case of the modern world-system, is coincident with that of historical capitalism.

We have, consequently, an area (or areas) of contact and interpenetration that goes beyond and over borderlines and frontiers. Primordially, I believe, it is those social areas of a systemic and constant interpenetration and their mutual transformation, in economic, political and cultural terms, that define or characterize the historical space on which social study, research and analysis has to be based.

2.

The application of these methodological procedures to the concrete case of the historical development of Southern Africa, to better understand it, was accordingly one of the main guidelines I tried to follow in the present work. My objective started to be, however, slightly different. It was, rather, the characterization of Southern Africa as a world-systemic region where the formation of the richest and the poorest countries of Africa were historically possible, occurred, and evolved side by side and as the result of common and interrelated world-historical processes. With such an objective, I tried to define, follow and discuss the long term formation of Mozambique, presently one of the poorest countries within the

periphery of the capitalist world-economy, in relation to that of Southern Africa in general, that of South Africa, the richest and most influential country in the region, in particular. Consequently, the study evolved within the context of the long-term creation of Southern Africa as an economically integrated region since at least the late nineteenth century and as the main structural consequence of two different, confluent processes. First, it resulted from the mode or conditions of local existence and impact of, simultaneously and in their systemic interrelationship, Portuguese and British colonialisms. Secondly, the creation of the region was also a product of the geo-strategic conditions of existence, social reproduction, and relative political power of the local, dominant elites, and their survival as such, within the context of an evolving capitalist world-economy.

In chronological terms and according to its main themes the present study ended up divided into two main parts. The first part, necessary for a wider understanding of the period thus defined, covers, in necessarily brief terms, the long trajectory of what I will call, following Braudel, the Indian Ocean human space and its main directions of trade, in their continuities and ruptures. In particular, it considers the peoples and social formations which constituted the African-Swahili coast northwards of the Zambezi River as well as those to the south of it before the local arrival of the Portuguese in the late sixteenth century. As discussed above, the incursion into such a long succession of long-term historical periods was a necessary and, I would add, an important intellectual exercise in the deconstruction of a Euro-centric approach to the present social reality of Southern Africa. It also furnished significant suggestions to the understanding of the region today.

The second part of the present work, more directly related with the questions suggested by the above, general, approach, has one of its temporal limits in the late sixteenth century but is centrally concerned with the period between the late nineteenth century and the early twenty-first century. As an attempt to define and characterize some of the possible tendencies of evolvement of the present regional situation, this period was tentatively extended, in prospective terms, to 2025.

Still in what concerns its more general objectives, the study tries to reformulate and answer some of the main theoretical questions in world-systems analysis related with the historical creation of peripheries. This include their relationship with the formation of semi-peripheries and the expansion of the core; and how they exist and reproduce themselves in what appears as a cyclical alternating of systemic marginalization and growing underdevelopment. Fundamentally, this questions how the locally defined interests of peripheral elites try to confront or assume the different processes of incorporation. To be sure, these are processes of the core and consequently related with the concrete expansion of the capitalist world-system. To assume or refute them, those elites react according to dominant concerns of self-protection and self-reproduction. Sometimes they originate strategies of resistance. Others, they react with responses of acceptance. More often they assume a combination of both. This is not, in other words, neither a linear nor a simple process. I try to discuss local forms of response to incorporation processes, not only as anti-colonialist or post-colonial opposition, including conflict and armed struggle, but also as cooperation, including assimilation and accommodation. The present influence of international organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank (WB), to a great extent reassuming in the region the

structural role and position previously played by its colonial occupiers, and the type of political relationships and co-optation they were able to establish with local elites, makes this approach particularly necessary to understand not only what is happening in Southern Africa today but as well, more generally, within the context of the periphery.

Simultaneously, this attempt to look at Southern Africa both in its remote relations within the Indian Ocean human space and as a colonized or incorporated region of the modern world-system, required the necessary fragmentation of what is in reality a world-historical, systemic continuity. This artificial fragmentation is, to be sure, inevitable when dealing with the historical evolution of what Tilly calls (1984: *passim*) big social structures and large social processes as a methodological device of systemic analysis. Namely, it is the only way to have a distinctive sense about the subject matter through the comparative references it can recreate. In the discussion of the modern evolution of Southern Africa, it is such a fragmentation that brings to the foreground the distinctions and similarities possible to be depicted in the discussion of the three models of systemic existence whose discussion constitute the last part of the present reflection: the colonial, the post-colonial, and the structural-adjustment models.

On the other hand, such a methodological device makes even more necessary and critical the need to discuss the way it is applied and used, because it contains in itself the possibility of the opposite, that is to say, of the possibility of imposing continuities where historical ruptures seem to be more evident. I would add that it is through the ambiguous duality of such a research device that a thesis like the one presented by Gunder Frank about the existence of a Sino-centric, 5000 years world system (1996, 1998) seems to be possible.

3.

The initial question leading to the study of the Indian Ocean as a human space of which the eastern coast of Africa was, in different periods, an integral part was determined by the need to characterize that region of the world before the starting point imposed by a Eurocentric approach to the beginning of its history. That is to say, before the circumvolution of Africa and the maritime arrival of the Europeans in the late sixteenth century. To be sure, this was the beginning of a long term historical process that led, three centuries afterwards, to its incorporation as part of the modern world-system. How to characterize, consequently, such an evolution? Was it broken down by a historical rupture, characterized by the consolidation of a capitalist world-economy in the region – or, rather, was it a structural continuity repeating, without qualitatively changing, the systemic characteristics of a 5000-years regional evolution within the evolution of a millenary world system? To a certain extent, both approaches seem possible to be defended as mutually exclusive or, better, in an either-or relationship. Because 300 years of systemic consolidation is, even in historical terms, a long period of transition, it constitutes continuity. But there seems to be no doubt that, with the localized and usually brief exceptions of some communities, as discrete as they were powerful in their trading tentacles and processes of accumulation, what the Portuguese first, the Dutch and British afterwards, brought to and imposed into the region, had no precedent, not only in military and economic terms but also in its social and cultural impact, in the millennial history of the Indian Ocean human space. It was the need to look for a possible response that made necessary the even limited and condensed excursion into the history of the Indian Ocean that constitutes de first part of this work and, namely, through the attempt to characterize the succession, rise, decline

and relative import of its dominant directions or networks of trade, in particular in their relationship with the African continent. Although any definitive conclusion is necessarily limited by the scarcity of sources about such a long trajectory or trajectories, that approach has made obvious that the arrival of the Portuguese launched the region into a historical process that, due to very specific conditions of time and space, soon became irreversible. Why? Because, I now believe, there were no viable historical alternatives to such a historical process. That was the reason why the Europeans were able to sail and occupy the Afro-Asian Sea without substantial opposition. And this is what happened throughout the following 300 hundred years. Contrary to what was still happening there fifty years before, in the late fifteenth century the forces capable of confronting or limiting the geo-strategic European occupation of the region had been discontinued. Without them nothing else was able to block the incorporation of the region two or three century afterwards within the dependent periphery of the capitalist world-system. There is then a degree of continuity of two or three centuries. But this does not exclude the rupture effectively established between a declining, contracting Indian Ocean world-economy and an emerging, increasingly stronger and more determinate western European world-economy.

There is also, then, a rupture between the subject-matters of the first and second parts of the present study, that is to say, between a millenary Indian Ocean human space and its transformation, slow, irreversible, and still continuing today, into an integrated part of the trajectory of historical capitalism. On the other hand, and notwithstanding the many voices defending that similar processes, the structural existence and repetition of ruptures, have occurred in the 500 years of the modern world-system, the reality is that there is no significant

or meaningful transformation in its nature, objectives, mode of existence and processes of appropriation and accumulation of surplus value. Wallerstein made clear this aspect in his critique of the vulgar Marxism description of historical capitalism as a mechanistic succession of multiple and different forms. There are not, he underlines, “multiple forms of capitalism – mercantile, industrial, financial – but rather... alternate ways for capitalists to make profits, according to conjunctural shifts in the operation of the world-economy” (2002: 368; 2004: 94-95). It is important to underline this at the outset because, as a research and narrative device, I will consider that the capitalist world-system can be seen and considered as a sequence of different processes. Notably, and in the perspective of the core, it can be approached as a triadic succession of enlargement of metropolitan spaces, followed by the creation of local autonomies, sooner or later requiring their destruction in order to make possible new conditions of enlargement or expansion of metropolitan spaces. In other words, the periphery is historically shaped and reshaped in line with the requirements, needs, and objectives of the core. In the historical trajectory of the modern world-system we recognize, easily, the sequence, of apparently different processes of accumulation. In the history of the evolvement of the modern world-system, those processes follow, chronologically, a period of contacts and exchanges between western European and non-European traders and their elites that included not only gold, silver, spices and other luxury items but, as well, the increasing enslavement, direct appropriation and use of labor force as the main source of capital accumulation. Colonialism, the extension of metropolitan political power and economic control over labor and resources of the rest of the world, that is to say, the national-based expansion of European spaces, constituted the first of those processes, from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. The creation of peripheral autonomies, starting in the late 1940s and,

namely, as part of the interstate system of the world-economy, followed the more or less generalized debacle of colonialism, which was, in part, a result of the consolidation of a new hegemonic power, the United States. Finally, and after the outcome of the critical phase of capital accumulation, in the early 1970's, the generalized decline of the profit rates and the beginning of the end of the dominant hegemonic power, new forms of control and access to peripheral resources was initiated. This is the origin of the generalized imposition, on the periphery but not only, of the usually designated programs of neo-liberal structural adjustment, part of the so far well succeeded, in its intrinsic objectives, process of destructing the possibility of peripheral autonomy and independence led by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The fact that those programs and projects of structural adjustment have failed clamorously in their **public** objectives, those of furthering the economic development of the peripheral countries where they are imposed, must not hide the fact that they have been an immense success in what concerns the objectives that led to their conceptualization to start with: that of taking away the independence and sovereignty of those peripheral countries and, in so doing, recreating the conditions of open access to labor and resources of those peripheral countries and of their increasingly more poor and wretched peoples.

In such a context, the case of Mozambique is particularly interesting as reference for a wider reflection because it offers, clearly and with an ideal-typical intensity and evidence, what constitutes the systemic succession of what I will call, in my designation, a colonial model, destroyed by a protracted armed struggle and followed by a characteristically anti-colonial or post-colonial social and economic experience, that was overcome by the imposition, since the

late 1980's and after a long and destructing military aggression leading to civil war, of the IMF/World Bank programs of structural adjustment to the capitalist world-economy.

This succession of colonial, anti-colonial and structural-adjustment models of social and economic organization and access to labor and resources, although with different emphasis in each one of the cases, can be extended and constitute the basic approach to the understanding of Southern Africa today. Simultaneously, they result from and determine the dominant characteristics of its countries and peoples, the way they interact in the present level of struggles and will in great part define their future. The same can perhaps be said about the whole African continent and this will be, as well, one of the objectives in the present work. Somehow connecting all those questions and hypothesis, and underlying them, a general question is formulated: what are the meanings of such a succession of processes in an even more general context, that of an evolving world-economy?

Finally, and in what concerns the space boundaries considered in the present work and their characterization in historical time, the need to consider the historical evolvement within the northern Indian Ocean region of its social and economic networks led me to apply to it the concept created and used by Fernand Braudel in his seminal work about the Mediterranean as a human space or, as he titled the chapter V of his study, as a human unit characterized by its "movement in space". In his words, a human space is the combination, over a geographic area of route networks and urban centers, of lines of force and nodal points, of people and relationships (1966 (1972): I, 277). In research terms, he adds, "the essential task before us is to measure the relationships such a network implies, the coherence of its history, the extent to

which the movement of boats, pack animals, vehicles and people themselves makes [it] a unit and gives it certain uniformity in spite of local resistance.”

On the other hand, and particularly in what concerns the colonial, anti-colonial and structural adjustment processes that characterize the last one hundred and fifty years of the generality of the periphery and, in particular, of Southern Africa, I tried to use the concept of commodity chains, as developed by Immanuel Wallerstein and Terence Hopkins. In the study of their rise, expansion, consolidation, decline and collapse this approach offers important aspects in the characterization of systemic space and its changes in time. Consequently, and within the context of the present work, I will try to characterize space in the interception of two approaches, as relational or networking human movement and as increasing or decreasing systemic incorporation.

This strategy allows to avoid the definition of space in terms of territorially defined national units, without putting aside its historical construction, and, at the same time, perhaps more importantly and once again, to overcome not only its core-centric characterization but, as well, the temptation of its nationalistic consideration as the dominant unit of analysis.

Such a research strategy, adopted and developed here, made my task, I must say, simultaneously, a slightly more comfortable and difficult task. More comfortable because in analytical and narrative terms it is easier to deal with the core/semi-periphery/ periphery relationships I have to deal with; it allows, consequently, a kind of shortcut both to the general context of Southern Africa, to South Africa (labor, railways, ports) and to Portugal (cotton,

migrant labor, forced labor) -- as well as to Britain, the Indian Ocean, the pre-colonial networks, the way the Portuguese tried to disrupt and occupy them, their continuity in time, the historical alternatives to what today is the Southern Africa region (namely the space of the Portuguese Pink Colored Map; the Rhodes Cape-Cairo space; the “apartheid” spaces to the Zambezi, first; to the Limpopo, afterwards). It allows us also to discuss transports and their role in incorporation in a regional perspective or, for that matter, aspects like the fact that in Mozambique today the division among North, Center, and South identities seems to be stronger and more (politically) operative than other possible divisions like, as examples, the Portuguese invention of a Makonde-Makua dichotomy or the divisions Ronga - Changane - Chopi.

But this approach is also more difficult because as far as I know nothing exists yet about it. This is the reason why, and notwithstanding the reference to both characterizations of space mentioned above, I will have to continue to use and define space and its change in time according, as well, to its ethno-historical and inter-state, national boundaries. This point is for me particularly interesting because, as I discussed above, I believe that in world-system studies and, perhaps even more, when they focus the periphery, one needs indeed new ways (in theoretical and methodological terms) to define social, systemic space and its changes in time.

II

The Sea and the Land before

European Hegemony

In the old legends of the sea, the Pacific Ocean is often described as being green: light or enlightened green. For Homer, who could not see with his own eyes, the Mediterranean was usually sung with the color, and probably the taste, of dark wine. Walking through the tight streets of downtown Lisbon, Pessoa, Campos, Reis and Soares, four different persons in a single self, tried to balance their common loneliness with the *saudades* of an “intensely blue” Atlantic (Pessoa, 1932/1998). The seas of the world, it seems, can be depicted by a single color. But, if this is true, then there is an exception. Because, seen from the coast of Sofala by its poets the Indian Ocean is, rather, **a sea of all colors**. It is also one of the oldest, if not the oldest, of the oceans extensively traversed and navigated by humankind -- at least since 3000 BCE. As the centrality of history after the fifteenth century of our era gradually started to shift to the Atlantic, as it seems sometimes to be shifting nowadays from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the Western, core-centric memory of the role fulfilled by the Indian Ocean in the long-term trajectories linking its past with our present and with the future, has been more or less lost.

That role was, however, and namely in what its global importance is concerned, a primordial one. To use as a reference the categories and chronology convincingly proposed by McNeill

(1963/1991: 296-8), the Indian Ocean was a central space of exchanges, communication, and contact between peoples, their cultures and interests even during what he calls the first closure of the Ecumene, between 100 BCE and 300 AD, and the second closure, from 1200 and 1400, but also before and after, till at least the early sixteenth century. On the other hand, and around 1500, the human space of the ocean was going through a phase of accentuated decline of economic importance. It coincided or better, and as Abu-Lughod would probably say (1989), made possible the successful attempt by the Portuguese to introduce new forms of geostrategic control and occupation of the ocean. They did it by subordinating sea-power and military control to commercial expansion in the name of the economic interests of a small but very powerful European Crown. At the level, in other words, of what was already at the time a fiercely independent, increasingly centralized, national state.

The use by the Portuguese of state and military power to control extensive sea lanes as a way to monopolize the trade circulating through them was a crucial change in the history of the Indian Ocean. If we do not take into account the effects of the ever-present and pluridirectional action of pirates, its waters had always been freely traversed and navigated by traders. By trying to dominate the space of the ocean and its routes and by submitting to such an objective their policy of occupation of the land, the Portuguese turned upside down what were the accepted, secular, historical geo-strategic procedures of trade organization in the region. In their place they imposed a state-based, military control and influence designed to monopolize the most important of the regional trade flows. We recognize here the foundations of the strategy of domination which, in the following centuries, was strengthened and consolidated by the more powerful and, perhaps, more efficient action of the Dutch sea-traders, first; of the

British navy and of the British imperial interests, afterwards (Farrington, 2002: 64).

To a great extent, such a control of the geographic space, in this case the space of the sea, to control economic flows and trade networks appear to us today as being part of a new, already "modern" conception of the world. It was a basic and necessary complement for the expansionist drive of the capitalist world-system. Notwithstanding the fact that, as Chaudhuri points out (1985, 1990), it was only after 1750 that the Indian Ocean became a colonized region, that is to say, became part of the periphery of a new, radically different and still evolving world-economy whose core was by then situated in a different region of the globe and in the shores of a different ocean.

Since then, and throughout the last three hundred years, the Indian Ocean has tended to become a more or less secondary region of the modern, capitalist world-system, perhaps with two brief and relatively recent exceptions: the first, after the late 1960's, when the then called Cape Route became for a while the better of the Cold War alternatives of transit for the giant super tankers linking the Middle East with an oil-hungry core; the second, in the mid-1990's and somehow more interestingly to our present narrative and reflection, when the political project of a new Indian Ocean economic region was proposed by a post-apartheid South Africa and, at least nominally, accepted by all the other countries on its shores, from Southern Africa to the Indian subcontinent, and to Australia. That project, if not complicated, as it will certainly be, by interests of the core or by the local reality of a nuclear, militaristic race between two or more of the states in the region, can be one of the possible factors in the reconstruction of Southern Africa. I will consequently come back to this proposal, its conditions, advantages,

possibilities and expected oppositions. Before that, however, we have to go back in time, to as brief a discussion as possible of the distant past that preceded the arrival of the Portuguese, from the south and along the African coast. This will be the approach I will follow here to try to understand the impact of a new, modern world order of which, and perhaps *malgre lui*, they were the emissaries, with their interests, their geo-strategic conception of the world, their religion, their ships, their guns, and their culture.

From that distant past Europe was still excluded or, if not, it was no more than a set of very small, dispersed and far-flung communities of traders. This is what makes of it a fundamental reference to determine the extent to which the arrival of the Portuguese represented indeed the beginnings of a new social, political and economic order. It can also tell us something about the way that arrival was received, resisted or accepted. Moreover, it is only by looking at that past that we will be able to determine the degree to which the presence of the Europeans transformed locally the secular movement of human beings in their relationships among them and with the spaces they created, that is to say, with the networks and social webs of their different trade routes and interests. In particular, we will have to focus on some of the main elements of the relationship between the peoples living not only between the Sofala coast and the interior of the southern region of Africa but also from the Great Lakes to the Cape, and those from Western Europe who traversed the sea to make that region an intrinsic part of their expanding world. That contact and the historical evolution of the nature of the social interrelationships determined by it, a long prelude to the present, will be the main objective of the following chapter

A brief remark about sources must however be taken here into account. Notwithstanding the

very important and frequently fascinating work by K. N. Chaudhuri (1985, 1990) or that by Sanjay Subrahmanyam (1990, 1990a, 1993, 1997), the history of the Indian Ocean is still waiting for its Braudel. In the meantime, one must reflect and write about it with the many interrogations, the blanks, the lack of agreement, and the superficiality that characterizes our present historical knowledge and imagination about the Indian Ocean, one of the least well-known seas of the world. It is also, of course, the most peripheral of the great oceans. Because Australia is usually facing "the other side", that of the Pacific, not even one of the past, present or possible future core regions of the modern world-system, has been or is situated on its shores.

1. A sea of all colors

Magalhaes Godinho's work about the Indian Ocean will be here a starting point. In the 5000 years between 3000 BCE and the present, he considers six continuous phases in the historical *longue duree* (¹¹) of what he calls the discovery and construction of the Indian Ocean as an economic complex (1990: 298). Extended to at least the middle of the first millennium BCE, it was during the almost 2000 years of Godinho's first and second phases that trading sources and their markets started to be defined and consolidated in the convergence of the changing interests of the peoples living on its shores with new and old long-distance routes and processes of trade, of shipbuilding and of sailing. Such a historical continuity created, structured and developed the northern Indian Ocean as a space of intense and cyclically-expanding economic and cultural exchanges until at least the mid-twentieth century.

¹¹ I will translate *longue duree*, from now on, as long-term; as long duration; or, somehow as suggested by Braudel himself (1994: 35), as the last deep level of History. Sian Reynolds, the excellent translator of Braudel, also uses long-term, occasionally, as a translation for *longue duree* (Cf., for instance: Braudel 1982, Vol.2: 21-22).

The construction of the northern Indian Ocean as an economic complex of that type and the considerable extensions traveled by its traders and sailors can be better understood if we take into account the obvious assertion, pointed out for instance by McNeill (1963/1991: 102), that coasting voyages offer no great difficulties to small and primeval vessels that can be beached on almost any shore if and when bad weather threatens their security. On the other hand, the transport by water, by rivers or by the sea, was the only way allowing the circulation of an increasing volume of goods over long distances (Crouzet, 2001: 30). Up to a point, the point that separates coastal waters or routes from the high seas (Braudel 1966/1972: 104-10), this is what made sea traveling more adequate, easier and, later on, more frequent than the correspondent overland travel. Basically, the sea became the alternative for the expensive limitations of the land. It offered a choice between short and long routes. It could be, but was not always limited by the comparatively modest distances of the numerous, segmented journeys and resting stations on which land traveling had to be obligatorily divided. The sea allowed as well the possibility to change the nature of the goods being traded. Through long land distances only luxury goods could be transported with profit. This limitation would be less critical through the sea. Moreover, the sea was also a way to avoid the possible consequences of frequent armed instability and all kinds of threats along the very long roads, of heavy tributes and the dangers or simple time-consuming attractions of intermediary and very expensive cities. When the basic secret to sail the Indian Ocean, that of the seasonal regularity and direction of its monsoons, was finally mastered and made into another advantage, the large scale, transoceanic, long distance trade navigation of its waters became not only possible but also, increasingly, an expanding, dominant activity (Godinho 1990: 299). Furthermore, with

time, there was an increasing and more generalized knowledge of the ocean in particular through the mapping of its coasts, peninsulas, islands, as well as of the changes of its currents in relation with the system of monsoons. This allowed the increase and consolidation of different sea routes and trade flows in a direct proportion to an increasingly safer sailing not only for men and ships but also, primordially one is tempted to add, for their cargoes. What this means, as well, and as Immanuel Wallerstein and Ravi Palat suggest (1991: 7), is that the costs of transportation by sea had become, by then, increasingly competitive, if not generally lower, when compared with the transport costs to the same distances through corresponding routes overland.

The extension and form of the northern Indian Ocean according to its different trading networks is somehow easy to configure. If we consider the northern Eurasian routes of the Silk Roads by land (several, different routes including one, later on, by sea) as its limit in the north; and, in the south, an imaginary line of sailing from the Indonesian archipelagos towards Madagascar and Sofala, on the east coast of Africa, then, between those two lines and linking them in various points, the structural space of the Indian Ocean complex of trade can be seen as having, at least since the second half of the first century BCE, something like a wide trapezoidal form on which an inverted triangle, corresponding to the Indian sub-continent, is inscribed. Both to the west and to the east, this space is in continuous relation with the faraway extremes of the land mass -- through the Mediterranean towards the European shores of the Atlantic, the Baltic or the North seas; and, through the Malacca and Sunda straits, towards the Pacific, today's Japan and the China Sea. Because in logistic and geo-strategic terms it was centrally located between those two extremes of Eurasia, allowing easier, quicker and cheaper

links between them, the northern Indian Ocean in certain periods of its history became part of larger, pre-modern complexes of social, economic, political, cultural and religious interrelationships. It was then that, under the influence of distant empires and their trading, the ocean tended to become, in those specific moments of its history and in similar terms to those used by Fernand Braudel to characterize the Mediterranean, **a single human space**. That is to say, in his words, an integrated and dynamic "combination, over an area, of route networks and urban centers, lines of force and nodal points" (1972: I, 277).

In the known history of the Indian Ocean, this appears, sometimes, as a large-scale interrelationship of interests and networks, with its cities and ports. Sooner or later, however, that interrelationship collapses without visible traces. This constitutes an ever-present tendency that, sometimes, crystallizes into a coherent, permanent, consolidated, systemic, social unit before, two or three centuries afterwards, fragmenting itself once again in a number of separate, autonomous, de-linked regions. In fact, and if looked at in this perspective, the structural characterization of the trapezoidal space of the ocean and its secular continuity appears more often to us, rather, as composed by the intersection of its different trading routes whose relative independence, autonomy and separation clearly mirror and correspond to different areas, different historical systems, different interests, different objectives and different markets. We have then, we have usually in the northern Indian Ocean, and once again to use a characterization found in Braudel to a similar situation concerning the Atlantic, **several Indian Oceans**, that is to say, "the association and more or less literal coexistence of several partly autonomous areas" (1972: I, 224). As a way to briefly characterize the **four or five Indian Oceans** which then, and in historical succession or not, seem to appear as part of a common

trajectory we will have to define their main areas of influence, to try to follow the most important of their corresponding trading directions and networks.

The first of those directions of Indic navigation is, probably, the oldest of them all (Abu-Lughod 1989: 267-8; McNeill 1963/1971: 100, 232-6, 379 Spencer, 1983: 67; Godinho 1990) the one formed by the different seaways traced by Austronesian navigators, namely from Java, Sumatra, Malay and Borneo. From initial island-hopping, as Braudel calls it (1987/1995: 256) they got involved in major out-migrations by sea of their peoples, since the third millennium BCE and to and from what we call today Indo-China, Philippines, Korea, Japan, China or, even, the more distant Americas (Varagnac: 1959). They followed, as well, the main interests of their trading activities, both in the Indian Ocean and in the Pacific. Through sea routes probably defined then and by them for the first time, they sailed to the coast of the Indian sub-continent, to the Persian Gulf, and, some centuries afterwards, to Africa, to Madagascar (Murdock, 1959: 45, 212-6; McNeill 1963/1991: 234; Braudel 1987/1995: 257) and what later became known as the Sofala coast, more than 6000 miles away.

We can characterize the long-term importance of the Austronesian sea routes by the geo-strategic location of the region on which they originate. That is a region of access to the west and to the east, a revolving door to and from the South China Sea and the Pacific. This characteristic, however, only seems to have assumed its full importance when combined with the fact that, since at least the first century, the region became the result of its conjunction with social formations of the southern part of the Indian sub-continent and around the Bay of Bengal. A conjunction sometimes characterized by conflict but, more often, by cooperation and

complementarity -- if not by systemic integration.

To be sure, it was the political power represented by such an integration that transformed the region into a decisive nodal point for the direct control of the two main passages to the great East-West sea-routes. The first of those passages was that of the Malacca Straits, between Sumatra and the Malay coast. The second was the Strait of Sunda, located between Java and Sumatra. Jointly, they were the revolving doors between China and the rest of the world. And, as Braudel reminds us, they were still being used centuries later by the powerful sailing-ships linking directly the Cape of Good Hope and the ports of the East (1994: 264).

On the other hand, it was on the foundations of their close interrelationship with social formations of southern India that the historical preponderance of local kingdoms, like those of Java and Sumatra, was often based. That was also the origin of their historical role as regional core states, in the designation of Wilkinson, and in what seems to have been a recurrent, alternate way for periods of time usually of one to two centuries (1991: 132). Such a systemic role was also consolidated by the monopolistic capability of their shipyards to supply the region with increasingly more sophisticated and efficient ships and other sailing craft. It also explains, of course, the historical and economic importance of Malacca.

At least since the 13th century and on the eve of the arrival of the Europeans, the region was ruled by the powerful Indo-Javanese "universal" or unifying empire of the Majapahit, based on Java (Curtin 1984: 124; Abu-Lughod 1989: 308). From there, obviously with the aid of a powerful and very active fleet and often against increasing pressures from Mongol China and

other regional powers, its rulers dominated other islands including Singapore, New Guinea and the Philippines. This was obtained according to what Braudel calls a vast network of vassals and dependents (1994: 262). However, affected both by military invasions from India and by growing internal divisions, the Majapahit empire was destroyed after 1420. It was then that Malacca fell to the enemy to become the base for further invasions. The whole region entered then into a slow but irreversible decline which was accelerated, after the fifteenth century, by the direct action of the Portuguese, first; of the Dutch, afterwards. In both cases, the Europeans used on their behalf the deep divisions among the various peoples of the region and the weakness to which they had been reduced by long periods of war. Both the Portuguese and the Dutch assumed the military domination of the sea by establishing new forms of control in the two east-west passages. At the same time, they complemented military control with the occupation of the financial and trading center of Malacca. It was through that they were able, as well, to get hold and establish a growing degree of direct control over the main sources and networks of spices, pepper, rare woods and gold dust (Braudel, 1994: 263), thus creating the conditions for the gradual incorporation of the whole region in the modern world-system in the late eighteenth century (Wallerstein & Palat, 1991; Chaudhuri, 1990).

In what specifically concerns the relationships between the region and the eastern coast of Africa, there is no doubt that expeditions were often organized, namely to capture slaves in the coastal region of the continent, from Sofala to the north, and to take them not only to the Middle East and India but also to China (Godinho 1990: 310). Ivory, gold, rare woods, and, in particular, silver were among the demanded products. Although we do not know much about those flows, their relative importance, quantities, frequency, and conditions of exchange, the

reality is that they gave origin to an important trading center in Madagascar. With time, it became a kind of strategic scale from where all kinds of trading and slaving expeditions to the continent were regularly launched, at least until the end of the thirteenth century (but Portuguese sources still mention it in the sixteenth century). With the exception of Madagascar, where today the majority of the people speak an Austronesian language, the impact of this type of relationship, however, does not seem to have produced visible changes in the structures, institutions or political organization of the African social formations with whom, eventually, those eastern traders and sailors entered into contact. It was, however, a culturally very rich type of encounter, namely through the introduction in the African coast of new species of edible vegetables and fruits as well as of new instruments and techniques of seashore fishing and sailing ⁽¹²⁾.

With its origins on both coasts of the Indian sub-continent, in the coastal kingdoms of the South and the Malabar, a second direction of Indic trade was defined, at least since 1000 BCE, to and from Ceylon and Burma, the Land of the Gold in Southern Asia, and both to China, through the Kra Isthmus (Curtin 1984: 102), and to the Persian Gulf and the Far East, with Ceylon as an intermediary market for silk and spices. Since at least 800 BCE there is evidence of overseas commerce with Babylonia and, according to Mc Neill ships probably traversed the Indian Ocean to east Africa and southeast Asia (1963/1991:174), increasingly, and as discussed

¹² For instance, there is an easily visible cultural influence present in the local construction of small fishing canoes still being widely used in the shores of today's Mozambique, as far south as the Delagoa or Maputo Bay. Those canoes are very similar to the characteristic twin-hulled sailing ships used by the Polynesian sailors to brave the seas more than two thousand years ago (Moura 1972: 7-39). Also through the designation by which those rafts of two logs bridged by planks are locally known, *ma-kangarra*, a possible corruption of an originally Malay-Polynesian word meaning "towards the south", they seem silently to witness, in the long continuity of historical time, the often forgotten presence and influence of those distant travelers of the ocean in the southern African coast of today.

above, in conjunction with the trading operations of the Java and Sumatra kingdoms, at least since the year 100 CE. By that time, as well, trading ships from the Mediterranean world started a frequent communication with southern India (Thapar, 1965: 134-5). Indian sailors also went to Arabia and Africa, later on forming an important colony in the Socrota Island.

On the other hand, and according to Rea, the sea did not usually attract Indians. They would rather delegate the exploitation of the ocean to others. Chaudhuri designates this characteristic as being part of the "introspectiveness" of the large kingdoms of India, in particular those with their capitals away from the sea (1985: 9, 14-15). Such a peculiarity, however, was not an obstacle to the formation, in Gujarat, of a well-organized community of traders which, by 300 CE, was already consolidated, active and very quickly expanding all over the region (Thapar, 1968: 134-5; Braudel, 1966: 125-6).

The introduction of money in the sixth century, with the Persian conquest of the Punjab, accelerated its historical formation and importance to such a degree that the Aryan conquest of India, although source of endemic war, conflict and chaos in the region (McNeill, 1963: 134), did not affect its trading activity and networks, in particular with the Middle East and, through it, with Europe. On the contrary: according to Romila Thapar, "beneath its apparent confusion there was one factor which gave continuity and consistency to this period -- and that was trade" (1966:109).

Trade and its networks were still very influential and powerful at the time of the arrival of the Portuguese. Writing then, the chronicler Tome Pires (1511/1944) describes them as being

controlled by the powerful Gujarat mercantile community. Probably as a self-defense against the frequent convulsions of the region, the Gujarat had originated an important monetary economy. With their seraphs, the usually Banyan money-changing bankers, their brokers and their money-lending networks they were present in all commercial points of the Indian Ocean and beyond (Braudel, 1966: 124-125). Until at least the early eighteenth century, they dominated the great majority of the business relationships, money lending, brokering and investing within the Indian Ocean and beyond. Still according to Tome Pires, the financial power, control of trade and extension of the Gujarati mercantile and financial networks was similar, if not wider and deeper in geographical terms, to those of the bankers of the Italian Republics in the west. Most probably, they were also very often, in open competition with them.

A third direction of Indic navigation had its origins in the ports of the social formations of the Mesopotamia and the Arabian Peninsula. As discussed above and still according to Godinho (1990: 299), Sumerians, Babylonians, and Minoans traveled to the basin of the Hindus establishing there important contacts with local cultures. They also navigated from the Arabian Peninsula to the Persian Gulf and, in joint voyages with Persians, to the Far East. After a period of Persian influence, from the fourth to the seventh centuries CE, the control of the Indic trade was concentrated in other Arabic hands and steadily expanded from East Africa to the Far East between 600 and 1000 CE, the historical period on which the Arabic primacy of command was reached and consolidated. To be sure, it was during the seventh century that Arab sailors and traders traversed the Indian Ocean in all possible directions, to the Far East, to Africa, to Ceylon and, after 671 CE, to China (Godinho 1990: 302). After the eighth century,

Arab expansion intensified towards Madagascar and the African coast. It was there, from Mogadishu to Sofala, that they were part of the formation of the network of coastal city-states that defined what we today call the Swahili culture. It was also the growing and highly profitable activities of Arab traders and sailors that, also in the eighth century, made necessary and led to the construction of the legendary Bassorah in the Persian Gulf and, when the Khalifat shifted to Baghdad, developed Mascat and Siraf, besides creating large trading communities in cities like Malacca and Canton.

More or less at that same time, the primacy of the relationships of the West with the Indian Ocean changed from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf (Godinho 1990: 303). Since then, Arab traveling and trade exchanges within the space served by the Indic networks was not only constant but also very extensive. When the Portuguese arrived at the coast of today's Mozambique, in the late fifteenth century, they found out there the information they needed to continue their trip to India. Perhaps with less surprise than we would expect they found there, as well, travelers from other distant points of the Arab world, including from Fez. In 1507, traders from Granada, after following long land routes, contacted the Portuguese in Ormuz

In our description of the different routes of navigation in the Indian Ocean before the arrival of the Portuguese, a fourth direction of sea trade can be defined as having its origins in the shores of the Mediterranean and as having been operative since around 2900 BCE, when Egyptian traders and sailors used, to open and follow it, the same type of ships, the craft, and the know-how developed to sail up and down the Nile. They were able to access the ocean through the Red Sea, either directly from the Nile or by traversing the relatively short distances of land that

separated it from the Mediterranean. Quite often, they transported by land and on the back of animals not only cargoes but also the components and parts required to reassemble their ships in the other side of the desert, at the seashore.

Centuries later, during the twelfth dynasty (circa 1938/1756 BCE), the techniques developed to open irrigation canals were applied to build a navigable connection from the Isthmus of Suez to the Red Sea and the northwestern Indian Ocean. Usually operated in a very effective way, this link between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean was intermittently used, when not closed down by the deliberate action of men or by natural causes, until at least 775 CE. In connection with the transformation of the Socotra island into a safe point of scale, that distant predecessor of the future Suez Channel, was instrumental to the increase of maritime trade and in particular that between Egypt, Mesopotamia and India between 1700 and 500 BCE (McNeill 1963/1991: xxiv). This was a period characterized by a consistent expansion and growth of trade.

It was by then, as well, that the first great harbors of the region started to be constructed: Cossair, for instance, in the Red Sea, but also the Solomonic Ezion-Geber, in Akhaba. It was from here that, later on, the Phoenicians departed in search of the African Ophir, possibly situated in today's Zimbabwe or Mozambique (Bentley: 3 and 20). Between 600 and 595 BCE, they exploited further southwards the east coast of Africa. Their probable objective was to create the necessary conditions to sail to the south of it and, tentatively, around Africa towards the Atlantic (Bentley: 20).

The Mediterranean, Hellenistic access to the goods circulating through and originated from the

Indian Ocean trading system, *grosso modo* between 500 BCE and AD 200 (McNeill 1963/1991: 254), was to a great extent based on and made possible by the heritage of those Phoenician navigations. During that period the coast and the interior of the Indian subcontinent were extensively explored, in particular the basin of the Indus. At the same time the Persian Gulf was navigated to and from Ormuz and, as trade intensified in the first century, to and from the Far East. It was also by then that the voyages by sea to the East Coast of Africa become more frequent. This is namely suggested by the fact that the first written descriptions of the region date from that period. The "Periplus of the Eritrean Sea", for instance, was edited in AD 40 in the port of Alexandria. It is a detailed guide about the region that was used by Greek navigators and traders. It includes what can be read as a large variety of anthropological, climatic, and maritime descriptions of the east coast of Africa as far south as Sofala. Often using Asian ships to sail and trade, those Greek traders and sailors exchanged gold with spices in India. Godinho points out as well that although the seaways of the Indian Ocean continued to be navigated, since pre-Islamic times, by Arabs, Gujarati, Cholas and Malayans most of the trade flows traversing the seas were dominated by Mediterranean sailors (Godinho 1990: 332).

In what concerns the relation between this direction of navigation and the eastern coast of Africa, it seems that notwithstanding the usually very attractive fact that African trade was not locally affected by heavy taxes or tributes, neither its products nor the expeditions to access them seem to have been very profitable or considered essential when compared with the trading possibilities of other coetaneous regions. On the other hand, we can safely relate the frequency of those expeditions and the existence of what Wilkinson describes as regional no-core periods alternating with a shifting core situated either in the Lower or in the Higher Egypt

(1991: 126-7). This was historically followed by the dominating influences of Classical Greece, of the Roman Empire, of the Muslim world, and, increasingly after the early thirteenth century, of the Italian Republics, in particular Venice but also, later, Genoa.

Such a succession of dominant influences, if not economic hegemonies, over the Mediterranean world can be explained by what constituted one of its main sources of wealth and power, the control of the flows of goods circulating through it at least till the early fifteenth century if not, although in decline, afterwards. This is related with the fact that, and as discussed above, most of the more important trade circulating in its lanes was mostly composed by far away products in transit to and from the northern Indian Ocean, India, Southeast Asia and China as well as, increasingly, to and from western Europe. In the monopolization of those flows, the Italian republics introduced important changes, in relation to previous modes of control, as they became, through their extended networks, ships, trading posts, merchants, and agents, all over the region and to the north and east of it, not only their intermediaries but, as well, and increasingly, their financiers, bankers, transporters and distributors. In contrast to what happened in previous periods of Mediterranean hegemony, like that by Muslim traders and merchants, the creation and relatively quick growth of important merchant elites in the Italian republics can be seen as a direct consequence of those changes and evolution.

Before the early fifteenth century, when the Portuguese spice routes around the African continent affected them, at least temporarily, the Mediterranean trading flows registered another important change, a change related with the nature of the main products traded. Since

at least the early Middle Ages these were more or less the same: silk, both raw and transformed into luxury fabrics, spices, precious stones and ivory, towards Europe. And, in the opposite direction, linen and woolen fabrics, weapons, metals, salt and slaves, the latter through Venice and Genoa and to and from Europe and the more developed Muslim and Byzantine countries. From a more local origin, there were wines from Greece and Crete, raw cotton, oranges and, in great quantities, the alum necessary to dye textiles. The nature of those flows changed, however, as they increased substantially, after the eleventh century. But this change was, as well, a qualitative change. As the more developed Muslim industrial centers started to decline in the early fourteenth century, Europe started as well to reverse its condition of exporter of raw materials and slaves in exchange for manufactured goods produced in those centers. The chronically negative European balance of trade had however to continue to be regularly and increasingly supplemented with silver (Crouzet, 2001: 28-9).

Finally, the fifth direction of navigation and influence in the Indian Ocean can be traced from its origins in the shores of the Chinese South Sea, where trade had been expanding since the beginnings of the first millennium. To a great extent, Chinese ships, loaded with porcelain, silk, medical drugs and spices were following already in the seventh century the same routes leading, primordially, to and from the sources of silver -- but also to and from those of gold, ivory, and slaves all over the Indian Ocean. In the ninth century they started what became a more regular and organized expansion -- that is to say, more than three centuries before the Portuguese started to think about theirs. Chinese sources from the time depicted already what Levathes designates as "an excellent description of Africa" (1994: 37) -- but there is no guarantee or indisputable references on them or elsewhere that the Chinese junks had by then

traveled to and from the continent. The most probable hypothesis is, consequently, that such knowledge was part of a regular and more or less systematic gathering of information about Africa from Indian, Persian and Arab travelers. To be sure, the power and the strategic existence of China naturally implied the need for a wide knowledge of the world at the time that included a centrally very important Indian Ocean. This became obvious during the Song Dynasty (960-1279) when, to respond to the needs of the state and its finances deeply affected by the siege of the kingdom in the north, a fleet of vessels and the necessary infrastructures were created and the systematic challenge of the Arabic predominance over trade in the Indian Ocean was seriously undertaken, for the first time, from the end of the eleventh century to early twelfth century. As a consequence and in a relatively very short period of time Chinese trade in the Indian Ocean more than doubled, while, by the beginning of the thirteenth century, they possessed not only the best ships to sail the ocean but had, as well, captured the bulk of its trade.

The most important of the Chinese contacts with the Sofala coast seem to have been those established in the first half of the fifteenth century. As all the others outlanders demanding it, the Chinese sailors and traders looked for, found there, and tried to control the routes leading to and from their sources, silver, gold, ivory, and, to an extent which is still difficult to evaluate, slaves. The establishment of Chinese trade communities, near the Swahili city-states, either by design or accident, has not been corroborated by archeology but it is here referred to as a strong possibility. To be sure, the chronicles of al-Mas'udi describe, in the tenth century "strange people" living near the local African social formations. Al-Mas'udi called them Yajuj and Majuj, adding that they were "similar", in their general appearance, to the peoples living at

the fringes of the Chinese Empire. About two centuries afterwards, another well-known Arab traveler, al-Idrisi pointed out that because of internal troubles in India, the Chinese had transferred their trading bases in that region to Zanzibar and other islands of the African east coast (Levathes, 1994: 200-201).

However and shortly after the Chinese last voyage to the Sofala coast, in 1433, the general suspension of all overseas sailing was decided while all construction and maintenance or repair of oceangoing junks was terminated. For internal reasons, bringing together the exercise of political power, the need to keep it centralized in a situation of internal and external threats, national security, the permanent tensions between traders and bureaucrats, and anti-trade Confucian ideas made up into a dominant and domineering ideology (Abu-Lughod 1989: 274-5; McNeill 1963/1991: 555-6, *passim*; Levathes 1994), the greatest navy of the world in the fifteenth century was formally extinct while sailors and traders had to choose between the illegality of contraband or the abandonment of their Indic enterprises. This dating coincides in general terms with the end of the period, between 1000 and 1500, the fourth phase according to Godinho. In McNeill's characterization, it brought to its closing down, less than four decades before the arrival of the Portuguese, the phase of the Chinese dominant influence in the Indian Ocean.

This description of the northern Indian Ocean according to its main trading routes allows, perhaps, a better understanding of its historical importance throughout more than three thousand years. It emphasizes, as well, the slow evolution of its different trading areas and markets as separate, independent, self-sufficient, and, often, more or less closed units. We can

say consequently that, historically, there was a northern Indian Ocean according to Indo-Austronesian interests and objectives (perhaps the more global or systemic of them all), as there were co-existent **Indian Oceans** according to Mediterranean, Arabic or Chinese interests, markets and objectives. As suggested above there was also an Indian Ocean bringing together all the others, giving some sort of unifying cohesion to the different networks and making them part of larger systems or networks of trading. However, even then, the separation of those routes, not their integration, appears as their main characteristic and the dominant element in the configuration of the sea. In other words, the whole geographical region seems to have existed and been constructed in the intercept of two great vectors. The first was based on the trading interests, the centers of power, the city-states and the trading and financing communities that existed on its shores and within the historical systems they originated. The second, and to an extent which is still difficult to evaluate, was defined under the historical and often domineering existence of distant empires situated in both extremes of the land mass, in Europe, with the Mesopotamian region as a kind of bridge, and in the eastern extreme of Asia, in China. It was such a relationship that, for certain periods of time, guaranteed not only a relatively steady, regular, profitable, and quantitatively sound supply and demand of commodities but also some degree of state control, stability and protection within important portions of the networks through which those commodities circulated. As McNeill points out, those extended flows existed "in the symbiosis of caravans and shipping networks" (1963/1991: xxiv). This was true of the Silk Roads, to the north, as it was when applied to the waters of the Indian Ocean, in the south. But the two vectors, and in particular the second one, that of the direct influence of distant empires, are not equally determinant in the configuration of the sea. The first one was always overcoming in influence and permanence the second. And

this is what gives the pre-modern trading routes of the region their cyclical breathing, their ups and downs their dynamic and their ruptures.

In chronological terms, the relationship between what we called above the rise and decline of distant empires and the tendency towards the interconnection among the different routes of the Indian Ocean linking them, became, perhaps for the first time, a reality around 2700 BCE. It was then that the voyages of importance through the northwestern waters of the ocean coincided with the evidence of what Frank and Gills describe as processes bridging and bringing together, as trading partners, the Egyptian, Mesopotamian and Indus social formations with China, into what effectively appears as an increasingly integrated and expanding commercial world-system (1996: 298-300). By then, Austronesian ships were already trading in the Indian Ocean but, as discussed above, we have no way of knowing the kind of practical interrelationship between them and the newly-arrived traders in the vast areas of land or sea. That is why the beginnings of a more extensive, regular and coordinated navigation within the ocean must be dated from the middle of the second century BCE. It was then that the volume of trade exchanged through the sea and land routes of the region can be said to have increased in a direct proportion to the increase of economical, political, and civilizational importance of the two large and powerful territorial units situated, once again, in the eastern and western extremes of Eurasia, the Han and the Roman Empires, respectively.

In particular towards the end of the first century of the present era, trade and other flows within this vast geographic space, namely those bringing together Austronesian and Indian trading and sailing interests, benefited and were part of a very prosperous A-phase of expansion (Frank and

Gills 193: 188). Around 400 AD, and after two hundred years of a slow decline, both empires appear as having collapsed. This was the result of a process which became even more critical by its coincidence, in time and space, with the outbreak and quick expansion through what were common networks of trade and communication of a series of devastating diseases. It was this confluence of imperial decline and disease that brought the first great period of global trade to an almost standstill.

The renewal of what quickly became a steady process of Eurasian commercial expansion started to be a reality in the sixth century. With its beginnings coinciding, once again, with the foundation and strengthening of powerful and territorially very large states, namely those of the Carolingian, Tang, and Abbasid empires. This process was strengthened by the military and political expansion of nomadic peoples, principally of the Turks and Mongols, and the vast trans-regional empires they established between 1000 and 1350, which contributed decisively for the intensification of regular and systemic trade exchanges throughout the Indian Ocean.

Having lasted more than 500 years, this period can be characterized with two probable A-phases of economic expansion: the first to 800 AD; the second from 1050 to 1300 AD (Frank and Gills, 1993/1996: 188). In both phases, there was a rapid increase of navigation within the Indian Ocean. It complemented and, sometimes, surpassed in importance all other routes of commercial, religious and cultural exchanges throughout the Eurasian landmass, from the Iberian Peninsula to China and from Mongolia to the African coast.

Within the human space of the Indian Ocean, the first part of this period was dominantly

characterized by the Arab economic and cultural predominance. During the second phase of trading expansion, however, and since the late eleventh century, traders from the Chinese coast started to confront that predominance to capture, in less than twenty years, the essential of the Arabic trading and shipping networks in the region. By the thirteenth century they had become its dominant economic power.

Specifically in what concerns southern Africa, Peter Mitchell dates from this period what he calls “the beginnings of the region’s incorporation in the expanding economic system that, partly tied together by maritime trading links across the Indian Ocean, increasingly united Africa, Asia and Europe before the Portuguese expansion. Parts of southern Africa, especially the Zimbabwe Plateau, became important suppliers of gold, ivory and other commodities, gaining in return exotic items that could not be made locally, or only at considerable cost” (2002: 300). We have seen, already, that previous exploratory and trading contacts through the Indian Ocean with the eastern and southern coasts of Africa had already been established throughout previous centuries, to be, in all cases, more or less discontinued later on. The same thing happened this time with a difference: the trade then established seems to have been not only more important in what concerns the quantitative and qualitative value of the exchanges but, as well, more permanent or continuous. It can consequently be characterized as having a deeper, more socio-economic and political transforming impact. Basing his assessment on the glass beads, Middle Eastern ceramics and other imported commodities found at some southern African archeological sites dating from the late first millennium, Mitchell emphasizes namely the relationship between Indic maritime connections and the transformation of earlier, less elaborately organized communities into the class-divided polities of Mapungubwe, Great

Zimbabwe and the latter's successors, Mutapa, Torwa and the various Venda entities (2002: 371).

Once again, however, and probably more than war, aggression and its effects, the systemic nature of the multi-continental flows circulating within the Eurasian networks of exchange implied also the conditions leading to their collapse and, consequently, to the declining interrelations – but not to their complete rupture -- with southern Africa. As Bentley points out, "Mongol hegemony in Eurasia facilitated the efficient spread not only of trade goods and cultural traditions but also of communicable diseases. The bubonic plague spread with such devastating effect in the later fourteenth century that it disrupted economy, society, trade and communications throughout Eurasia" (1993: 27). Recovery from the plague, with a new era of trade expansion was however slowly under way in the early fifteenth century. There was then an increasing presence in the Indian Ocean of trading ships of Arabic, Indo-Javanese and Chinese origins. At first reenacting past successes of trading and its control, the latter started however to disappear from the waters of the region in less than forty years. To a great extent, this was how the conditions making possible the arrival and settlement of European traders were created.

In the pre-modern history of the Indian Ocean we have, consequently, important periods of time when everything seems or tends to come together as part of a single systemic unit and into some kind of coordinated human space. These are, however, conjunctural moments in its long-term history. Underneath those unifying tendencies and strongly reappearing as such when they start to wane away, there was always the reality of different historical systems with their

different trading routes, networks of interests and markets, their different cultures, languages and civilizations. It was that reality that made of the northern Indian Ocean a vast intersection of interregional, sometimes intercontinental, networks of trade in more or less open competition or, more simply, ignoring one another.

The long-term history of the northern Indian Ocean seems, consequently, to have evolved for more than 4000 years between those two characterizations. It appears as an alternation between centrifugal and centripetal forces, between **one** and **many** Indian Oceans. Its evolution can as well be described as having been between a certain kind of world-systemic unity and its desegregation. It was, consequently, a history divided between the influence of distant empires and the localized and autonomous recreation of different historical systems, self-contained even when occasional links reappear in the flows circulating in their trading routes and networks. These alternations seem to have come to an end only with the beginnings of the modern world-system. That is to say, when the emergence of a single, Western, all-powerful, systemic core of accumulation of capital started to impede, to finally over-ride and destroy, the possibility of distant empires and competing cores. It impeded as well the existence of autonomous, de-linked regions. In other words, it ended when the historical possibility of empires gave way to what became the global dominance of the core of a unique, modern world-system. Highly centralized in its structures of accumulation, this was the capitalist world-economy.

Through a closer observation of such a complex network of intercontinental and regional sea-routes, interests and contacts within the long-term time and space of the northern Indian Ocean,

can we draw any other positive conclusion about it? Perhaps, I think, a very general observation. In the context of the present work, it is related with the fact that the above description does not tell us why those networks and their sea routes tended uniformly to self-reproduce themselves, changing often without transformation, throughout the long centuries. It does not tell us why they were able to resist the attraction and the temptation of the wider, larger, more inclusive and incorporating influences of distant empires. Why, in other words, there was not some kind of crystallization of those different routes, networks, and markets into a single system of trading interrelationships, into a single market, into a unique five thousand years world system.

The response must be based, I think, both on the nature of the trade flowing through them and of that of the cores or centers of wealth linked or interrelated by it. In what concerns trade, the main evidence is that it was mainly formed by goods which, although important and in increasing quantities, were not essential for the self-reproduction of those centers of wealth. Among those goods, silk, porcelains, spices, ivory and gold were destined for the households of the elites of rich and powerful in those centers. Silver, a main commodity, was mainly a financial instrument of economic interrelationship among the various centers. Slaves, finally, did not occupy yet the role and function of primitive accumulation of capital that later on they will assume in the West. Secondly, and in what concerns the nature of those centers interrelated by trade and its networks, the evidence is that they were oftentimes characterized by the presence of what appear to us today as emerging forms of capitalism and of capital accumulation and, as such, permanently trying to undermine the prevailing order. I mentioned the Gujarati, above. There were, however, other similar, although less powerful communities.

As a consequence they were without exception confronted by the old, by the dominant forms of, as Samir Amin would call it (1999: 307), a tributary social organization that, more or less uniformly, characterized those historical systems, their social formations, their centers of power and their productive organization. It was a secular confrontation always resolved either through some kind of accommodation or by open conflict. Either mode avoided, I think, both the threat and the temptation of systemic change, of radical transition, of the substitution of the old by the new.

Through the predominance of the tributary over all other forms of social and political organization, such a resistance to transformation can be considered, consequently, as one of the fundamental characteristics of the secular, pre-modern evolution of the different centers of power within the northern Indian Ocean. In all cases, and this is why they are not antagonistic or mutually exclusive, it is trade, in all its forms and underlining the economic relationship among those formations and the cultural contact among their peoples, which gives to the long-term history of the ocean its real meaning, its logic, and its continuity. However, trade implies also that those systems tend cyclically to approach their limits and, without solution of continuity, to collapse.

A 5000-years world system, the crystallization of the influences of distant empires into a single trading unit or the more permanent hegemony of one among the different systems in the region, can perhaps be seen as one of the potential historical alternatives to what was the dominant trajectory of the ocean, a trajectory determined by the tensions between a divided region and the influence of distant empires and, within the region, between the old and the

new. All our evidence points out, however, that it was, as well, and notwithstanding the Frank's fascinating hypothesis, a **non-fulfilled historical alternative**. The reality of the ocean at the time of the arrival of the Portuguese in the late fifteenth century was, rather, and as Abu-Lughod shows (1989: *passim*) a reality of separation, not of systemic cohesion, with its three circles or networks of influence -- those formed by Arabic, Indo-Austronesian and, perhaps withering away but still present, Chinese navigation and trading interests. The contrary, most probably, would have made impossible the Portuguese aggressive action, their presence, and their successes. On the other hand, and as Chaudhuri points out, correctly, I believe, pre-modern trade in the Indian Ocean needed neither the continuity nor the regularity that we associate with the modern, capitalist world-economy. It was, rather, the commercial expression of "a decentralized system of economic production" that, he writes, "made each region much more self-sufficient and reduced the influence of producers in long-distance trade" (1990: 20).

Such a defining characteristic of the northern Indian Ocean can as well be used to explain the reason why there was never a unifying, universal culture or religion in the region or strong tendencies towards it. The northern Indian Ocean was, rather, throughout its millenary history, a meeting point of cultures, trading routes and networks, of influences, tensions, and the rise and fall of local or distant social formations but never, in its 5000-years of history, a point of cultural, civilizational or, for that matter, religious convergence or unification. On the contrary: almost all of what Abdel-Malek (1981: I, 12) calls the great civilizational empires and circles of human history included, in one time or another of their respective histories or, often, simultaneously, the Indian Ocean as a main component of their existence and social and political reproduction, that is to say, of their existence. Namely, and as mentioned above, the

Egypt of the pharaohs, Persia and China; historically succeeded by the Arab-Islamic system from the Iberian Peninsula to Persia; the Indian system based on the subcontinent and expanding eastwards based on a traditional Hindu culture with Muslim rulers; the Chinese system, in particular under the Mogul domination; by the Eastern and Western sub-Saharan African systems; and, finally, by Christendom -- none of these civilizations, empires or territorial forms of social organization can be explained without reference to the human space of the ocean. However, and notwithstanding brief and locally situated forms of cultural syncretism, those civilizations, cultures and religions of the Indian Ocean never came together into as much as the simple suggestion of a somehow unifying, renewed, hybrid, mutually influenced, consolidated form. The opposite seems to have been true. This gives another meaning to what its poets tell us: that throughout its more than 5000-years of history the northern Indian Ocean was always, was indeed, **a sea of many colors**.

2. The Land: southern Africa before Southern Africa

The permanent influence of the Indian Ocean, of the sea, is essential to the historical and sociological characterization of what I will call here southern Africa before Southern Africa, its past, and its possible futures. Another aspect of this introductory research must be, however, a better understanding of the land, that is to say, of the peoples living in that region of the African continent, of their history and, in particular, of the type and nature of the social relationships they established and assumed amongst themselves and their environment. To be sure, this was made according to their structures of production, reproduction, subsistence, and knowledge. But it resulted as well of their exchanges, through the Indian Ocean but not only, with other peoples of the world. My main concern here will be, consequently and as discussed

in the Introduction, a necessarily brief attempt to characterize and understand those spaces, inflections or zones of contact in southern Africa and its history “in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other” (Pratt 1992: 6-7).

Within the more specialized field of what is usually designated as African Studies, that history or, better, such a study of the successive forms of social relations and social change lived by those peoples, has been dominated throughout the last thirty or forty years, and to a greater and perhaps more intensive extent in what concerns Southern Africa than in any other region of the continent, by three important intellectual debates which continue today.

The first one, perhaps the more open of the three, is concerned with the still very widespread perception that until the arrival in Africa of foreigners, usually meaning the Europeans but also, sometimes, the Arabs, nothing of effective import happened or changed within what was (or still is) constructed, consequently, as an isolated, backwards, primitive, God-forgotten continent. As Ken Smith among many other authors points out, African societies were considered as static and unchanging, “they had no history” (1988: 10). Such a conception of Africa has its roots, to be sure, in a European-centered, episodic and narrative historiography based on written sources, theorized by Rankean and Hegelian conceptions of history. As such, and in an even more intellectually striking way, it appears as a kind of response to a cultural, collective necessity -- the ideological, ethical, religious need to justify, reframe, and morally savage what to be sure constitutes a long term, violent, predatory and in depth exploitation of the continent and its peoples by economic, political and cultural interests based on the Christian West and its core. It tends to hide or present in better light what has been,

historically, a usually very violent and brutal process of appropriation of labor, land and other resources, a process that required and, to a great extent, crystallized historically, in particular after the eighteenth century, into multiple racist expressions of a generalized false consciousness. This, of course, continues to be prevalent in our days.

The second debate, equally important, with its roots in the very deep influence of a still dominant core-centric, colonialist ideology on the study of the continent, concerns what could be called the problem of the forms and nature of the historical evolution in Sub-Saharan Africa, in general, within southern Africa, in particular, of what I will here continue to call Bantu-speaking peoples. Such a convoluted debate can be better defined through some of its main interrogations: can those Bantu-speakers be considered as "local" peoples or were they originally "external" to the southern half of the continent? Were they military invaders expanding their cultivation of the land by force and genocide? Were they "colonizers", brutal invaders or both? Was there a Bantu conquest, a Bantu expansion, a Bantu migration or a Bantu dispersal? Between the colonialist hypothesis about warriors invading the south of the Equator in a series of very quick and destructive military operations served by better weapons and a better agriculture because based on the use of iron and easily submitting or exterminating the local peoples, between such a blitzkrieg-kind of expansionist explanations and the suggestion of a dispersion of languages without the dispersion of their original speakers, all those positions were presented as hypothesis throughout the last 50 years and, usually in a very conflicting way, as we will see, were defended or falsified as such.

Finally, the third debate within African history, perhaps the most interesting of the three in a

perspective of world-systems studies, concerns the history and role of long-distance trade in its relationship with processes of social and political change within the continent. In one of the most recent defenses of such an approach, and specifically in what concerns the early Portuguese contacts with present-day Ghana, Jack Arn concludes, based on the important work of Ozanne, among others, that those contacts, since their beginnings from the mid-sixteenth to the early seventeenth centuries, determined there “a veritable economic revolution” leading to “great increases in population, to urbanization, to the industrialization of the crafts (pottery production), and to the formation of the states which are historically known to us” (Arn, 1996: 417; Ozanne, 1962: 67). To a great extent, this is not only the type of explanatory model applied with more or less success to many other regions and historical conjunctures of the globe but, as well, the more acceptable among many other approaches to the explanation of the impact of long-distance trade and its determining role in some of the processes of social and economic transformation within the African continent.

I will use here those debates, in some of what I believe are their more interesting questions and conclusions, to characterize the southern part of Africa before its transformation, in the nineteenth century and mostly due to the contact with and the local impact of the expansion of an evolving capitalist world-economy, into what became a highly structured and established region in geo-strategic, political, cultural and economical terms, into what we call today Southern Africa. In other words, such debates will guide us in what pretends to be a brief reflection about southern Africa **before** Southern Africa.

Ideologically centered upon a pseudo a-historicity of the peoples of the continent the first of

the three debates was given, as late as 1966, a characteristically eloquent expression by the prestigious British historian Hugh Trevor-Roper, then the Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford University, when he wrote that "perhaps in the future there will be some African history to teach. But at the present there is none or very little: there is only the history of the Europeans in Africa. The rest is largely darkness... And darkness is not a subject for history." Without explaining why "darkness" cannot be a subject for history, Hugh Trevor-Roper adds that "there is no time or interest to amuse ourselves with the unrewarding gyrations of barbarous tribes in picturesque but irrelevant corners of the globe" (1965: 9).

Much before the time Sir Hugh expressed his certitude about the a-historicity of the African peoples, from the immediate post-war, the reality in what concerns the study of Africa was, however, both within the core and, to a certain extent, within the continent, a very different one. Jan Vansina, for instance, tells us that the year of the birth of "African academic history" was 1948 (1994: 41) when the Africanist Roland Oliver occupied the newly created chair of historian of Africa in the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. Two years afterwards, Basil Davidson inaugurated his popularization of the history of pre-colonial Africa with what became a surprising best seller, **Old Africa Rediscovered** (1950). Simultaneously in the United States, African studies started to become a more visible theme – and a highly pragmatic one within the imperial context of the American hegemonic consolidation -- as one of the so-called area studies then inaugurated, studies which, because highly specialized and interdisciplinary, led quickly to an increase of historical, linguistic, archeological and other types of research projects about the continent. Finally, and within the continent itself, the first attempts towards the construction of an African history radically

different in its approach and epistemology from the already prevalent settler stories of the colonial occupation (which they uniformly described as the humanitarian “pacification” of the continent), had already started to give its fruits. Among them, there was the pioneer academic work of Kenneth Onwuka Dike in Nigeria (1956/1965). This trend had also been extensive to Southern Africa. It can be there exemplified by such classical works as **The Cape Colour Question** or **Bantu, Britain and Boer: the Making of the South African Native Problem**, by William M. Macmillan (London: 1927 and 1929; Smith, 1988: 110-111); or the Marxist inspired **Time Longer than Rope**, by Edward Roux (1948-1978).

To be sure, the post-war geo-strategic interest about the continent, the so called process of decolonization that followed it after the mid-1950s and the corresponding multiplication of scientific studies about its peoples and societies soon confirmed, against statements or approaches like those of Trevor-Roper, that African social formations had been historically through very complex, specific, large scale, long-term trajectories of change and social transformation. Moreover, that those trajectories of change were either inflected by or independent of the arrival, the contact with and the local settlement of outside, foreign peoples. These were among the innovative conclusions that could be easily found in the ground breaking work of Jean Suret-Canale (1958, 1961 and 1962) or, under the influence of the Annales school, in that of Ki-Zerbo (1972). They could as well be found in the monumental Cambridge History of Africa (Fage and Olivier 1975-). Also in what concerns Southern Africa, and perhaps in a more striking way because it constitutes a geographical area which, after the 18th century, was constructed as a human and social region on the base of racial differences, ethnic distinctions, and the theories of apartheid, that pre-European, pre-colonial

historical trajectory was rather shown to have been based on and generally towards a greater integration and cultural hybridism amongst the different ways of life of the peoples in contact and at all levels of interrelationship. An integrative process of social, economical, political and cultural hibridity that was shattered, precisely, because inflected and distorted by a multiplicity of forms of land, labor and resource expropriation that followed the arrival and local settlement of Europeans (Roux 1978; Wilson and Leonard 1969-71).

This is today particularly well illustrated in what concerns one of the earliest peoples of southern Africa, the San a designation encompassing several different social groups such as the Xo and the Gwi of the Kalahari, the Naron of today's Botswana or the King in Namibia. They are also generically known as the Twa, in most of the Bantu languages of the region, or as Bushmen, the more simplistically descriptive designation they received in contact with European settlers (Gall 2002, Smith et al 2000) In their musings about a local history, the latter also saw them, traditionally and when not simply ignoring their existence, as the dormant, static, or quickly disappearing remnants of the oldest types of human-beings in Africa, incapable of adaptation to modern life and progress -- if not as proto-humans or, even less, as a kind of amusing piece of trivia about the continent and its fauna. For instance, in the words of one of those less crude historians the Bushmen are described as "the nimble little flat-faced brown men of the caves and deep kloofs" -- while their origin is explained in the following terms: "(I)t was in Southern Africa that the first man evolved from the ape...: from this earliest man... came the Bushman" (Cope 1967: 29). To a great extent, this was part of the intellectual and ideological framework on which the generalized enslavement and extermination of those peoples, mostly by settlers throughout the past 200 years (Gall 2000),

found some of its justification.

There is today no doubt that south-eastern Africa was indeed the cradle of the first human beings, "the postglacial populations of Africa", as Fagan calls them (1989: 235). With a post-colonial and post-apartheid historical research now flourishing in Southern Africa, our knowledge about the long-term historical trajectory of its peoples is becoming more precise and comprehensive. A trajectory that extends itself from those postglacial peoples or the users of the so called pebble tools, to the appearance of the axes characteristic of the Early Stone Age, to the more complex toolmakers of the Middle Stone Age, some 40,000 years ago, and to the late Stone Age cultural systems, with their impressive rock paintings, since at least the tenth millennium BCE (Omer-Cooper: 1994; Davenport: 3). In particular, the in-depth study of hundreds of sites and their stone implements all over the region, from the Cape to the upper Rovuma River, has been clearly showing that at least since 500 BCE and onwards to the early centuries of the second millennium AD very long term historical processes of adaptation and social change, namely those determined by quickly changing environmental conditions throughout the centuries, has characterized the millenary social history of the region. It has also been showing that those processes of adaptation and self-reproduction, leading to a very specific southern African Iron Age, have determined a great diversity of hunter-gatherer cultures and societies based on increasingly more efficient modes of hunting, of fishing, of the exploitation of shellfish and of gathering. It was from such a cultural diversity that societies like those of the San originated (Fagan, 1989: 235). Consequently, and as Inskip had already written, in a scandalously notorious statement among the defenders of apartheid in the late 1970's, they were "the first South Africans" (1978; Omer-Cooper 1994: 3).

In other words, San culture was not historically a self-enclosed, static type of culture, impervious to change, but, rather, the dynamic and evolving result of the social interrelationship within and among characteristic hunting groups, with their defined territories, political organization and forms of collective, usually consensus-based decision-making; with their modes of survival and social reproduction; and with their forms of religion (Omer-Cooper 1994: 4). These groups, as Barnard (2001: 28) tells us, present important commonalities in their social existence and reproduction, but they show, as well, a vast range of differences: there is not, even if based on what is often called “the ethnographical tyranny of the !Kung... a homogeneous Bushman archetype” (Wilmsen 1995). Richard Lee (1976: 118-9; 1978) showed as well how their mode of life emphasized a balanced interrelationship with the environment but also, far from the idyllic descriptions which were sometimes written about them, that their survival and self reproduction was very hard and based on a highly unbalanced division of labor between men and women, with the latter not only assuming usually the hardest and most decisive tasks for the survival of the group but also receiving less of the scarce resources in the process of collective redistribution.

At the same time and increasingly, modern archeology is also making it evident that the San would frequently develop or adopt new forms of production of food as well as of the creation and possession of domestic animals and pastoralism (Omer-Cooper 1994: 5). There is also, today, a considerable body of archeological findings, confirming both oral traditions and the written descriptions of travelers and traders that the San did not avoid, rather entered in frequent trading relationships both among their different hunting groups and, since at least two

thousand years ago, with other peoples from whom they would receive, namely, and in exchange for their own specialized products, the iron required for their hunting gears (Omer-Cooper: 1994). It is as well evident that they were exposed to pastoral societies earlier than once was believed. They traded and, according to Heath, not only engaged in tribute relations with those pastoralist societies but, in many known cases, kept livestock as well (2000: 1664). Bringing together an important body of studies about them, Edwin Wilmsen, namely, tells us that "the isolation in which they are said to have been found is a creation of our view of them, not of their history as they lived it" (1989: 3). Much before the arrival of the first Europeans, the oldest Arabic writings about the east coast of Africa describe their existence and suggest, as another strong direction of research, that they were as well developing territorially based forms of political organization (Mota Lopes 1972: 4).

Although contacts among different cultures are not enough to explain social change, as we will discuss below, there seems to be no doubt that they can and usually do accelerate it, namely through the quick and mutual adoption, adaptation, exchange or rejection of innovation, of technologies, of beliefs, and other forms of living. In the case of the San, the contact with another human group in southern Africa, the usually called Khoi (also designated as Khoikhoi or Khoekhoen and, by the Europeans, as Hottentots) was culturally and materially characterized by what Elphick describes as "large-scale borrowing and reciprocal influence" (1977/1997). Throughout the centuries, Khoi and San engaged in mutually benefit cultural and linguistic exchanges, intermarriage and, in particular, trade of cattle, iron, copper and dagga (Smith 2001: 152-3). Probably the first people to bring cattle to the region between one thousand (Nave 2000: 1091) and more than two thousand years ago (Davenport 1977/1987: 4),

the geographic origins of the Khoi have not yet been completely characterized by modern archeology although the most accepted hypothesis points out to east Africa or to the northern part of today's Botswana as their main area of origin and southwards dispersion. Living in patrilineal groups of more than two thousand members with, in the words of Davenport, a "more elaborate social organization than the San" (1977/1987: 6), they probably occupied in ancient times most of southern and even East Africa (Nave 2000: 1091). As such, and to a great extent, they can be seen as having acted as a kind of cultural and historical bridge between the region and the Bantu-speaking peoples of those areas with whom they were in permanent contact, a contact not only characterized by trade but also by linguistic and other cultural exchanges, including intermarriage. This is notably evident in today's Nguni languages which, although belonging to the Bantu group of languages, have incorporated many words and characteristics found in those of the San and Khoi, including their characteristic click sounds.

On the other hand, and as Nave points out, Khoi and Bantu speakers have intermarried for centuries to an extent that it is often difficult to consider them as being today genetically distinct (2000: 1092). The cultural and trade interrelationships of the Khoi both with the northern Bantu and the southern San was such that they have been considered both as ethnically San, in what was known as the Khoisan, or as the first Bantu-speakers of Southern Africa. There seems to be no doubt, however, that in relation to the other two dominant human groups of southern Africa they constitute a different people in historical, linguistic and cultural terms and, namely in order to better understand the processes of acculturation in process in the region before the arrival of outsiders, as such they have been described. Anyway, it was the

Khoi who welcomed the Portuguese when they arrived for the first time at the southernmost part of the southern African coast – and before expelling them into the sea once again when their presence, it seems, started to become unbearable (Velho 1497-99/1945: 12). They repeated it, almost to the detail, some ten years afterwards as an equally welcomed contact with an even larger group of Portuguese developed later into conflict. And, once again, the foreigners were expelled and had to run for their lives. With extensive herds, whose exploitation they combined with hunting, gathering and localized food production, the area constituted, as Mitchell points out, “an important incentive for subsequent colonization” (2002: 227). But it would not be, as those and further European contacts would show, an easy one.

When the Khoi were reaching southern Africa more than 2000 thousand years ago, other Bantu-speaking peoples, also with their cattle and knowledge of iron, were mainly concentrated in the equatorial regions of Africa, near the Benue River and in today's eastern Nigeria and Cameroon. They started then to expand towards the regions of Shaba (Katanga) and of the Great Lakes, where they arrived around 500 BCE in what is usually known as, respectively, the Western and the Eastern Bantu dispersions. After the year 100 BCE the latter reached the eastern coast of the continent and, more than nine hundred years afterwards, around the eleventh century, some of its clans arrived at the southern Africa region and started to settle there, in successive population ripples still continuing in the late seventeenth century. This is probably the main reason for what appears as a sometimes abrupt transition, also found in the central and east African plateaus, from the local dominance of almost exclusively vegetocultural peoples, often living in concentrated villages, usually detectable through the archeological remnants of characteristically early Iron Age ceramic forms, to more dispersed

patterns of settlement and of livelihood. Oliver has no doubt in attributing those changes to the arrival of more cattle-oriented styles of farming (1962: 180-181). Although obviously with many variations, the most generalized model of settlement, applied at least since the eleventh century and still common in the fifteenth century, was based on usually easy and peaceful agreements between migrant clans and those of earlier residents leading to the distribution or demarcation of land to be used by the newly arrived, to the installation of their clan-heads in ceremonial positions, to mutually beneficial politics of intermarriage, and to the introduction of new crafts and new crops capable of “improv(ing) the quality of life” (Oliver 1962: 140).

This general hypothesis has been well served, in particular after the 1970s, not only by a series of very impressive archeological findings that pinpoint in time and space the probable origins and territorial evolvment of the Bantu-speaking peoples in the continent, but also with firmly established glottological and linguistic theories about the expansion of their respective languages since at least the year 1000 (Inskeep, 1978: 124-28; Phillipson, 1977: 197-209). The main material evidence is the existence of characteristic Iron Age pottery or ceramics, generically known as the Urewe ware (Illife, 34; Mitchell 2002: 264-267), whose archeological findings describe what is, in various stages of evolution, a clear trajectory from a more or less common source in the north towards today’s Zimbabwe (Huffman 1978), the region of Maputo (Morais 1988) and the southern tip of the continent (Phillipson 1977).

In its general conclusions, this is today the commonly accepted approach. But, as recently as 1984 and in name of the dangers of easily assumed generalizations, Vansina was still reminding us of the truism that it is not always possible to establish a direct causal relationship

between existing archeological data and demographic trajectories (Vansina and Ngcongco, 1984: 578). However, the growing evidence that throughout the last twenty years served that hypothesis and its confirmation by linguistic studies, for instance, led Vansina in the 1990s to back step from his in the meantime very influential hypothesis about the non-expansion or dispersal of Bantu peoples (¹³), to adopt a position based on what he started to call a process of "successive spreads" of clusters of related families from proto-Bantu homelands, located somewhere in the northwest of today's Cameroon, towards the southern regions of the continent. That is the approach and the metaphor adopted here to explain the long-term and large-space dissemination in southern Africa by Bantu-speaking peoples since the early beginnings of the second millennium.

Slowly, Bantu-speaking pastoral aristocracies and cultivators spread to well-watered regions like riversides, lakeshores, coastal plains or valleys and complementing their feeding habits not only with hunting or fishing but also with small livestock, yams and sorghum. In the east, they had settled in particular around the lake later called Victoria, in the foothills of today's Mount Kilimanjaro, and near the coast. After reaching the region of the Lake Nyassa, a word designating the great extension of water forming the lake, Bantu-speaking families and their clanic groups followed two main trajectories towards the south, in a progression that, from around 100 BCE to 400, continued during more than five hundred years: the first, along the banks of the Rovuma and towards the coast afterwards turning south to reach the regions of

¹³) Vansina's previous idea, against the hypothesis of a non-dispersal or Bantu expansion, was however largely used during more than a decade of very conflicting debates, to confront the idea, not only erroneous but intrinsically racist as well, of the absence of local initiative in the continent leading to the construction of its history and to the explanation of its changes or transformations as dominantly based on the agency of outsiders.

southern Mozambique and Natal; the second, along the shores of the Lake, through eastern Zimbabwe and towards northern Transvaal and the region of the Cape (Nave, 2000: 176-8).

Archeological findings show us as well that they started by choosing for their settlement the regions around and between the two defining rivers of the region, the Zambezi and the Limpopo with their fertile hydrographic basins. It was there, in zones away from the tsetse fly, that the first Iron Age settlements of very disperse and rarefied populations were established. As their methods of shifting cultivation and forest clearance evolved, becoming increasingly less wasteful (Fagan 1998: 524) and consequently more efficient and productive, those settlements tended to develop and multiply themselves into new settlements at an increasing rate of self-reproduction. At the end of the first millennium, most of the region between the two rivers, in particular in the dominant savanna woodland, was already increasingly peopled, as far away as the shores of the Indian Ocean, to the east.

Further south, and, as discussed above, since about the year 500, Bantu-speaking groups initially living in the coastal *lowveld* had started to expand to the *highveld* valleys, as far as Southpansberg, in present-day Northern Transvaal. To the west, near the Kalahari, other Bantu households had already settled in the pastoral fringe of the desert and, around 900 CE, they were organized in a hierarchy of larger and smaller settlements whose existence imply the corresponding existence of specific forms of political organization and political authority.

Although another area of contention in modern African studies, I will venture to underline here, following Illife (1995: 96), is that as elsewhere in the region, those hierarchies and their

corresponding social stratification were by then slowly consolidating themselves. They were, most probably, based on the ownership of cattle as the main container of wealth and political power and, consequently, as the main foundation on which not only social stratification and hierarchy but social and political organization as well were founded. Furthermore, they were based on flexible forms of centralization which allowed, when and if necessary, an easy integration of different village communities, each completely independent of its neighbors, under a central superstructure, the kingdom or the empire, capable of generating wider and stronger forms of defense and security in exchange for taxation and tribute (Oliver 1962: 184). Paid in labor, in foodstuffs and beer or, for the more distant communities, in salt, tools, textiles, pots and basketry it was such a tribute base that started to be, later on, increasingly geared for the needs and demand of long-distance trade (Oliver 1962: 185), making it possible.

We can characterize, consequently, the gradual arrival of Bantu-speaking peoples in southern Africa not only as part of the history of a 3000-year population spread from the faraway north but, as well, as having constituted one of its later stages. The very low fertility of the soil, the lack of geographic obstacles and the absence of all types of barriers are usually pointed out as the main reasons for such a long-term advance, an advance however made easier as new groups were often able to settle in areas left more or less empty by those who moved south. At the rate of the succession of generations, and according to estimates made by Vansina (1990: 55), it took about 600 years for them to advance something like 1000 kilometers, a rate of about 22 kilometers per decade, slightly more accelerated when out of the forest. Other possible factors can also be used to explain such a relatively quick process and, among them, the fundamental one that Bantu-speakers were easily seen and accepted, when in contact with

the peoples of the regions where they settled, as carriers of important cultural, technological, and material innovation: not only with their cattle, characteristic ceramics and villages, but also with a better, less labor-intensive access to improved food (namely the type of crops they had been secularly receiving from their contacts with East Asian sailors and traders of the Indian Ocean trading system) and their knowledge about the extraction, work, and use of iron. In such a contact and inevitable interrelation with local populations what seems as well to have happened throughout the centuries was a type of relatively very quick, usually peaceful, process of mutual acculturation in which the in-depth knowledge by local groups about the productive, geographic, and ecological characteristics of the regions where they lived was, as already discussed above, combined with the type of iron-based agriculture, the pastoralism and the settlement into the more or less permanent villages of the clustered families involved in those very gradual, slow, successive and regular territorial "spreads". In other words the cultural and material knowledge of the different groups in contact must have constituted a very powerful attraction both for Bantu-speaking households and for the inhabitants found by them in their territorial movements, leading the latter, although by no means always, to settle and to adopt the language, the culture, the pastoralism and the weapons of the villages, that is to say, leading to a gradual mutual acculturation and to a growing assimilation (Vansina 1990: *passim*). This is perhaps the main reason why, and more than the knowledge by Khoi and Bantu-speakers of the extraction and use of iron necessary namely to manufacture the weapons of war, it is the knowledge of agriculture and cattle rearing that archeological and oral references emphasize when describing and characterizing such a secular territorial progression and contact. On the other hand, and in an African perspective, the idea of a forced expansion is not even necessary as an hypothetical, explanatory argument because the dominant form of

settlement throughout the eastern and southern Africa, from the Ethiopian highlands to the Cape, was first of all characterized, in spatial terms and at least till the later Iron Age, by an exceptionally high rate of maximum dispersion. As Oliver points out, "it would seem that people mostly preferred to live as far away from each other as possible" (1991: 90).

It seems consequently possible to conclude that such a demographic spread did not imply or was dominantly based on a systematic military conquest or some other type of forced, colonizing expansion. Such a conclusion, it has to be stressed, does not preclude the occurrence of strong conflicts of interest between groups in presence and contact eventually leading to armed confrontations. But it precludes not only the old colonialist conception of an African history based on pre-colonial, militaristic, expansionism and occupation, but also the more recent but equally essentialist, to say the least, type of approach according to which patterns of conflict, war and generalized social violence constitute a permanent, overarching theme, with drought and famine, of the long-view of the history of Africa, in general, of that of Southern Africa in particular, with such forces of disintegration overcoming, by force, eventual tendencies of integration capable of leading to generalized peace and modernization (¹⁴). To be sure, and as underlined by the Kenyan historian Bethwell Ogot, it is a fact that "most non-African historians have portrayed pre-colonial Africa as a continent of warring natives,"

¹⁴) This is, notably, the position assumed by Malyn Newitt (1995) in the Preface to his, notwithstanding informative and interesting, A History of Mozambique, Bloomington: Indiana University Press. His confessed objective is to understand "the catastrophe that has overwhelmed Mozambique since independence" by seeing and explaining it "against a long-view of Mozambique's history". His conclusion, at the end of the twenty chapters and the four centuries covered by his book, is that such a "catastrophe" results from what to him appears as a "familiar" (sic) continuity in that history: a generalized pattern of "famine, drought and social violence", with emphasis on the violence. Newitt, of course, assumes in his work the perspective of the colonial process itself, of the Portuguese occupation of the territory, but, even with such a qualification, it is not only highly Eurocentric but as well plainly wrong to reduce the history of Mozambique to "famine, drought and social violence" – and explain through that what is happening there today.

usually led by a “blood-thirsty savage” in “senseless and inhuman” wars (1972/2001: 2-3). But all our evidence points to the opposite, including the fact that pre-colonial standing armies were rather the exception than the rule, for obvious reasons among which the fact that the continuity of war, of military prowess and of life by terror and predation was incompatible with the more important efforts of food production and social self-reproduction of the group. As Oliver emphasizes, specifically about the southern half of Africa, “prior to the late eighteenth century, the only standing armies consisted of the personal bodyguards of the kings and other great men and military action could normally take place only as a temporary response to the summons of the big war drum” (2001: 7). On the other hand, the evidence is also that the kind of approaches based on an imagined predominance of “traditional”, pre-colonial, African wars and violence as a general characteristic of the continent and its history constitute a very convenient approach in the sense that it both reflects and can be used as the main explanatory argument not only to somehow justify the generalized military repression characteristic of colonialism but also to give a kind of historical justification and legitimacy not only to the anti democratic and authoritarian practices of many of its post-colonial states but also, mostly perhaps, to the neo-colonial nature of many of the post-colonial military coups of the 1960s ⁽¹⁵⁾, to the violence and terror of the groups of armed bandits of the 1980s and to the present multiplication of the inter-ethnic conflicts of the 1990s.

Another common characteristic of southern Africa before Southern Africa was the increasing involvement of most of its human groups or cultures with long distance trade, both within the

¹⁵) In her extensive study about the wave of military coups that affected many of the newly independent African countries after the early 1960s, Ruth First (1970) reminds us conclusively that Africa’s armies were an extension of the West. They were usually created by the former colonial powers which supplied them with modern weapons and trained their hierarchies and chains of command. This included usually their respective commanders-in-chief, often made into conquering heads of state.

continent, by land, or through the sea and, in particular, with the Indian Ocean trading system. It was from the sea, namely, that they received, in the words of Fage, "the rewarding new south-east Asian food crops" (1996: 300) on which, I contended above, a great part of their peaceful progression towards the south was based. But it was also from the sea that, in some cases, they received the pressures and the influences leading to decisive modifications of their ways and modes of living, of production and of social relations, changes which often led as well to their historical decline and collapse. With particular interest to world-systems studies (Arn, 1966; Moseley, 1992), this centrality of contacts with other peoples through long-distance trade, both inter-continental and within the continent, has become at least since the mid-1960's (Godelier 1972, 1973; Suret-Canale 1958, 1961; Coquery-Vidrovitch 1972) a main explanatory element about social and cultural change in pre-colonial Africa and about the formation, rise, exploiting behavior and decline of its power elites throughout the centuries.

Maurice Godelier formulated the main thesis of this approach in 1963. To him, the rise of states and empires in Africa was a consequence of "the control, by tribal aristocracies, of inter-tribal or inter-regional trade" (1963/1973: 30), an assertion extensively discussed and confirmed by Coquery-Vidrovitch to whom that trade was, simultaneously, "the motivating factor of the exploitation of man by man" and "the dynamic element in African history" (1972: 78-79). With Samir Amin, I rather believe, however, that trade is better seen as "**one of the essential bases** of the organization of the societies of Tropical Africa": pre-colonial or pre-mercantile trade, he adds, "fostered the development of social differentiation, the constitution of states and empires, and the progress of the productive forces" (1976: 49; my emphasis, ML). That is also the position assumed by Illife who, writing about southern Africa after the year

500, tells us that the region "provides the best evidence of subsequent evolution through the growth of pastoralism and its role, together with trade, in fostering large scale polities" (1995: 98-99). In other words, trade can act and has historically acted as an important factor of social change but only if and when other factors of change were already present.

Those other social and cultural processes or factors of change were determined or imposed, for instance, by declining productivity of the land; by social, political and economic tensions; by abnormally growing or declining demographic rates; by scarce resources becoming scarcer; or by the centralization of political or religious power and the accumulation of wealth, usually but not always under the form of cattle, in the hands of smaller and hierarchically dominant groups or ruling elites. Although an easily forgotten factor, long-distance trade would not be possible without a certain degree of political, social and economic integration allowing the formation of a tribute and taxation base that could be displaced toward it and that, increasingly, shifted from payments dominantly made in foodstuffs, textiles, tools or basketry to payments dominantly based on labor, on slaves, on the extraction of metals and on the production of other goods, like ivory, required by the trade, its demand and its requirements.

Just as the ownership of cattle was essential in the determination and evolution of social stratification, trade, its practice or refusal and under the forms of local, inter-regional, intercontinental or long-distance trade, was an important catalyst for social transformation, combining, that is to say, bringing together, all the other factors and usually making them more pressing, more critical, and more irreversible. In different degrees of cohesion, it was that central role of trade that determined the acceleration of what was already present all over the

continent, although with different characteristics, since the eleventh century: what Oliver & Fage characterizes as the political tendency for its societies to expand socially and economically (1962: 89). From natural, demographic growth, such an expansion becomes, with the generalization of long-distance trade, increasingly integrative covering, still in the words of Oliver & Fage, “a broad continuum, from village to neighborhood, from chiefdom to kingdom, from kingdom to empire” (1962: 89). In place in most of the continent till the late nineteenth century it was mainly based on growing needs of tribute and of the absorption and control, peacefully or not, of labor, as new dependent subjects or, more often, as slaves. Labor needed to the production of food around the new, growing pre-colonial cities, to be resettled in mining areas, used to clear the forests and to dig the shafts. In addition, “if the economic gain was favorable enough, such dependent people might be traded abroad -- in the case of the Muslim world, across the Sahara, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean” (Oliver & Fage 1962: 8-9).

Historically, it was the different role of trade, its presence or absence, its intensity, and the nature of the goods circulating through its flows, in relation to the presence or inexistence of other social, environmental and geographic factors that can be seen as having started to determine the structural organization of southern Africa in general, of its southern-eastern coast in particular, in what are three very different areas or sub-regions. In fact, and if we look at them according to their relationship with long-distance trade, the three regions situated, respectively, to the south of the Limpopo river, between the Limpopo and the Zambezi rivers, and from the Zambezi to the north, we can easily identify an equal number of different contexts, conjunctures and processes of historical social change. To a great extent, it was such a relationship with long distance trade that determined the relative specificity of each one of

those sub-regions and their possible differentiation, a differentiation that continues to exist, to stand out and to be obvious today. The long-term evidence is that while the central area between the Limpopo and the Zambezi rivers was historically characterized by a continuous and growing influence of long distance trade, in particular that of the Indian Ocean trading system, the other two regions, to the north and south of it, were differently affected by those contacts, in different degrees, by different reasons, and with different responses.

In what concerns the southernmost of the three areas, from the Cape to the Limpopo River and comprising what is today most of South Africa, Swaziland and the south of Mozambique, the evidence of more than one thousand years after the year 500 was that long distance trade, in particular that of the Indian Ocean, played there a less important role than in the rest of southern Africa. As already discussed above, that area was, first, the destination of Khoi herders migrating from the north to regions characterized by winter rainfalls, namely around the Kalahari. Bantu-speaking farmers and herders started to arrive at the region, afterwards, probably after the end of the third century CE to settle in land characterized by the absence of the tsetse fly, by summer rainfall and adequate to the cultivation of millet and sorghum. A third group, that of the local gatherers and hunters, the ancestors of the later called San-speaking peoples, characterized by forms and modes of social reproduction still belonging to the Stone Age, entered into quick processes of political, social and economic integration or more or less survived between them with their very rudimentary use of iron technology, hoe agriculture and the construction of small villages, with thatch and mud huts, on which was based their social and political organization (Iliffe 1995: 27).

Although all of those peoples maintained more or less regular trade relations amongst themselves and with the north of the region, the evidence is that they neither did consider trade as a dominant element in their social structure nor established regular, direct relations with traders external to the continent. Such a process can namely be identified in what concerns the case of the well known Nguni-speaking peoples of modern Natal, or, to the west of them, across the Drakensberg, among their Sotho-Tswana close relatives which, according to Illife, still showed intact their patterns of survival when the first Europeans arrived at the area (1995: 99).

This is probably the reason why the main disruption to the pattern and demographic equilibrium they were thus able to achieve happened only in the seventeenth century when Europeans, who had in the meantime settled in the Table Bay area, started to move into the interior in search of land and political and geographical environments adequate to their self-subsistence, to their farms and agricultural production. Inevitably, this trek away from the coast pressured the Khoi first, Bantu-speakers afterwards (Newman, 1995: 184) into what became the beginning of a situation of generalized and widespread conflict which, opposing Europeans to Africans, Africans to Africans and Europeans to Europeans, deeply affected and transformed the structural definition of the social, productive and economic organization of the southernmost part of Africa with consequences felt as far north as the Rovuma River and beyond -- at the same time sowing the seeds for the re-creation of southern Africa as Southern Africa, that is to say, as a systemic region, part of the capitalist world-economy.

In what concerns the central region of southern Africa, between the Limpopo and the Zambezi rivers, the archeological and historical evidence points out to a long-term increase of pre-modern trading exchanges, within and with the region, leading to what can be described as an acceleration of social change. This is what characteristically seems to have happened in the case of the historical transformation of the so-called Leopard's Kodje cultures into that of the Great Zimbabwe.

As Fage tells us (1968/1978: 131), the archeology and history of the Great Zimbabwe, with a higher degree of political and religious organization, shows clearly that its existence in the area which today more or less corresponds to modern Zimbabwe and part of central Mozambique, in the central plateau between the two rivers (Iliffe 1995: 100), is historically linked with the culture developed since about the year 200 by the agricultural and iron-using people of Leopard's Kodje. Archeological sites in the region show that they were very open to the adoption and development of innovation in their forms of production, in the importance they attributed to cattle and in the fact that they kept larger herds than those of their predecessors. Around the twelfth century they were already extensively using stone as a building material, a development that coincided with increasing trading contacts with the Indian Ocean reflected in the growing importance of the region with the Great Zimbabwe at its core. The better known and the most impressive of a vast group of stone-walled constructions which pinpoint the region, in what seems to have been a vast interrelated network towards and from the coast, the Great Zimbabwe was probably constructed over the course of four hundred years, between the early eleventh and the early fifteenth centuries, to be, simultaneously, a fortress, a temple and a royal manor. It succeeded, as the dominant, multi-ethnic center of regional power, the earlier

settlement of Mapungubwe, which may have been, as Mitchell points out, “the earliest state in southern Africa” (2002: 304), an evolution that coincided with the eastern and southwards expansion of its Shona builders and that, as Iliffe emphasizes, left much of the previous local cultures intact (1995: 101). The expansion was determined both by a growing population and a growing prosperity shown by the presence, in large quantities, of imported goods like porcelain, seashells, and glass beads. Research has been showing as well that the gold belt that crosses the south of the territory was extensively exploited at least since the twelfth-century. At the same time, local villages became not only more permanent but also larger and more complex in their stonework, construction, buildings and organization. They make evident, consequently, the very quick formation of a strongly structured hierarchical, political and social differentiation. The abundance of imported goods found in great quantities in all of the correspondent archeological sites, point out as well to the relationship between those transformations and the significant growth of long-distance pre-European trade, namely that of the coastal merchants of the Indian Ocean trading system interested in the gold, ivory, silver, iron ore and copper of the region. Perhaps the most important feature that led to the evolvement of the vast network of sites, from the coast to the hinterland was, precisely, the fact that both gold and ivory were relatively abundant in a region that could also offer other demanded goods like silver, copper or iron. According to Beach (1994) this combination could only be found in the Zimbabwe Plateau as it did not occur or repeat itself in any other region of southern or eastern Africa (Mitchell, 2002: 328). The advantage to traders is obvious as it offers the possibility of the greatest returns for limited amount of capital available to the Swahili, first, to the Portuguese later on (Mitchell 2002: 328.). It is here also that the hypothesis that a core-periphery relationship between outside powers of the Indic system of

trade and the Great Zimbabwe or other southern African polities were thus built up to an extent that it made impossible for the latter to control or break up the relationship even when the political, economic and social organization of the region was collapsing. Mitchell, however, denies such a possibility with the argument that “gold and perhaps other exports were... economically marginal activities, an African equivalent of the mass produced glass beads and cloth for which they were principally exchanged” (2002: 329). What is being implied here is that both the labor-intensive mining and the panning for river gold did not affect directly the cultivation of the land for food as they were off-season activities practiced mainly by women (Mitchell 2002), but this does not seem an acceptable approach as, on the contrary, this type of production not only affected deeply the self-reproduction of the household economy but, at the same time, destroyed the land and its productive possibilities. It is here, most probably, that resides one of the main reasons for the collapse of the Great Zimbabwe. There is also evidence that, in particular to obtain ivory in the quantities and with the quality demanded by traders, some sort of coercive relationship between the African intermediaries at the Great Zimbabwe and other southern African social formations were necessary. At the same time, the need for rulers to control and centralize the production and the manufacture of the exportable materials by a large population and their regular exchange with foreigners must have been, as well, a fundamental element in the construction of a strong state and strong elite. It is perhaps important to remind us here that trade and the, usually symbolic but powerful, benefits of imported goods were social phenomena proper of the elites of which the rest of the population was excluded – although mining or producing the required materials to obtain those same imported goods.

To be sure, the trend towards larger and more permanent settlements, a more controlled and diversified economy based on the mining of gold, silver and copper, on metallurgy and on subsistence farming seems not only to coincide with an increasing concentration of power and wealth by what became a very powerful elite who, in the Great Zimbabwe, lived in the most impressive of the settlements but, as well, of being the consequence of increasing long-distance trading relationships with the Indian Ocean and its shores.

Such a convergence of factors, usually expressed by the consolidation of forms of social and productive organization and in terms of a very quick social differentiation or polarization, mostly related to the impact of trade, is a dominant characteristic and an often found pattern in this central region. However, and probably because the extraction of the metals required by the maintenance of the trading flows determined the long term exhaustion of the land, in particular through overgrazing and deforestation, trade can be as well used as the main explanatory argument in the description of the processes leading to the historical demise or collapse of those societies in what becomes an irreversible chain of consequences. In other words, leading to an increase of demographic density and a more often division of villages, the demand for more metal and its less easy extraction increased pressures on agriculture and grazing land. Expansion into new lands became then the obvious response. However, expansion cannot continue indefinitely as local environmental and productive limits are, eventually, achieved. The result, and this is the most plausible explanation to what happened to the Zimbabwe state, around 1450 and after almost four hundred years of continuous domination of the region, was a very quick decline of its resident elites followed by their abandonment of the region (Phillipson, 1968: 191 and 212) to originate, elsewhere, different political formations or

kingdoms. It was from that process of disintegration that the Mwenomotapa kingdom, so prominent in the Portuguese sources, made its appearance; with it, as well, other Butua states.

In the late seventeenth century, however, the region was divided among a great number of even smaller states (like Sedanda, Quissanga, Quitave, or Manica) none of which capable of assuming the generalized centralization of power, necessary to control over trade, previously exercised by the inhabitants of the Great Zimbabwe or, for that matter, by the Mwenomotapa states and, in many cases, fighting among themselves with the more or less clear involvement of the Portuguese (Medeiros 1982: 51 and 62-73). An evolving conjuncture probably related with the fact that both the Arabs, first, the Portuguese, afterwards, adopted forms of settlement, colonization, and trade that deeply affected and blocked the emergence and consolidation of other, alternative, social and political relations of production and their structures of power.

Finally, and in what concerns the third and last sub-regional areas of southern Africa being discussed here, the area situated to the north of the Zambezi River, between the coast and central Africa, the virtual impossibility of raising cattle due to the tsetse fly is, perhaps, its main defining characteristic. Two other factors, intimately related, were however present and are necessary for its characterization.

The first was the fact that at least two of the most important human groups of the region assumed traditionally very strong forms of resistance against their penetration by trade from the Indian Ocean. Second and probably determined by that resistance, the possible forms of Indic trade with the region started by being confined or restricted to the coast or to coastal

islands in a process that later on originated or evolved into what became known as the Swahili city-states of the east coast of Africa.

Such a resistance had two different origins. The first was found dominantly in the history of the Makonde, a people occupying both margins of the Rovuma River, their active refusal of contact and their isolationism can be seen as forms of social resistance mainly based on a highly consequent cultural and political strategy of self-survival. The second, evident in the case of the Yao, a people of long-distance traders based around the Lake Nyassa, was resistance against the penetration of trade from the sea that can probably be better explained in terms of refusal of competition in what concerned the access to trading sources, destinations, markets and prices.

In both cases, however, such a common resistance led to decisive changes in traditional forms of what were, dominantly, kin-based and clanic types of social organization. Namely, it led to the formation of territorially defined chiefdoms bringing together formerly autonomous groups under what can be described as very innovative forms of militarily organized proto-states. It was those proto-states that became the main bases of resistance, cultural self-preservation, and armed defense in response to and against the growing influence and penetration of their traditional territories by Arabs, first, by the Portuguese, afterwards. It is consequently possible to conclude that the early beginnings of Arabic trading settlement based on islands, or as near the seashore as possible, as well as the formation and characteristics of their networks of contact with the hinterland, had in its roots the need to overcome what was indeed or appeared as a more or less hostile response and refusal to trade.

The trading city of Sofala, founded around the 9th century between the mouths of the Zambezi River, in the north, and that of the Savi, in the south, is a good example of such historical behavior. As seen by Arab geographers, it gave the name to the entire coastal region extending to the far north, to Kilwa, often but probably erroneously seen as its dominant trade connection, and the Somali coast. To the south, the direct influence of Sofala was felt as far as Mambone and Bazaruto, Muslim villages that, according to Portuguese sources, were main suppliers of foodstuffs (Barbosa 1518/1812/1921) and, even further to the south and at least in the 15th and 16th centuries, to Inhambane. In other words, and although situated and mainly trading with the central sub-region of southern Africa, Sofala was not only in direct contact with other Swahili city-states of the coast but as well, since very early and tentatively, open to trading contacts and exchanges both with the southern and northern areas of the region.

Through a vast tissue of trade networks, linking a great number of what the Portuguese classified as **vilas mouras** (or Muslim villages and trading centers) usually in the coast, with the **vilas cafres** (the kaffir or African villages defined by their non-conversion to Islam) in the interior, Sofala was not only a relatively important trading center but, also, a base of further control and penetration of the continent. Besides their trading and religious connections, the trade and business networks thus constructed were as well interrelated and consolidated by other types of relationship. Following characteristics common to many other city-states of what later on became also known as the Swahili coast, Sofala was ruled by a high level Sarif, linked by kin and business interests to other ruling families in the north, and by various marriages to African chiefs and Kings of the interior. Treaties, political accords, alliances, and the frequent

exchange of gifts and dons complemented those relationships making them relationships of mutual interest. The objective, and the usual result, was the regular maintenance of a situation characterized by the more or less permanent stability and security required for trading. For the Sarif this allowed as well the possibility to apply taxes and tariffs to other traders who frequently demanded Sofala and were interested in making business with the interior by following and benefiting from the stability of those trade networks. Sofala, and its Sarif, was also able to offer them not only bed and board, as the contacts with the interior continued, but also other services such as the repair and maintenance of ships, the storage of cargoes, or even the knowledge of experienced pilots capable of guiding them when they wanted to get back with their cargoes to their ports of origin or destination.

The relative importance of cities like Sofala is, consequently, related with the type of trading networks and routes which, as discussed above, guaranteed the linkage between the different areas, harbors, producers, trading posts and city-states and the trading interests, that is to say, the secular evolvement of offer and demand, which characterized the pre-modern history of the northern Indian Ocean for more than two thousand years. It was through coastal settlements, sometimes evolving into city-states, that they were extended towards the east coast of Africa and reproduced within the African hinterland. To be sure, and as discussed above, all of the Indic trading routes, in one time or another but with increasing frequency and regularity as the centuries went by, demanded the east coast of Africa, towards the Sofala region, usually in search of gold, silver, ivory and slaves. A number of factors, however, seem to have made such a contact either a difficult one or a non-fundamental, easily rescindable trading contact. Among those factors there was, to start with, the socio-political conjuncture within the continent,

characterized by fluidity and very quick change, as migrations and demographic expansion towards the south continued until at least the sixteenth century. There was also, of course, the effects of the monsoon system implying the mooring of ships trading with the Sofala coast for quite long periods of time in unprofitable, not very favorable conditions. Finally, the fact that the settlements determined by the trading routes of the sea were rarely located on land, in the hinterland, but rather and preferably, in islands, easier to control and secure, from Sorocotra or Madagascar to Mombassa or the Mozambique island, seems to imply forms and degrees of resistance from local peoples to foreign influences, at least in first contacts, making the expansion of trade relationships with the east coast of Africa, less easy, less profitable, less desirable and, consequently, less frequent and regular. We will find other examples of such a behavior of resistance against the influence of the sea when discussing, below, the contacts established there by the Portuguese, in the late fifteenth century.

Nevertheless, the impact and influence of the trading contacts with the continent determined by the Indic routes of trade were quite important, in particular during the Arabic primacy of command in the ocean, and we have different historical models of what could happen when such an encounter took place -- from those based on a more or less strong resistance and avoidance, to those leading to deep transformations of the local political and productive organization, namely around the Great Zimbabwe, and to what appears as a process of gradual, long-term, and mutual assimilation between local groups and foreign settlers, within city-states, the main evidence of which being what we know today as the Swahili culture. Between these different possibilities of localized interrelation or their active refusal there was, as well, the distinction, made by the Portuguese in their first contacts, between *vilas cafres* and *vilas*

mouras, that is to say, the political, cultural, and productive organization of living spaces according to religious differences and separation. Finally, it was the Indian Ocean trading routes that led to the formation of important trading networks in the African hinterland linking *vilas cafres*, *vilas mouras*, kingdoms and production centers from the interior of the Sofala region to the sea but also between the latter and Quiloa, Mombassa, and other Swahili city-states in land or in islands, to the north. To be sure, not only trading commodities but, as well, important cultural and technological inputs and influences circulated, both ways, through those networks.

That was the situation, in its general terms, when the Portuguese arrived at the region in 1498. This is also why their local strategy of contact became, in the following decades, mainly based on the occupation, by force and destruction when necessary and oftentimes, of those Arabic networks and their linkages. That is to say, it was a strategy aiming, basically, at the expulsion, elimination and substitution, by all means necessary, of other traders from the region while at the same occupying and consolidating their trading networks. However, who were they, who were the Portuguese?

III

Space, Spices, Slaves

In 1100, when successive spreads of Bantu-speaking families were slowly approaching the southern tip of Africa, western Europeans were also, and as they would be for the following 250 years, in a state of geographical expansion. In its form, nature, and objectives, this was, however, a very different kind of expansion.

1. EUROPE: ORDER OUT OF CHAOS

In the name of the Christian God but for the sake of wealth and more land, three objectives so interrelated in the history of Europe that they are often considered as a single objective, the pacified but still 'barbaric' northern and eastern European frontiers started to be integrated towards the end of the first century of the second millennium and, soon afterwards, what we today call Poland, Hungary, Denmark and Norway had solidly implanted Christian kings as rulers. In the south, the Normans conquered Sicily and the southern part of the Italian Peninsula from the Arabs bringing to an end, at the same time, the Byzantine presence in the western Mediterranean. Starting in the eleventh century, the Iberian wars of 'Reconquista' or expulsion of the Moors from the considerable territories where they had settled since 711 were already well advanced when European princes, organized in 1147 into another Crusade, even more cruel and violent than the previous one but, in the end, and in what concerns their

objectives, a dismal failure, helped to capture Lisbon and, by handing it to a Portuguese king, helped as well to legitimize his power as a European Christian ruler.

In the same outward movement, the Europeans extended their presence in the Mediterranean by conquering Cyprus and, from there, continued to Syria and Palestine. In 1099 they had captured Jerusalem, their main objective, but they lost it in 1187. After repeated defeats they were however able to once again access to the Holy Sepulcher after 1192, under the lead of an excommunicated European prince, for another 150 years.

Because it was more easily consolidated than outside the continent, the expansion within Europe allowed the cultivation of the newly-conquered lands contributing to an increasing prosperity reflected in growing demographic rates, in the extension of trade, and in the possibility for the ruling elites to extract from the ruled peasantries the surplus necessary to make war and pay for imported goods. For more than 200 years, those were some of the dominant characteristics of Western Europe.

Towards the early fourteenth century, however, all this started to change, as expansion and more or less generalized prosperity began to gradually reverse their trajectories of growth. First, and to a certain extent in a mirror-like image of what had happened 300 years before, the Christians were expelled from the external territories they had occupied: Constantinople was retaken by the Byzantines in 1261 and, twenty years afterwards, not only the whole of the Holy City but also all the other formerly occupied territories in the Levant were once again ruled by

the same Arabs who, in the southern part of the Iberian Peninsula, were able to consolidate their power in Moorish Granada. This geographic contraction of the Christian world led, among other consequences, to the contraction both of agricultural areas and of trade. Secondly, it was also by then that climatological changes probably combined with the exhaustion of over-cultivated soils resulted in severe declines of output at all levels of production leading to a protracted economic and social stagnation (Crouzet, 2001: 35). It led as well to the propagation of the Black Death, the most deadly of all the known plagues, which struck the continent to kill one- third of its population, causing more hunger, more overcrowded cities, more misery, and the multiplication of epidemics. Finally, as falling revenues caused by the convergence of those economic, political and environmental pressures determined the quick contraction of trade and rapidly increasing prices for essential and luxury products, they led as well to more oppressive means to extract them. The consequence was the generalization of social unrest and violence all over Christian Europe, the gradual collapse of the social order. After the long phase of prosperity and social stability, between about 1150 and 1300, the Europeans found themselves, in the fourteenth century, in a state of growing instability reflecting an unprecedented coincidence in time of climatological, political, economic, and social calamities. As we know now, it was from the multiple pressures of such a conjuncture of generalized chaos all over Western Europe that a new world order was born.

2: PORTUGAL: BETWEEN THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA

According to Oliveira Marques (1991: 30), the first documented references to the effects of the great European crisis in Portugal date from 1340. The evidence by then, already, was that the

prices of manufactured products were too high and that the aristocracy continued to spend much more than it should because the revenues from its estates no longer provided the required payment for all the expenses. A law published in that same year reflects those problems and the worries of the Crown about them. As importantly, it gives notice of what can be described as an increasing social restlessness within the ranks of 'the lower classes'. This was the expression, adds Marques, of the 'breakdown of feudal stability' (idem: 31).

As happened in the rest of Europe, the situation became even more critical with the outburst in Portugal of the Black Death, in 1348-1349. Followed by other and equally deadly plagues in the later fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth century, they made the numerous agricultural units north of the Tagus River or the relatively extensive estates to the south of it unproductive and deserted. Increasing migratory movements from the countryside to the towns made them overcrowded and repeatedly stricken by renewed surges of the plague. Increasing shortages of grain and bread soon gave origin to what became periodic and generalized famines. The population decreased by more than one-third (Marques, 1991: 30). As in the rest of the continent, pervasive social unrest was the obvious consequence of all this, with riots and rebellions erupting regularly. The main solution, perhaps the only solution, to confront the effects of such a generalized crisis and its effects in Portugal was the sea.

To be sure, the maritime expansion of the Portuguese had its roots in part in the cumulative effects and pressures of that fourteenth-century European crisis. According to Godinho's classic analysis, it was the need for an impoverished aristocracy and gentry to find new sources of income, as well as the chronic scarcity of cereals regularly affecting the towns and the necessity to import them from the corn-rich but 'infidel' lands of Morocco (Godinho, 19:

chapter V), that led to the first expeditions into north Africa. With the defense of imported cargoes against the frequent attacks of corsairs and pirates as their declared objective, they were organized, since the beginning, as military operations. Later on, the access to the gold circulating in the trans-Saharan trade networks and the need for slave labor required by the development of the first sugar cultivations in the Algarve and the Atlantic islands became their central objective and justification.

Other important factors, however, factors of a more structural nature, were present and are necessary to explain why and how such a vast geographical progression was possible. And, among them, the fact that the Iberian hinterland, as opposed to the open influence of the sea, represented in political and cultural terms to the Portuguese the danger of a stronger Castile and the real, or as such perceived but ever-present, threat of being annexed or occupied by her.

In contrast, it had been from the sea that the recognition of Portugal had arrived because, when the European princes of the 1147 crusade handed Lisbon to a Portuguese king they were recognizing him as such and, consequently, against Castile. It was also from the sea that the country received its name, Portucale, as it was its relatively long seashore that led to the formation of the main towns of the kingdom as very secure and cosmopolitan ports. Part of a more vast network of coastal settlements dating from the thirteenth century and more numerous than today, those harbors and ports soon had become required for calling or retreat from bad weather in a dangerous and difficult part of the ocean for an increasing navigation and a growing trade between the Mediterranean and the north of Europe. They were also centers for the production of salt, for fishing, for the repair and supply of ships, for commerce, artisanship,

and other productive activities. Moreover, it was the particular geographical and political location of Portugal that made the first kings of the country, since at least the late 1270s, to consider shipbuilding as one of the activities deserving development and the protection of the Crown. The direct consequence was the very early activity of shipyards, the local production of the inputs required by then, the construction and maintenance of a relatively important fleet, as well as the very early creation of a maritime tradition and know-how.

For all these reasons, the Portuguese port-cities, in particular Lisbon and Porto, had become the birthplace of what an important group of historians, since at least Antonio Sergio, call a ‘cosmopolitan bourgeoisie’, opposed in culture and interests to the rural lords of the interior. Their members, traders and merchants, soon established business relations with Flanders, France, England and Italy while traders from those and other countries installed themselves in Portugal (Sergio, 1929 (1972): 5-6 and 10-11).

To a great extent, we can see that inchoate bourgeoisie occupying a middle position not only within the kingdom’s social structure but also in relation to the systemic networks then in process of consolidation in Western Europe. In what concerns Portugal, it occupied as well a central social location between the Crown; the strict social hierarchy of contractual relations in the north of the kingdom, a hierarchy based on the supply of labor to the local lords and barons in exchange for the use of land; the religious orders and their knights in the south, with estates worked by poor Christian peasants and by slaves; and the population of the cities with their municipal councils, grouping and giving voice to burghers, traders, craft workers, fishermen, sailors, and, even, to use the expression of the time, to a destitute “*arraia miuda*”. More

importantly, and in what concerns the trade networks of the time, the bourgeoisie of the Portuguese littoral cities, a bourgeoisie which did not yet know its name nor its social and historical role, was centrally placed between what Immanuel Wallerstein calls the two world-economies then existing within Europe and based, respectively, in the city-states of northern Italy and on the cities of Flanders and northern Germany (1974: 36-7). New research about this question, in particular about relations with Flanders and Genoa, is increasingly showing that such a position was not only a geographical position but, often, a bridging position of linkage and relationship between the two autonomous economic systems and their centers and structures of accumulation.

Geographic location, the importance of the European trade and such a characteristic social structure are, consequently, some of the main factors explaining not only the independence of Portugal in the Iberian Peninsula but also its expansion overseas. To Antonio Sergio, it explains as well why Crusaders from the north had participated in its 'liberation' both from the Moors and from Spain. Moreover, he tells us, 'it was the expansion of trade that later will take Portugal to the Far East: and this is why the development of a bourgeoisie in the Flanders and Italian cities, the renewal of municipalism, the conquest of Lisbon by the Crusaders (1141), the establishment of El Mina (1482) and the conquest of Malacca by Albuquerque (1511) are like phases of a single movement, different points in a single trajectory' (Sergio, 1929: 11). A trajectory which, in other words, was a consequence but also a causal part of processes leading to the slowly emergence and consolidation, all over western Europe, of a new world order, that is to say: of the modern, capitalist world-economy.

Two of those processes are particularly enlightening to our present narrative and discussion. Involving the Portuguese both as actors and as subjects, they have to do with their active participation in the geographic, maritime expansion of Europe and, less spectacular but as important, with transformations which, as within many other European kingdoms, were then starting to be introduced in the organization and exercise of political power, in the construction of more powerful, more efficient, more centralized state machineries. However, if in those kingdoms the first objective of such a transformation and its generalized social acceptance was geared towards the generalized restoration of internal order, in the concrete case of Portugal what determined the formation of a different type of state was the peculiar nature of its secular relationship with Castile.

The successive Portuguese kings had always perceived that relationship as a permanent threat. As discussed above, this was the reason why, as an independent kingdom, Portugal was constructed facing the sea, that is to say, against Castile and, in medieval, feudal terms, against the sometimes legitimate ambitions of her sovereigns over the population and land of the western rim of the peninsula. Ambitions that, in particular after the ethnic and religious “cleansing” of the Moors in the south of Portugal, became more pressing and vital due to the need for a direct Castilian access, through the ports of Algarve, to the very rich trade and navigation of the Atlantic.

When in 1367 the death of a king without direct descendants plunged Portugal into a dynastic crisis, the first direct conflict of importance between the two kingdoms broke out. It soon resulted into a relatively long period of war and the occupation of part of the Portuguese

territory. After a very confrontational resistance, a handful of military defeats and two more or less frustrated sieges to Lisbon, in 1373 and 1384, what was considered as an aggression by the majority of the inhabitants of Portugal, organized into a vast anti-Castilian alliance, came finally to its end. In their reluctant departure, the invaders had the company of a great part of the old Portuguese nobility dependent upon and allied to the King of Castile. As a consequence, the period saw as well a generalized reshuffle of the old social structure of the kingdom into a vast alliance of classes and interests openly against the pretensions of Castile.

At the immediate political level, this determined the need for the new established power, the House of Aviz, to consolidate the support of such a vast and diverse social base. This was achieved at various levels into what appears today as having been an enlightened exercise of political power, more aware of the realities of its time. Simultaneously, and because legitimized by such a vast consortium of interests, it was able to assume a high degree of political and economic centralization. Finally, it determined the need to consolidate and root Portuguese independence within its territorial limits, at the same time finding and giving incentives to a way out of the generalized European crisis which was deeply affecting the kingdom.

To a great extent the Portuguese overseas expansion can be seen, in this perspective, not only as having started right in the midst of the European crisis and as a way out of it (Wallerstein 1974: 38), but also as part of the process of consolidation of the independence and sovereignty of the kingdom against Castile. Expansion soon became another factor of national unity, as the ships used in it were built in shipyards located all over the country and as far north as Valença

do Minho (Ure 1971: 33), in Galicia and what constitutes part of today's border with Spain, while the main centers of strategic planning and research required by the enterprise were located not only in the capital but also in the far south shore of the Algarve, in Sagres. Portuguese expansion consolidated the alliance of social classes and interests that had been already involved in the liberation of the kingdom from Castile. In what became another common project, it brought together the new nobility, the traders and the merchants of the littoral, but also peasants and fishermen, artisans and laborers, people from the countryside and from the cities and, last but by no means least, what Boxer calls 'an ignorant clergy' (1969: 111). They not only participated in the material preparation of the voyages but, perhaps as importantly, they were increasingly involved at different levels in their materialization and geographical expansion; they benefited from them. Without such a generalized involvement of the people of the kingdom in a common objective and its consolidation constantly threatened or, which is indeed the same, seen as constantly threatened by Castile, the expansion would not, probably, had happened or been possible. And Portugal would have rather looked inwards into itself and the Iberian Peninsula—not outwards into the unknown, dangerous, faraway sea.

But, by themselves, geopolitical location, ambition, and self-protection against a real or imagined enemy do not completely explain the enterprise on which the Portuguese were going to find themselves actively involved after the fourteenth century—the opening up of unknown trade routes in a new world that they helped to create and called, wrongly but at least since Zurara, its 'discovery' (1453/1937). At least two further conditions were indeed required and were present: the access to the knowledge of their times and the capital required to centralize, relate and apply that knowledge, that is to say, the ability to gather the means to finance what

was, obviously, a very expensive enterprise. Just as the intra-Iberian rivalry, determining a constant political and cultural resistance to Castile, led to the early centralization of power in Portugal within what can be seen as the embryonic form of a national state, the need for overseas expansion and the information and increasing capital flows required and involved in it placed the Portuguese within the core of the western European economy, the embryonic form of the new, slowly evolving, capitalist world-system.

In what concerns the access to the technological and scientific information required to define and follow the long routes of the sea, the evidence is that the Portuguese were able to obtain it from others, in particular from Jewish, Arab, and Italian sources. To a lesser extent, they were also able to get it from the vaults of the Christian orders that had throughout the centuries collected it, often from the same sources. Much of that knowledge and technology, as Crouzet reminds us, had been developed during the 300 years of the first European expansion and preserved from the chaos into which the continent plummeted in the fourteenth century (2001: 35).

The virtue of the Portuguese was, to start with, their capacity to bring to light, piece together, and coordinate the dispersed and unrelated knowledge required for the preparation of their navigations. Then, and as they arrived at new lands, to use the information there collected to correct or complement what they already knew. The vast documentation of the time shows that the Portuguese obsession with new information was a constant in their contacts overseas (¹⁶).

¹⁶) **This is what happened, for instance, in the first expedition of the Portuguese out of Portugal, to Ceuta, in 1415. It was there that they learned from local traders not only about the conditions and extension of the so**

Such a concern with information can be related with a more crucial problem, that of the financing of what soon became an increasing number of sea expeditions. And here, to be sure, a similar process appears as well to be in place in Portugal: the ability of gathering from existing centers of accumulation, both within and outside the kingdom, the capital required for the enterprise and, principally, from Italian traders and the Christian Order of Christ. The role of the latter has often been overlooked because of the importance of the former but it was, most probably, a fundamental one - in particular in a first phase and for the *take-off* of the enterprise (¹⁷). Afterwards, the extension of the new lands gradually reached by sea became proportional to the involvement of private interests and businesses, in particular after 1441 when the first slaves from Africa (Marques 1991: 41) were brought to the kingdom, starting a highly profitable practice that would increase in the following years and that, as will be defended below, constituted one of the real driving forces for the geographical expansion of an emerging western European world-economy. The involvement of private interests in the Portuguese overseas expansion was also, and very often, boosted and stimulated by the Crown and its agents widespread use of legends like those of the biblical Ophir, of the search for the Christian kingdom of Prester John and, more or less related with it, that of a potentially abundant, easily accessible, and highly profitable gold of Sofala.

This kind of propaganda, the systematic access to and coordination of information, and, to be sure, the initial economic success of the first slaving enterprises in the western African coast,

called 'silent trade' but also to precise and complement what they already knew about gold flows through the Saharan networks of long-distance trade (Godinho 1963-1971/1991; Ure 1977).

2) The Order of Christ was the heir in Portugal of the very wealthy but excommunicated Order of the Temple or the Templars.

soon changed the financial nature of the Portuguese maritime operations. In the beginning mainly financed by the Crown, heavily indebted because of it, from the early 1440's onwards and with the increase in the traffic of slaves to the kingdom and the rest of Europe, the capital needed to equip an increasing number of ships became mostly financed by private sources. Discussing the question, Godinho/Ure tell us that profits of more than 100%, sometimes even 700% of the initial investments were already, by then, not uncommon (¹⁸).

3. CONTACT

The first Portuguese expedition to India was made under the dominant financing of the Order of Christ (Ure 1977). According to its chronicler, Alvaro Velho, the objective was to go 'in search of spices'. (Velho 1497-99/1945). Sailing away from Restelo, in Lisbon, the three ships followed along the Guinea coast before turning westwards, into the mid-Atlantic. Using then the winds blowing from the east, from the Brazilian coast, they aimed towards the Cape of Good Hope. In late December they entered the waters of the Indian Ocean and reached the south African coast, calling it Natal, Christmas in Portuguese. They then continued northwards and, after various contacts with local peoples along the African coast, they sailed towards their main destination, the Indian sub-continent. They arrived there and anchored, in sight of Calicut, in May of 1498.

¹⁸) Vitorino Magalhaes Godinho does not accept the so-called Italian thesis about Venetian and/or Genovese interests having inspired, stimulated, financed and controlled the Portuguese expansion. He writes that not only Italian but, also, Catalan galleys sailed the Atlantic since at least 1290. The result was the development of portulan charts, the discovery of the Canaries and the use of Biscay, Andalusia and Portugal as centers of trade. On the other hand, he shows that the Portuguese expansion was not a direct consequence of pressures by the Ottoman Turks. In discussing the motives of expansion and, namely, as a critique of Godinho, Boxer (1962: 508) writes that an important factor is usually overlooked: the significance of religious motives. To be sure, they must be referred to but with a qualification which the process made obvious all along, from Ceuta to China: the fact that religious motives were always mingled with economic ones and that the latter had always a way to overcome and determine the former.

In those contacts with peoples along the eastern African coast, the Portuguese found patterns and types of social behavior already known by them from the western coast of the continent. There, and according to Zurara, the main contemporary chronicler of that first phase of the expansion, they had started by establishing a type of relationship based on war and aggression. From Ceuta to the Cape Bojador, more or less along the 20th parallel, they considered all the inhabitants as being Moors, “white” or not, and, as such, as being the enemy. They could consequently be, and were usually, attacked and killed or made into slaves by the Portuguese, just as their villages could be, and usually were, sacked and destroyed by them.

From the Bojador to the south, however, a different pattern of relationship was introduced. Considering them as governed by kings, dukes or knights, the Portuguese tried to establish some kind of diplomatic relations with the local structures of power by ‘recognizing’ them and, of course, by trying to be ‘recognized’ by them, as allies or, in the expression of the time, as ‘brothers-in-arms’ (¹⁹).

This change coincided with two other realities with little or nothing to do with the faith of the peoples contacted. In the first place, the expectations of the Portuguese about the abundance

¹⁹) When this was not accepted the use of force was, if not used, at least always present as a convincing form of pressure. The “vassalization” of the peoples with whom they were in contact was always a Portuguese objective, namely by their conversion to the Christian faith -- not, most probably, in God’s name, but, more certainly, in the name of the Portuguese king. Once converted, they were transformed into ‘vassals’ (Boxer 1969: 98), and they ceased to be 'brothers-in arms'. In other words, the Christian conversion of African and Asian peoples was really an instrument, a 'legitimate' instrument, to create dependent vassals: a process in which, very easily, we recognize the same structure of oppression characteristic of later European colonialism.

and accessibility of the trans-Saharan gold were frustrated. Secondly, what was probably the first objective of the Portuguese expansion, slaving, became increasingly the dominant activity and main source of profits. This was determined by a growing demand for slaves not only from the Algarve and Madeira sugar estates but also from the rest of the kingdom where labor became scarce as the expansion continued. Later on, a growing demand for slave labor from Aragon, Castile, and other European countries, still affected by the consequences of the plague and of the continuing wars, pushed the rate of capture from one to two thousand slaves per year, between 1445 and 1463 (Ure 1977: 139). Trade, in particular trade involving the local African elites, soon appeared to the Europeans as a more profitable, more regular and easier way to obtain slaves ⁽²⁰⁾.

Both types of relationship are also present in the contacts of the Portuguese in the east-southern African coast, but only to the north of the mouth of the Savi River and Inharrime. There, in the coast of the central region of today's Mozambique, they felt more or less welcomed by local peoples, whom they characterized as "knights" and "lords of the land"; and, afterwards, they entered in contact with "white" Moors whose presence, influence and suspicion they found everywhere from Sofala and the Mozambique Island to the north of Malinde. Before reaching the Savi river, however, in both coasts of the southernmost part of the continent and to the north of it, till Inharrime, the Portuguese were received by the local inhabitants with a degree

²⁰)Trade involving a strange association of knights, squires and merchants -- the number of the latter increasing as that of the former decreased and the development of urban merchant classes took place (Ure 1977: 140). On the other hand, the goods used to trade for slaves were usually from Morocco: textiles (in particular woolen cloaks), cowry shells, and agricultural produce; later on, colored beads from Venice and the Levant started to be extensively used as well.

of resistance and refusal to trade which has no parallel in other similar descriptions of the time about their progression on the West coast of Africa.

The earliest evidence of that direct rejection was, first, in Santa Helena Bay and, afterwards, in Mossell Bay and two other locations to the north of it, already on the eastern coast of Africa. The “autochthones”, as the Portuguese chronicler Velho called the local peoples, seemed neither familiar nor interested in getting involved with traders from the sea. In their contacts, the Portuguese showed them the kind of goods for which they were searching -- cinnamon, cloves, gold and sea pearls. As in at least three contacts of this type, the trade samples did not seem to be recognized by them and the first exchanges, against sea-shells or kauris, were very limited and of a merely symbolic nature. For reasons which are not very clear in Velho’s description that type of somehow detached and disinterested relations usually become more complicated and tense in the days following the first meetings and, invariably, the Portuguese ended up having to run for their lives to their ships. Further north, at a location they called S. Bras, a commemorative pillar placed by them in the sand was broken to pieces by a group of ten or twelve men, as they watched from the sea. Then, and as they sailed away, they fired towards land the canons of their ships, revenging thus, at least twice, those different forms of rejection.

The following contacts, both at the mouth of the Savi and at the Zambezi, were substantially different. Contrary to what had happened till then, they were well received by what they considered to be the lords of the land or knights according, mainly, to the way they dressed and behaved towards them—with reserve but, also, with interest about their objectives and

interests. As pointed out in Velho, the Portuguese also found them to be knowledgeable in the practice of trading and, although somehow distant, showing hospitality. What this means, in short, is that to the north of the Savi River they had reached the southernmost African limit of the northern Indian Ocean human and trading space. As Godinho points out (1990), there they were indeed entering “a new world“.

The remaining distance, along the coast was easily navigated. Gathering, through their hosts, information to follow voyage, they soon arrived at Mozambique Island where they contacted, perhaps with less surprise than the one we today show about such events, the “white Moors” settled there. They recognized as well their strong influence over the local trade and its networks towards, from and within the hinterland. Some days afterwards they sailed, still along the coast, to Mombassa and Malinde. Received there with the resistance reserved to infidels and potential competitors, they became involved in skirmishes that led, once again, to their precipitate escape to their ships and, once there, to the use of their highly destructive canons. Notwithstanding, they were able to recruit the services a local pilot who guided them to the coast of India.

4. THE TRADING NETWORKS

When they arrived at the Indian sub-continent, the Portuguese had already behind them more than 50 years of extensive and intensive experience of contact with and manipulation of other peoples outside Europe, in accordance to their own economic and strategic objectives and interests. In the northern Indian Ocean, one of their first and, soon afterwards, their most

important contacts was with the Gujarat of Cambay, on the Malabar Coast. Describing them thirteen years afterwards, in 1511, the Portuguese chronicler and adventurer Tome Pires ⁽²¹⁾ wrote that they belonged to different ethnical origins, like “Banians, Brahamans and Pattans”, but that they were “**like Italians** in their knowledge of and dealings in merchandise” (1511/1944: 41-47). He added that ‘they have factors everywhere, who live and set up business—as **the Genoese do in our part [of the world]**... [T]here is no trading place where you do not see Gujarat merchants” (Pires, 1511/1944: 47; my emphasis, ML). Pires description also points out that the Gujarat owned and controlled fleets of ships which demanded the various ports of the region regularly, that they used “many men-at-arms to defend their ships and their trade” and that they had large factories in Calicut (1511/1944: 41-47). Malacca was their main trading center, the greatest of all the trading centers of the region. Nowhere else “such fine and highly prized merchandise” was dealt with: “goods from all over the east are found here; goods from all over the west are sold here”. The Gujarat concludes Pires “have the cream of the trade“(Pires 1511/1944). Braudel describes them as being “capitalists”.

Besides the presence and dominance of the Gujarat, Pires also recognized the presence of three other important networks of competition: those of the Muslim Arabs, of the Javanese, and of the Chinese. These different networks linked a great number of cities, harbors, trade routes, sources of production and other trade centers. Muslim traders were everywhere, he tells us, but their influence and local cohesion was not as strong and as important as the others or, for that matter, as their presence in the east coast of Africa. Mainly based in Siam, the Javanese and their traders in the northern Indian Ocean formed another very influential trading network.

²¹⁾ Some of the most important references made by Pires are in the following pages of the Hakluyt edition: Vol. I: 41-47, 104, 107-9, 122-27, 174-75, 180, 182, 214-216, 219-220; Vol. II: 269-74;

They not only competed with all the others but also among themselves maintaining, at the same time, what were secular relationships of cooperation. Finally, the Chinese appeared to the Portuguese as a declining influence. They were obviously very wealthy, and still had a strong influence in the region not only in economic but also in political terms. However, and still according to Pires description, they were “militarily weak, self-sufficient and indisposed to trade” ().

Pires description seems, consequently, to confirm what has already been stated in our previous description of the region, that what the Portuguese found when they arrived there in the turn of the fifteenth century to the sixteenth century was that while the Muslim and Chinese influences, historically the strongest and longest in the region, appeared as declining influences, that of the Gujarati and, to a certain extent, that of the Javanese (often in alliance with the latter) were very strong and, in the case of the former, a probably dominant presence. In the common version of modern Indian and Portuguese historiography, a new dominating and hegemonic state over the region was probably being generated out of it. The arrival of the Portuguese, first, that of the Dutch and British afterwards, blocked this development destroying it or in some cases substituting their respective networks of trade.

What can consequently be concluded from descriptions of the region as the Portuguese found it in the late fifteenth century is that those competing trading networks, mainly controlled by Gujarat, Javanese, Muslim, and Chinese traders, formed a very vibrant economy or system of interrelationships both locally and with the rest of the world. There was not, however, any kind of political centralization or dominant power. Instead, they found high levels of isolationism

sometimes affected by competition, open or latent conflicts, and enmities within and amongst the different business networks of the region.

Such a context can be used to explain the kind of double strategy then followed by the Portuguese. In the first place, and as the Priest Jose de Acosta wrote in 1590 (Boxer, 1969: 51), they started by exploiting to their benefit the old divisions among and within the different networks of the region at the same time creating new ones as a form of local control. By mere chance but also with premeditation, they ended up occupying the role of a dominant power within a context that they tried to understand, manipulate, instrumentalize, and, to a small extent only, to change, in accordance with their interests. Accordingly, they usually followed century old norms of peaceful contact and diplomatic relationships but did not hesitate to use force, to destroy, and to aggress when they thought it was needed—and in particular when the competitors were Muslims or Moors. As Trevor-Ropper points out, there was a political vacuum in the region and the Portuguese filled it (1966: 126).

5. SPACE: THE COMMODIFICATION OF THE SEA

In the second place, and because they had superior means of war and navigation, they were able to recreate to their benefit the local forms of access and control of the geographic space, in particular that of the sea. As such, the reality seems to have been that, *pace* Frederick Lane (1969), the Portuguese were not interested in territorial occupation and did not consider territorial occupation as a fundamental factor for the materialization of their trading objectives. They rather designed and tried to establish, to a great extent successfully, three types of

different control in the region: first, and obviously in a dominant way, the control of the spice trade, by establishing themselves at three strategic points of trade -- Goa, Ormuz, and Malacca. Secondly, by trying to control the Japan-China trade, with bases in Macao and Nagasaki. Thirdly, and as a way to keep open access to those points, for the trade routes they followed, for taxation, and to confront smugglers, they established the control of the navigation of the Indian Ocean, from Sofala to Macao. This was achieved by the establishment of small trading posts in highly strategic points of the region like Aden, Ormuz, the Malabar Coast, and the golden Goa, as well as in the city of Malacca, a required port of call to China and Java, to the shores of the Bay of Bengal and to the Indonesian Archipelago. In 1513, they reached Canton and established themselves in Macao, in the south, and on the Japanese coast thirty years after. At the same time, and deliberately avoiding large islands like Sumatra or Borneo, they concentrated efforts and scarce naval means in smaller ones, like the Moluccas and the Spice Islands which not only gave them quick access to large areas of the sea but were also the main producers of spices including cloves, the 'brown gold'. From those trading and military bases, by systematically policing the seas and through the well known system of the '*cartazes*'—the required passports all non-Portuguese ships had to carry and pay for—the Portuguese were able to control a vast system of trade in terms which had no parallel in the long history of the region and, as importantly, to pay for it locally. Although never able to establish a full monopoly of the spice trade to Europe, the Portuguese influence in the northern Indian Ocean was, at least till the 1580s and as Boxer reminds us, a dominant one (Boxer:1969). This explains why, in the mid-seventeenth century, when the first Portuguese empire was going through a contracting phase, cloves were still being exported directly to Europe at an average of three million pounds a year (L and F: 7).

To be sure, a new conception of space, a conception of strategic space in the Indian Ocean can be recognized in the Portuguese contact with the century-old realities of the northern Indian Ocean. This was not something that evolved with time and local experience. It appears, rather, as a project, a well-designed objective, already present—or, better, which started to be put in practice when the first Portuguese fleet arrived in India, at Calicut, in 1498. It was also, most notably, the result of the experience of the Portuguese both in the Iberian Peninsula and their permanent confrontation with Castile, and in the gradual exploitation, occupation and defense of the territories they gradually reached in the African coast, West and East, in the islands of the Atlantic, in the coasts of the Mediterranean or in northern Africa. It was a conception already ripe, carefully pre-established, even legitimated by the Papacy, a strategic conception of control of the space of the sea as a way to control the land and its riches. This was a strategy that would continue to be used in the following centuries both by the Dutch and by the English navies. The relationship between offer and demand in pursuit of profit and accumulation involving three continents became, to use here Polanyi's (1944/2001: 71) insightful finding, a central, defining feature of the emerging world-system. That is to say, with the Portuguese in the northern Indian Ocean, as probably before with the Italian Republics in the Mediterranean, markets ceased to be accessories, secondary features of economic life, to become integral, imbedded parts of it and their central, determining factor.

Equally modern, that is to say, in accordance with the realities of a new and evolving capitalist world-economy, and equally part of the gradual centrality of markets in economic life, was the dominant way followed by the Portuguese to finance their trading operations in the northern

Indian Ocean. With that objective, they used systematically all their possible advantages and differences of value among the poles of what soon became an operative and very profitable triangular trading process. In general terms, it consisted in the acquisition of merchandises in Europe, from cheap glass beads and mirrors to “*panos*” or cotton cloth to trade in the African coast for the gold, silver and ivory, which then were used to purchase in the northern Indian Ocean the spices and other goods which were the object of high demand and high prices in Europe. This guaranteed a maximum profit to the various enterprises and their financiers. It was through the regular practice of that triangular mode of generating profits that the Portuguese trade represented the first real penetration of southern Africa by the expanding, Euro-based world-economy of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. As we will see, this trade collapsed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to be revived in the late nineteenth century with the so called ‘scramble for Africa’.

6. THE NEW AND THE OLD

In their thrust out of the feudal crisis of the fourteenth century and out of Iberia the leading elites of Portugal became an active part of the world-systemic transition that characterized Western Europe since the beginnings of what we call today the long sixteenth century. To be sure, they were primordially searching for profit, wealth, and glory. With those objectives they were able efficiently to bring together people, resources, and capital. Their possible role was to be part of the conditions that allowed geographical, maritime expansion. And that was what they did. Moreover, through the diplomatic, juridical, economic and military organization of the geographic space of the sea, notably in the northern Indian Ocean but also in the Atlantic, the Portuguese elites were able to control strategically the land and the trading networks on

which they were interested. In other words, they were able to use the space of the sea as an instrument of access and monopolization of resources. Consequently, they were also among the first both to profit from the benefits of transition and to deeply feel its social and cultural impact. As such, and to a great extent, they were, already, part of the new. But not totally: in contrast to what was happening within the European core in formation, the emergence of the new in Portugal led to changes that resulted into the strengthening, consolidation and continuity of the old. That was why, after a phase of generalized prosperity and glory the Portuguese entered into a long term trajectory of historical irrelevance in the context of the further development of the modern world-system. A world-system to whose creation they had been instrumental.

It is not easy to describe this contradictory process. To be sure, it was not a specific characteristic of the Portuguese. Historically, we find similar situations of conflicting transitions repeating themselves under different guises all over the world. Braudel was particularly attentive to their existence. Without discussing them in detail, I mentioned some of them, from the Malabar Indic coast to China, in a previous chapter. Perhaps in more polemical terms the impressive organization of the politically independent city-states of Venice, Genoa, Florence, and Milan can also be pointed out as important references. Uniformly, we can see in all those instances the new, under the form of what we would call today capitalism or capitalist relations, being destroyed by the strength and power of the established old, that is to say, by dominant, more powerful, different structures of production and knowledge. Sometimes, as well, we were able to observe in those situations a kind of uneasy balance between the old and the new, a balance made of difficult compromises and mutual concessions. Sooner or later,

however, they achieved a solution of continuity in which the new ceased to be possible and, consequently, disappeared.

The conflict between the new and the old followed by forms to avoid or resist it was also what happened in Portugal. With a different outcome, however: the balance, the equilibrium between the new and the old became accepted as such, as a kind of *modus vivendi*. It did not disappear. After the mid-fifteenth century it consolidated itself. It was made into a political, economic and cultural characteristic of the kingdom. Like a doomed, cursed dialectic tension unable to resolve itself, it was perpetuated to become a foundational structure of its modernity. This was how Portugal and the Portuguese became part and parcel of the modern world-system – assuming the new without abandoning or totally giving up the effective presence of the past. In the words of Alberto Sampaio, this was how *uma vida nova*, that is to say, “a new life” started to be lived in the kingdom. But, he hastens to add, this was also how the lack of organization and control that was going to characterize Portugal in the following centuries started as well (Sampaio 1979: 73; Sa 1980: 107). In other words, a new life did not mean a better life.

Between the new and the old: we find, quite easily, expressions of this unresolved tension not only in the historical trajectory of Portugal but also in the structures of knowledge underlying its culture. Historically, and in what concerns us here, we can see it developing in intrinsic relationship with maritime expansion and its profits – or, better, with their dissipation. There is no effective accumulation in Portugal. Perhaps as a direct consequence of it, often as a reaction to it, a socio-political and economic conjuncture characterized by increasing patrimonialism,

conventionality, conformity and backwardness started to quickly consolidate itself within the kingdom. The new, in other words, led to or allowed the strengthening of the old. Under the watchful eye of an ever present Church, it gained new forms by deeply affecting the social and political organization of the Portuguese, their relations of production, institutions, hierarchies, and collective perceptions. As such, and in permanent relationship with the impact, constraints, and opportunities of the emerging modern world-system, the resulting conjuncture in Portugal can be described neither as part of an old, withering away social order nor as belonging to or, better, allowing the full setup and local expansion of the new, evolving capitalist world-economy. It appears, rather, as a different, if not divergent, path of evolution. Historically, this assumes sometimes the form of a collective assumption of one of the possible historical alternatives to both the old and the new. An alternative implying, in the long term of history, what appears as their simultaneous, more or less open refutation and practical denial. Necessarily with its ups and downs, this continued to be an important part of the Portuguese political and social habitus in the following centuries. After arriving at a similar conclusion about the royal and political continuities that is possible to detect in the long term historical trajectory followed by the Portuguese, Oliveira Marques complements it by saying that at least until the late nineteenth century they were uniformly “matched by secretarial continuity” (1974: 85). He adds that this was an important factor of stability; however “government stability has its advantages but also its inconveniences: if it permitted reforms, it also favored conservatism and routine” (Marques 1974). This means that Portuguese conservatism was never blind for the pressing needs to reform but, also, that reform had always to take into account the conservative nature of power. The result was, throughout the centuries, a kind of permanent indecision, of paralysis, of lack of effective decision-making. Within the greater

historical scheme of the development and economic growth of the western European core, the impression given is that after its maritime endeavor Portugal became blocked, frozen in time. Despite the wealth of expansion, through the profits of trade or, later on, the Brazilian gold, its elites seem to be standing still for all eternity – or, at least, in relation to the quickly distancing economic growth of the rest of the European systemic core.

This was how the kingdom changed its position from the vanguard of systemic expansion to become in less than one hundred years increasingly, dominantly “traditionalist” in political and cultural terms. At the same time, and after being one of the countries within the core of the emerging world-economy, it was made into a deeply underdeveloped, backward country. That was the price, undoubtedly a too elevated price, for the long period of political stability lived in Portugal and in contrast to the long wars and military confrontations simultaneously characterizing the rest of Europe. On the other hand, this is the reason why Gallagher concludes that the 1832-1834 conflict between absolutist and liberal elite groups in Portugal, a conflict that ended up with the difficult victory of the latter and led to the first serious attempts to transform and limit the power of the monarchy, was, as he writes with some exaggeration, the “most striking breakthrough that forces to the left of classical right have engineered to date in Portugal – the revolutions of 1910 and 1974 not excepted” (Gallagher 1983: 81-103). Some exaggeration because, as I will try to show below, those nineteenth century reforms were also located **between** the old, under the form of an all-powerful, conservative Crown, and the new - - the attempt to submit it to some form of collectively approved democratic constitution. This objective was not attained. And the changes emphasized by Gallagher appear, rather, not only as pyrrhic but also, in the end, as designed, once again, to allow everything to stay the same.

Indeed, nothing changed then -- or very little. On the other hand, the same unresolved tension between the old and the new continued to be present some fifty years later when the dream of a still vast Portuguese African Empire started to be coveted and therefore dismantled by more powerful European states. To a great extent, and although this time served by repression and authoritarianism, the indecision between reform and conservatism was also a determinant factor in the long night of colonial-fascism that gripped the country, its resources and its colonies during a great part of the twentieth century and of the disastrous colonial war it originated.

Even if in necessarily brief terms, the analytical consideration of that unresolved tension and its consequences at its historical origins in the passage of the fourteenth to the fifteenth centuries seems, consequently, important, if not essential, to try to understand the subsequent historical trajectory followed by Portugal. I will consider it here, basically, as having been possible due to the complexity of the beginnings of what was going to become a world-systemic transition (²²). Later on in time, probably, one or two centuries afterwards, it would not have been possible. In particular, I will try to characterize through it the nature and the form of Portuguese underdevelopment, the refusal of economic growth by its elites, the ambiguous, sometimes paradoxal relationship they maintained with modernity. If this can be shown, then

²²) The word alternative is here used with the meaning of a different form of surplus appropriation, capitalist or not, but distinct from those that characterize a capitalist world-economy and its structures of accumulation. As Dehio (1962) tells us, the beginnings of the long sixteenth century is a historical moment when all the roads of evolution out of the feudal crisis seem still to be open. Other alternatives of appropriation would, for instance, be predominantly based on tributes, eventually leading to a (Christian) world-empire; on feudal rents and the generalization of a “second serfdom”; on different city-states; on a permanent state of war; etc. This theme is interestingly suggested by Wallerstein (1974, 2nd chapter, in particular pages 93-97), although not explicitly. He adds that “opposite reactions to the same phenomenon, economic recession”, ended up being historically complementary within the more complex single system of a European world-economy (1974: 95).

we will have here new suggestions to explicate the Portuguese positional shift from the core of an emerging European world-system to its semi-periphery and even, later on, although temporarily, to its periphery. Oftentimes, to be sure, such is the systemic penalty for atypical or nonconforming systemic paths. More importantly within the context of the present work, I will try to find there the roots of the anachronistic Portuguese colonialism and its deadly resilience, as well as the reasons for the disastrous involvement of a weak and impoverished Portugal in what became the longest colonial war of the twentieth century.

The effective or attempted assumption of different historical alternatives, of those paths that are going to be nonconforming to the main direction of an evolving capitalist world-economy, was not a specific characteristic of Portugal. On the contrary, it was a strategy of response and reaction found in many other regions of a transitional Europe. Usually it involved some kind of political internalization or closure as a form of collective self-defense to the local impact of ongoing, large scale, systemic social change.

Internalization, however, was not a feasible solution for the Portuguese. Two defining structural constraints already discussed impeded it. The first was the geographical location of their country, between the Castilian devil and the deep blue sea. The second, a direct historical consequence, was their very early political and economic involvement with the northern Atlantic and Mediterranean trading systems. This was how Portugal became, in structural terms, one of the links between them and the world-economies they served. Consequently, as the remaining possibility, the Portuguese leading elites had to chose the deep blue sea into what soon became a long process of overseas expansion. And it was such a maritime

expansion, since its beginnings in the second decade of the fifteenth century, its profits, and the competition to access, control, and appropriate them, that to a determining degree, defined the social organization of the kingdom. At the same time, it gave form to the political choices of its rulers, in their relationship both with their subordinated classes and with an evolving world-economy.

The fundamental, founding-event of such an evolution and its social, political and economic consequences was what the Portuguese historiography often designates as the Revolution of 1383-1385. As argued above, the “revolution” was basically the struggle leading to the end of the first Castilian occupation of Portugal. With the exception of part of the old nobility allied to the Castilian Crown that struggle united and involved actively against its pretensions over Portugal all the social classes or orders of the kingdom. They included the remaining nobility, the *arraia miuda*, as the chronicler Fernao Lopes calls the poor and the destitute, as well as a bourgeoisie who, in the littoral cities of the kingdom, did not know yet that it was a bourgeoisie. They came together around a common refusal and a common political objective, a new king, and the establishment of a new governing dynasty, that of the House of Aviz. The present and clear danger of a Castilian aggression and the need to confront it, recreated then what in the following centuries would be consolidated: a whole new set of political, economic and cultural commonalties. At the same time, it materialized as national both the territorial boundaries of the kingdom and, increasingly, the specificity of the language spoken within those boundaries. It recreated, in short, what we would call today a new identity -- in political, social and cultural terms.

Because of the generalized involvement and unity of the various classes of the kingdom against the occupier, in particular that of the bourgeoisie and the people of the littoral cities, of its proto-nationalist characteristics and of its coincidence in time with what constituted the early beginnings of the modern world-system, the Portuguese triumph against Castile followed by their geographic expansion out of Europe, has been interpreted as part of the transition from the old to the new world order which was starting to evolve within western Europe. It has been as well described as the opposite, as an event that led to the effective reform of the old, medieval, social order in Portugal allowing its survival and strengthening (Barros 1945/1950 Volume 5: 226-230; Ferreira 1977: 31-45; Borges Coelho 1964/1985; 1965; Lobato 1954-60; 1957). To be sure, this constitutes a central debate in Portuguese historiography to this day: did the fourteenth century struggle against Castile lead in Portugal to the victory of the emergent bourgeoisie of the littoral cities, in particular that of Lisbon and Porto? Was it **the** bourgeois revolution, as defended namely in the classic and highly influential thesis of Borges Coelho (²³)? Or did it recreate the conditions for and allowed the continuity and the consolidation of a structure of power dominated by the king and part of the nobility, as defended for instance, and among many others, by Alexandre Lobato? In other words, was it an element of the new and its emergence? Or, on the contrary, did it belong to the old and its consolidation in Portugal?

An approach somehow different from the one leading to those two historical hypotheses although taking them both into account can perhaps be attempted. It asserts that, what happened in Portugal after the late fourteenth century and in the first half of the fifteenth

²³) Borges Coelho (1964: 73) writes: “Who makes the Portuguese society to climb over the sea walls, who makes it to jump, who determines the general expansion of the Portuguese... is the high bourgeoisie maritime and rural” (Translation ML; emphasis in the original)

century did not directly consolidate the old order in the kingdom, the often contradictory, usually allied and dominant powers and influence of the Crown and the nobility. Rather, it strengthened the former while weakening the latter -- in a similar way, consequently, to what will happen in the European core in the following two or three hundred years.

At the same time, however, and in a different way, it did not bring in the new because, I contend, it ended up blocking, impeding and delaying the main forms of political, cultural and economic transition in Portugal towards a full blossoming of what we call today modernity. What happened appears, rather, to have brought together what I have been calling the old and the new into a different complex of social accommodation among conflicting social orders and interests. However, this did not solve the contradictions between them. It rather tended to co-opt and, somehow, to equilibrate them. By so doing, it blocked the potential creativity and innovation of their tensions, that is to say, closed or obstructed the development of all other possible historical alternatives towards modernity. At the same time, however, such a corporative class agreement guaranteed the necessary stability required to change the early beginnings of maritime expansion into a collective endeavor and, consequently, to make it feasible.

One of the main reasons why this was possible in Portugal must be, to start with, related to the fact that, as a result of the gradual *Reconquista* (or “reconquest”) of its territory from the Moor secular presence, the predominantly feudal relations of production common to the rest of Europe were not implemented there, as happened for similar reasons in neighboring Spain (Wallerstein, 1974: 166), to the same degree of implementation and strength they had achieved

and still maintained in the rest of the continent. In Portugal, this was particularly true to the south of the Tagus River. On the other hand and as already discussed above, the old nobility, of Leonese descent and with large northern estates mainly worked by serfs, had been deeply affected and weakened by crisis. This was aggravated when, due to their feudal dependence upon the crown of Castile, most of their members considered themselves obliged to side with her and its objective of occupying Portugal. As a consequence, they found themselves among the losers when the Castilian King and his forces were expelled from Portugal. When the House of Aviz assumed power they were replaced by newly established nobility, in general of a bureaucratic, ministerial, or military extraction.

This means that the emerging and very weak forces of the new had not to confront traditional and strongly opposing forces of the old to assert themselves in Portugal. But, at the same time, neither the forces of the old nor those of the new were strong enough to assume fully the old or the new and, in so doing, to compel or avoid transition. Under the permanent shadow of the real or potential threat of occupation by Castile, the forces of the old and those of the new tended rather to come together. During this first phase, the interests and objectives of the Crown, the Church, the new nobility, the bourgeoisie, and the rest of the people appeared as being not only interrelated but, also, as being united. This unity is, notably, what led to overseas expansion. Literally, the Portuguese dominant elites found themselves in the same boat. But this was also how forms of political power primarily centralized by the Crown were consolidated. Among them, the quick development and consolidation of its administration and a military force which were, characteristically (Weber, 231), considered as personal

instruments of the monarch. These were the foundations, in short, that allowed the strengthening and effective consolidation of a patrimonial state.

This social and political evolution, complementing the unifying consequences of the Castilian occupation of the kingdom and of the ever-present threat of its repetition, effectively or as such perceived, must also be related with the reasons why it has become a kind of historical and sociological truism to consider Portugal one of the first, of the oldest, national states of the modern world-system. To be sure, there is indeed no better term than national state -- although, not yet, nation-state ⁽²⁴⁾ -- to describe Portugal after 1385 and its first serious confrontation with Castile.

This relatively early development of a Portuguese national consciousness and identity against an old order and its constraints appear as an important factor to explain the advantageous position of Portugal in the European transition to the capitalist world-economy. In particular if looked at against what, in the rest of the core of the European world-system and synchronically, became the slow transformation of the feudal into the patrimonial and national state, of the old into the new, the long-term and complex substitution of one by the other. In the rest of Europe, this process required more than 200 years of a daily confrontation of classes to culminate into the generalized impact of three major political and social transformations, respectively in England, the United States and France. In other words, it was through such a long-term process that, within the core of an emerging European world-system, allegiance to

²⁴) I consider that the concepts of national state and nation-state correspond to different social realities. I tried to distinguish between them in Mota Lopes 1992: Introduction;

the monarch gave way to the allegiance to a territory, within its borders, and to its population. That was how subjects became citizens and the interstate system of the capitalist world-economy emerged as such and consolidated itself. Moreover, that was how, in the slower European transition, the old institutions gave place, were changed, or, perhaps more often, collapsed or reformed themselves to become the institutions of the new -- the institutions required to bring in modernity while at the same time being molded by it. In the convergence of stronger and more centralized states with the accumulation of capital made possible by the geographic expansion out of Europe and with a new division of labor, this was how an emerging capitalist world-economy started to be consolidated. Contrary to what happened in Portugal, there was not an easy co-option, a soft accommodation of the old and the new. Throughout a long process of transition and through a large variety of different degrees or forms, there was no subsistence of the defining institutions of the patrimonial within the national.

The timing, characteristics and duration of this same process in Portugal was however different. There, the politics of a patrimonial state were able to reform and strongly consolidate themselves by becoming, **also** those of a national state in the transition of the fourteenth to the fifteenth centuries. In other words, Portugal became almost overnight a national state, belonging to and assumed as such by the Portuguese, without ceasing to be a patrimonial state, belonging to and assumed as such by their monarch.

To be sure, the monarch used amply arguments of a national nature to consolidate and expand his power and that of the patrimonial state. This resulted into the collapse of the national with

the patrimonial, of the modern with the traditional, of the old and the new. In other words, this not only became a defining political characteristic of identity but, as well, made easier to mask the main social contradictions within the kingdom -- by simultaneously hiding them behind the Castilian threat and the blinding splendor of expansion. By uniting the population of the kingdom and transforming its multitudes into a single people, the quick evolvement of a national identity and a proto-nationalist ideology in Portugal, made the kingdom stronger and more powerful. It solved within its territorial borders the social crisis that was still destroying, with a high degree of generalized violence all over the rest of Europe, the feudal stability of the previous centuries. At the same time, it allowed the establishment of peace with Castile, after the defeat of a second occupation at the end of the sixteenth century. In the historical short term, at the level of the political conjuncture, it allowed, as well, the continuation of a successful expansion overseas, the “discovery” of the world. For some time, it made Portugal richer, more knowledgeable, more united, and more influential.

At the same time, however, the consolidation of the Portuguese patrimonial state resulted in the consolidation and evolvement of the old. In particular with the beginnings of the very quick overseas expansion and increasing competition from Spain, Holland, France and England the consequences were disastrous. Notably, they affected deeply the civil and military levels of the officialdom required and directly involved in the administration of the growing and powerful expansionist endeavor, of its trade, and of its at least theoretical monopolization by the Crown. Organized according to a hereditary system based on the “new” nobility, on familial relations, and on submission to the King, they were, from the perspective of the new, highly inefficient administrative and defensive bodies. Moreover, their members were overwhelmingly corrupt

and venal. By all possible means, by fee and land benefices or, more often, through bribes, smuggling, or contraband they would illegally appropriate most of the profits which, in the kingdom or out of it, belonged to the Crown. Generally considered as being an integral part of their functions, they would thus absorb much of the income of expansion with a single objective: conspicuous consumption. Lacking investments, the economic reconstruction of the kingdom, its agriculture, fishing, industries and the necessary infrastructures necessary for their development were relegated as unimportant. To the people and, to a great extent, to the bourgeoisie of the kingdom, the prosperity and splendor of expansion started to come to an end. A second phase characterized by an increasing social and economic polarization, by growing unemployment in the towns, by difficulties in trading and agriculture and by impossible increases in the cost of living had started. In all of this, by its general behavior, the patrimonial bureaucracy involved in the process of the Portuguese expansion was very much part of the past, of that past of crisis from which Europe was still trying to get out. For the kingdom, the consequences of this disconnection were devastating.

This can be exemplified, primordially exemplified, perhaps, by two historical processes that, through the political decisions leading to them and their social and economic consequences, appear to us today as only possible because located within that limbic space between the old and the new -- while deeply affected by both. The first one concerns the way the Portuguese Crown and its patrimonial bureaucracy conceived the role of trade under their direct control and its practice with the rest of the world, with the Indian Ocean region, in particular. It concerns the substantial profits from that trade, the lack of them or, rather, after a very successful initial period, what is often described, for instance by Lane, as the *absence* or

generalized dearth of profits. Related with the type of political and economic relations institutionalized by the Crown with Great Britain, the second one resulted directly into the increasing dependency and underdevelopment that ended up characterizing the position and role of Portugal in the evolving world-economy.

In a brief reference about the Portuguese trading in the Indian Ocean region, the first of the two historical processes, I described it above as characterized by a conception of space and use of the military that, in their subordination to trade and its monopolization, appears as being, already, part of what was by then a new world order in the making. It was in rupture with centuries-old practices and traditions of sea-trading. This is also the approach in Farrington (Anthony, 2002: *Trading Places, The East India Company and Asia, 1600-1834*, London: The British Library, p 13), who, after discussing those practices and traditions, writes: “The Portuguese brought with them (to the Indian Ocean) the concept of aggressive armed trading in ships carrying heavy guns, Theirs was a national enterprise fuelled not only by the drive for personal and national wealth but also by their long struggle against Islam” (13). It was such a strategic conception that guaranteed the Portuguese the more or less monopolistic domination of the spice trade. Historically, however, its application and its regional success from Goa to the Moluccas and to the Mozambique Island were after the mid sixteenth century seriously affected and overcome. The reestablishment of the Red Sea trade with the Mediterranean by competing and stronger economic forces was one of the reasons leading to it. Another was the more or less simultaneous attack and occupation of the Portuguese overseas possessions by the enemies of Spain and after the forced union of the two countries in 1580. Underlying both events, however, there was the ambiguity of the Portuguese overseas policy and the predatory

role of the officialdom responsible for its implementation. The result was that the costs of maintaining the Portuguese domination of the sea space by military means in the Indian Ocean, the protection costs as Lane calls them (1979: 12-13; 43), became, increasingly, superior to the profits received by the Portuguese to supply them. For Lane, this is the reason why the Portuguese trade with the Indian Ocean human space resulted in high deficits. Lucio de Azevedo, perhaps the first historian to make them clear wrote, notably, that the trade with India became increasingly a negative operation to the Crown. "Only in the period of conquest did India pay its costs", he writes (1926: 42). In fact, and even before the second occupation of Portugal by Spain, the Portuguese trade with the region tended to become a relation of accumulated deficits for the Crown. To be sure, this was due to increasing security or protection costs -- but not only. Primordially, there was the high cost of benefices distributed to or, more often, illegally appropriated by a vast network of sapping depletion of profits. This network included members of the royal house, of the nobility and of the different state apparatuses and their officialdom. Always in the name of the king and both within the kingdom and out of it, they had in the meantime taken hold of the effective control of the whole imperial operation. Regularly, the members of that intercontinental network appropriated most of the royal profits of expansion and its trade. With that objective, they used all possible means from increasing corruption to the direct and privileged involvement with private trade, forbidden to them in their quality of royal agents in place but, in fact, more or less tolerated. Sea and land booty and plundering, bribes and the collection of local, more or less private and often directly generated protection costs, were among the means leading to their quick enrichment. Frequently, this was denounced in the correspondence of the time to an extent that the existence of permanent deficits between the expenses of the Crown and its profits does not

constitute a surprise. Perhaps more than the real increase of protection costs it is that generalized corruption, with its correspondent vanishing of profits that better explains the permanent bankruptcy of the Portuguese Crown in its involvement with expansion. In other words, the Portuguese patrimonial bureaucracy complemented the new and revolutionary mode of trade control it was able to establish in the northern Indian Ocean with forms of profit appropriation which were old, unproductive and inefficient.

In what concerns the second historical process concerning the development of the relations of Portugal with Great Britain, they are usually and can generally be explained by the Portuguese will to survive as an independent and sovereign country against Castile. But they must, as well, be described as based on conditions that uniformly, from the Portuguese perspective, benefited not only the Crown but also the landed interests of the kingdom, that is to say, those of the nobility and the church. In other words, they became an important instrument in the consolidation of the old and its perpetuation.

Culminating in 1703 with the signature of the Methuen Treaty, those conditions had quickly evolved since the aid given to the Portuguese by a small unit of English archers against the Castilian occupying forces in 1383-1385. This was followed in the following year by the signature by the new Portuguese king, in Windsor, of what became known as the “perpetual alliance” between the crowns of the two kingdoms (²⁵). Initially a type of relationships which

²⁵ The relations between the two peoples dated however from much before, as early as the twelfth century. A formal treaty between traders of London and Porto was signed in 1353. In 1373 a first royal treaty between the two Crowns was as well signed. On the other hand, the Methuen Treaty, so predominant both in the writings of Adam Smith (who considered the Treaty as “evidently advantageous to Portugal” [Smith 1964 II: 45]); and of David Ricardo (for whom the Methuen Treaty classically exemplifies the principle of

gave advantages to the Portuguese, these royal links ended up, however, becoming one of the main obstacles to the social and economic growth of Portugal, a determinant factor in the development of its underdevelopment. Consolidated at the level of the dominant classes, those conditions institutionalized the division of labor between the two countries for the following centuries. Accordingly, they froze it in time as an exchange between Portuguese “unwrought”, or primary goods, with British “wrought” or manufactured goods, that is to say, between wine and cotton cloth. As a first consequence, such a type of exchange reduced Portugal, a producer of **both** wine and cloth at the end of the seventeenth century, not only to be a sole producer of wine and other primary products but, also, to be increasingly dependent from Great Britain for all its needs in manufactured goods. An important factor of strengthening, in Portugal, of the influence and power of the Crown, such an unequal and dependent relationship extended to the economy the type of relations established at the level of the common military defense, while contributing to the economic development of England. Historically, and as Sideri makes evident, the permanent division of labor created by the conditions of the Methuen Treaty led not only to the de-industrialization of Portugal but also to what became a permanent, chronic deficit in its balance of payments with England. This deficit had to be financed by the increasing outflows of the Brazilian gold in the eighteenth century and by extensive foreign borrowing in the nineteenth. At the same time, it blocked the first serious Portuguese attempts to industrialize and diversify in the late eighteenth century. Finally, in 1810, it led to the loss of the Portuguese trade with Brazil (Sideri: 5-6; *passim*). Birmingham points out that this type of relationship between Portugal and Great Britain became “the bedrock of Portuguese diplomacy

comparative advantage being, as such, equally beneficial to both trading partners, [Ricardo 1965: 82]], is the summing up, expansion and consolidation of conditions already part of previous commercial treaties between Portugal and Great Britain. Those treaties were signed, respectively, in 1642 (two years after the “second liberation” of Portugal from Spain and recognizing it), in 1654, and in 1661.

well into the twentieth century” (1993: 21). As it will be discussed below, it constitutes, as well, an essential explanatory element of many of the characteristics of Portuguese colonialism after the 1880s, in general, of its colonial presence in Southern Africa, in particular.

The corrupt and reactionary nature of the Portuguese patrimonial bureaucracy sets it apart from the modern forms of bureaucracy generated by the development of the capitalist world-economy. Two other distinctive characteristics can be pointed out. Contrary to the bureaucracies created in France, England or in the neighboring Castile and Aragon, the main function of the Portuguese bureaucracy was not to restore internal order nor, for that matter, to expand the tax base within the kingdom as a way to self-finance itself and grow. As we have seen, it was meant, rather, to organize, to structure, to administer, and to coordinate in the name of the king all the multiple aspects of expansion, of its trade, and of its increasing profits. Both within the kingdom and overseas it had, as well, what we would call today an important distributive function of opportunities and benefits, those that had been opened up by expansion. Since the more difficult times of inflation and debasement that followed in Portugal the political crisis of 1385 (²⁶), this allowed the House of Aviz to be seen as defending not only the interests of a new and weak nobility, quickly appropriating by all possible means the existing wealth, and of the church but also of all the other sectors of the kingdom. In particular, it was

²⁶ The post-1385 crisis in Portugal neither coincided nor followed the general trend of falling prices of grain by then being registered in the rest of Europe. Chaunu (quoted in Wallerstein 1974: 69) confines the chronology of that contraction to 1310-1480, with plateaus in 1330 and 1380. In other words, and contrary to the European trend, the price of cereals continued to increase in Portugal becoming, in the classic approach by Godinho (1963-1971/1991), one of the main reasons for the Portuguese expansion into north and western Africa. Still according to Godinho, the high prices of grains and other agricultural produce was also the main reason for the colonization of the Atlantic islands of Madeira. Other authors point out that it was rather a direct result of the confrontation with Spain. Anyway, the reality was that the difficulties in Portugal started to be attenuated only when the first gold from the western African coast started to arrive at the country, in 1435 (Godinho: (1963-1971/1991).

considered as such by traders, financiers, soldiers and slavers. To be sure, this was the main reason for the harmonious, well-balanced, and seemingly congruent equilibrium of rights, duties and common interests that often appear as part of the political situation within Portugal during the first phase of the maritime expansion. Through this expansionist entrepreneurship and through its increasing, extravagant and sumptuous expenditures the House of Aviz was able to complement and consolidate the balance of forces of its social base.

This allows an interesting conclusion. In the Portugal of the early sixteenth century the roots of absolutism did not have to be imposed from above. Rather they found at all social levels the right type of soil to be accepted and evolve. They had, in fact, very different origins, different lineages as Parry Anderson would say, from those that later on started to grow all over Europe. They also had, perhaps more importantly, a different timing and, in the end, very different consequences. With the monarch as its crest, the patrimonial state in Portugal consolidated itself by assuming a kind of social symmetry in relation to the main interests of the kingdom. This played no small role in its political equilibrium and social stability. The strengthening of old institutions was one of the ways followed with that objective.

In political terms, for instance, the preservation of that internal equilibrium was, as Pedro Cardim tells us (1998), the main social function ascribed to the Cortes. Similar in their functioning in Portugal and Spain, the Cortes are often described as the Iberian Parliament. In Portugal, they constituted the most important and influential of all the natural institutions of social and political representation. Accordingly, the main function of the Cortes was to preside at the effective and peaceful accommodation of the different interests amongst the different

orders of the country and between them and their King. A country imagined as a “politically plural, polycentric and decentralized” kingdom (Cardim 1998: 23-25). It was in this context that the objectives of the Cortes were characterized, and socially assumed, as consisting in “the maintenance of the ancestral equilibrium among the various bodies of the Kingdom” (Cardim 1998: 25). All this came to an end in the late seventeenth century.

I must add here however, another important consequence equally with very negative effects to the kingdom. To maintain the balance among different political bodies implies, fundamentally, to accept and recognize them as they see themselves. This is why the Cortes played as well no small part in the consolidation of the rigid Portuguese social structure. They created the conditions to allow all-powerful monarchs, using the wealth and power of expansion and overseas possessions, to increase and consolidate their own wealth and power. This was done by impeding not only the existence of a strong nobility or gentry but, also, of a strong middle class. As importantly, the Cortes guaranteed the necessary social and economic space within which merchant-gentry arrangements and pacts became possible and mutually profitable. In other words, the functioning of the Cortes within the context of what I have been calling a patrimonial exercise of power corresponded in Portugal to the type of institutions that, within the core of an evolving world-economy, will be later on fundamental for its expansion and growth. On the other hand, the development of underdevelopment in Portugal, that is to say, the inexistence of a relatively developed agriculture, the deep problems affecting trade, the absence of industrialization, and its chronic dependency have here as well an important part of their structural base (Sergio 1976: 79-91; 1977-1978, Vol. 2: 74-76; Wheeler 1978: 207-8).

To be sure, the role of the Cortes was not to solve old or new divisions within the kingdom. It was, rather, to balance the tensions provoked by them, that is to say, to politically integrate them. As the Portuguese expansion continued, those divisions were exacerbated and, in the social reality of the kingdom, made even deeper and aggravated (Sergio 1976, 1977-1978; Godinho 1963-1971/1991). Among them, there were the divisions between the cities, in particular Lisbon, but also Porto, Evora, Coimbra or Aveiro, and the rural interior. There were also the deep divisions based on the unequal distribution, access and ownership of land usually reduced to the division between an overpopulated north and the south of the country. Finally, there was the separation between trade and agriculture, the dominance of the former stalling the development of the later (Sergio 1976).

The generalized depredation of the profits of expansion was, to be sure, one of the main causes of such a historical and economic development. However, and as Victor de Sa points out, the main problem with maritime expansion was not only that its profits had no serious control and consequently could be and were easily and fraudulently appropriated. It was also that its trade, the goods and the capital required for it, were not based on the labor and production of the kingdom. They all had to be imported. Consequently, he concludes, the Portuguese colonial empire was a ghostly, phantasmagoric reality that disappeared with the smallest inconstancy of fortune as quickly as it had appeared. This was the reason why the best of the times in the Portuguese history are always times of an apparent prosperity. They were also times in which the agriculture necessary to feed the Portuguese was systematically discouraged and abandoned. The land was left uncultivated and fallow. Sugar, rice, dairy products and meat as well as the grain needed to make bread had been previously produced in Portugal to levels that

allowed their export. Not anymore: with all the other basic products for subsistence they had to be imported. The same thing happened with fishing, notwithstanding the great extension of the Portuguese maritime coast and the great number of fishermen. Besides conspicuous consumption and fraudulent appropriation, the need to feed the kingdom with imported food, year after year, was another open and permanent drain for the profits of expansion. To be sure, the remaining would find its way to the accumulation centers of the core, almost by definition located out of Portugal.

A curious social paradox can however be detected here. It is the fact that while those divisions became deeper and larger with expansion, the tensions and conflicts they originated tended to become not more but less pressing, constraining or destabilizing. The fact that the Cortes were basically an instrument to keep those tensions at bay by giving them “voice”, that is to say, by allowing their public expression, was certainly one of the reasons for their social integration. A more direct and efficient reason can as well be found, it seems to me, in the sea. Social conflicts and tensions became less pressing with expansion because, once again, the sea was the great and permanent way out of them. It allowed, in other words, to “exit”. In other words, and to use here concepts made familiar by Albert O. Hirschman (1970, 1986 and 1995) they lived politically within a pre-established harmony between **voice**, or the possibility to be heard and protest, and **exit**, or the possibility of out migration. In particular with the declining importance of the Cortes in the passage of the sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries, the ways of the sea towards exile were converted into the great social solution through which tensions were overcome and taken away. Moreover, in a situation without agriculture, fishing and

manufacturing the only solution for the Portuguese was to emigrate. Exodus, hope and the effective possibility of a better future substituted, consequently, the need for internal conflict.

The intense exit that historically became central to the survival of the Portuguese, in particular after the late seventeenth century, has here its roots. But migration is often, as well, a very negative movement. Usually to Europe and to America, only secondarily to the overseas territories, Portuguese migration took away from the country not only people and their skills but also capital. Furthermore, and because those who migrate are usually the more able and capable, migration can be seen historically as a basic explanation for the lack of innovation and initiative that is often possible to recognize in Portugal. On the other hand, and because they tended to artificially solve the internal social tensions and conflicts, both expansion and its consequences led to the long term historical consolidation of a rigid class structure; an unchanged class structure accommodated to a patrimonial state and finding in it both security and social equilibrium.

The way expansion affected the kingdom after its first phase of conquest had consequently very negative consequences for the Portuguese. Besides exacerbating its internal divisions, it impacted the social and economic structures of the kingdom, its internal organization, its ability to respond efficiently to a new reality. Both Sergio and Godinho are adamant about this. For them, expansion recreated in new levels and increased the cleavage between rural and trading interests in the kingdom. Trade, however, represented mostly a constant outflow of wealth that blocked or made impossible the development of a productive national economy. In fact, the accumulation of capital determined by the Portuguese expansion became located out

of the kingdom, in Dutch, British, or French centers of accumulation. Consequently, it neither developed nor consolidated Portugal. This means that it ended up pushing Portugal away from its initial place within the core of an emerging world-economy. When we use this perspective to look at Portuguese expansion, the hypothesis that it was a failed, unprofitable venture seems to be confirmed.

There is another perspective, however, to assess and evaluate the results of the Portuguese maritime endeavor. It is not a different perspective but it must be enlarged or broaden to take into account the complex reality that characterized the Portuguese expansion and, in particular, the various participants who as financiers, agents, brokers, buyers and sellers working in the kingdom or out of it, in different points of the empire or in the rest of Europe made it possible. When we bring them into the scene, the reality is that negative approaches like those of Lane and Azevedo become less credible. In other words, they are not conclusive to assert that the overseas trading operations based on Portugal, even in what the spice trade is concerned, were or became a profitless enterprise. On the other hand, they seem to forget that the profits of expansion were not an exclusive of the King. To be sure, this was, for quite a long time, one of the ideas defended by a traditional Portuguese historiography for which the Portuguese monarchs occupied the center of everything – including as chief merchants. But this is not acceptable, on the contrary. The fact that the royal family in Portugal kept for itself the monopoly of the trade of expansion, in the process becoming the wealthiest family in Portugal, does not mean that it practiced as well navigation exclusiveness. As Oliveira Marques very clearly tell us and seems to be forgotten both by Azevedo and by Lane in their characterization and accounting of the Portuguese expansion, its profits and its costs, the

organization of private undertakings, although with the permission of the Crown, a permission obviously paid for, were the rule rather than the exception of the Portuguese expansion and Portuguese trade (page 41). In other words, the Crown was not the only intervenient in the Portuguese trade: many traders based or not in Portugal, were involved and, for them, the losses of the Portuguese Crown, through protection costs and corruption, were often condition and part of their own profits. This approach is also found both in Godinho (1963-1971) and in Boxer (1969). They emphasize the centrality of the private trade with Asia by comparing it with that of the Portuguese crown. Their conclusion is the rejection of those approaches emphasizing a profitless expansion. In an even more recent investigation, based on a vast array of primary sources, Boyajian (1993), confirms those approaches and concludes that the investments in Asia by Portuguese private traders in the seventeenth century and beyond were ten times greater than those by the crown. In fact, he adds, their investment was even greater than that by the Dutch East India Company. Organized according to family links, the most important of those Portuguese traders, usually New Christians with their bases in Lisbon and Madrid were able to establish, organize and benefit from highly profitable triangular operations that included Goa, Africa and Brazil. To a great extent, the nature of their trade was part of the secret of their profits: in total weight, and in the forty years from 1580 to 1640, the royal cargo that was transported through the Cape route surpassed private cargo by more than twenty percent. In terms of total value, however, private cargo represented about 93 percent of the total transported through the same route and in the same period, compared with seven percent of the royal cargo. Among the factors that made possible all this, Boyajian points out that private traders were able to adapt to the growing threats to their ships and cargoes, namely those represented by the growing presence of the Dutch, through local agreements, by adopting

quicker and bolder means of transport, and by constantly changing the main location of their trading.

A conclusion can perhaps be attempted here. The Portuguese expansion constituted a fundamental element of growth and consolidation of the modern world-system. More than that, it was part of one of the three main factors whose coincidence in time made it possible. Within Portugal, however, its results were, to say the least, disastrous and highly negative for the Portuguese people.

These negative consequences of expansion within Portugal were quite clear to its contemporaries. Camoens, for instance, coined the expression **Velhos do Restelo** or the “Old Men of Restelo”, to designate those who were against the “discoveries”. According to his poem “Os Lusíadas”, they were intellectually old, conservative, and incapable of dreaming the future. They were reduced to passively watch the ships leaving the Restelo harbor in search of new worlds. The interesting here is not only his assertion that there were very negative feelings about maritime expansion. It is, rather, a certain degree of empathy felt by the poet towards those he is negatively describing. Secondly, his symbolic reference to those who were against the “discoveries” in a poem singing their praises can be read as meaning that such an opposition was more widespread and stronger among the Portuguese at the time than usually considered. This has been confirmed by other approaches. Notably, based on the fact that there are no popular, traditional songs or tales in Portuguese about the maritime expansion (²⁷),

²⁷) Almeida Garrett published the most complete and in depth register of Portuguese traditional songs and folk tales. Among them there is a single one which has the maritime expansion as its central theme, the song

Alberto Sampaio concludes that “such an absence is eloquent in its silence: it tells us that the maritime endeavor was not well received by the people” (1979: 102; quoted in Sa 1980: 111). In a recently published study in which the work of another author contemporary of the second phase of the Portuguese expansion, the playwright Gil Vicente, is analyzed, Eduardo Lourenco concludes as well that it reflects a collective, popular disinterest and indifference towards the maritime endeavor. More than that, Lourenco detects a permanent and very deep ill feeling, a collective “indisposition” towards maritime expansion, a kind of generalized “civilizational angst”. Even if Gil Vicente is not aware of it and oftentimes depicts it in comical terms, Lourenco tells us, there is always present in his many plays “an implicit sense of tragedy”. The result would only become clear in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, “in the threshold of our present post-modernity” (Lourenco, Eduardo 2004: Destrocos, Lisboa: Gradiva Editora; Baptista, Maria Manuel 2004: “Eduardo Lourenco: Interrogacoes do Futuro”, JL 26 de Maio – 8 de Junho, 21). A third related point can be here equally mentioned. It was notably underlined by Margarida Calafate Ribeiro in her recent book “Historia de Regressos: Imperio, Guerra Colonial e Pos-Colonialismo” (History of Returns: Empire, Colonial War and Post-Colonialism, Porto: Afrontamento). According to her reading of Camoens, it is obvious that the poet emphasized the great heroic conviction of expansion and its heroes. But he spoke also”, she adds, “about the dangers that such an excess of domination was bringing into the small Lusitanian house. [The “Lusiadas”] is an epic much more based on doubts than on certitudes” (2004b: 37).

Nau Catrineta. Even here, the reference is more to the difficulties and troubles represented by expansion than to exalt it.

Despite these approaches and others lately being made public by an important group of historians and other social scientists in Portugal, the idea that the maritime expansion is its greatest accomplishment, the defining feat of its history and the major expression of the “racial superiority” and “greatness” of its people, continues to be, today, a major ideological and cultural vector of the Portuguese collective imaginary. This is a direct result, I believe, of the fact that for more than fifty years, the half century of colonial-fascism in Portugal, such an interpretation of the “discoveries” was made into the dominant trope used and expanded to its limits by the ideological machineries of the so-called New State that assumed power in 1926 to increasingly assume important influences of the fascist ideologies and practices then expanding all over Europe, in Asia and in the Americas. At all its levels of expression, what was described as the unsurpassable greatness of the Portuguese maritime expansion became a kind of dogma whose denial was seriously punished. This was what happened to many of the Portuguese authors I have been using in the present work. Their need to understand the social and economic realities of maritime expansion represented or was considered by the regime as insubordination, as a direct, rebellious challenge, as a confrontation. To be sure, the maritime adventures of the Portuguese as an epic feat was to a certain extent already present in Camoens. But Camoens never forgets, as we saw, that a consistent opposition to those voyages was part of their reality. On the other hand, he is primordially lauding Vasco da Gama, by giving him not a mythological but a modern dimension. In other words, he is saying that there is no difference between humans and gods, that it is Man who rightly occupies the ideological center of the new world. Consequently, he can fail. He has to surpass himself and, principally, his doubts. Nothing was written beforehand. Moreover, Camoens describes the maritime way to India as a kind of Homeric odyssey. As such it is simultaneously blessed and condemned.

All this is very different from the convoluted and rigid intellectual creature into which the New State transformed Portuguese expansion and its history. It was through it that expansion became “discoveries” assumed and imposed as a dogmatic reference characterizing if not founding, for more than fifty years, the Portuguese collective ideology. Basically, the complex and no doubt admirable feat of the Portuguese sailors was transformed by colonial-fascism into an abject expression of a pseudo ethnic and racial superiority. It was changed, in other words, into a characteristic of a supposed Portuguese exceptionalism. It was only with Portuguese fascism that their history assumed a kind of mythical and mystical nature. To be sure, this irrational irrecusably of expansion was both a necessity and a consequence of the fascist ideology (or lack of it) that characterized the theory and principally the practice of the New State. To describe itself as the true heir and embodiment of those “great men of the past” who had given “new worlds to the world” in name of God almighty was one of the many ways through which the New State tried to legitimize its authoritarianism and, in particular, its refusal of any kind of political or cultural opposition. By doing so, it placed itself up and above all the divisions, oppositions and social conflicts that characterized Portugal throughout the first quarter of the twentieth century. Then, from such a position of an ideological superiority justified by history, in the name of history, it used all possible means to violently crush them all, left and right alike, forbidding their reconstruction afterwards. As such, it needed and assumed often forms of irrationality, of racial superiority, of mass manipulation, absurdity and, as a consequence, of daily violence that are common both to Italian fascism and Nazism.

To a great extent, this became also a defining characteristic of Portuguese colonialism. If there is something specific in the kind of colonialism that the Portuguese were able to impose on other peoples, it is the fact that it was also a form of fascism, a colonial-fascism. Simultaneously it was in the recreation of expansion as “discoveries that gave new worlds to the world” that in a global conjuncture characterized by decolonization, the Portuguese regime found the ideological roots to base absurd claims of continuity of its colonial legitimacy.

The longest colonial war in the history of Europe found here, in the collective assumption of the “discoveries” as the basic characteristic defining the Portuguese national and colonial identities, part of its *raison d’être*. As Margarida Calafate Ribeiro points out, it was in the “specific form of development of its expansion and of its imperialism (that) Portugal defined itself, simultaneously, as the center of a colonial empire and as a European periphery” (2004a). This originated, she adds, the somehow “schizophrenic kind of culture” that historically as today seems to characterize the country. For her, this is the reason why the history of Portugal is often marked by “madness”: a madness that assumed its limits with the colonial war. To be sure, it is already present in the Tordesillas Treaty and the division of the world between Portugal and Spain it endorsed and legitimated. But this was based on the realities, politics and culture of the time. On the contrary, the African policy of the Portuguese New State in the second half of the twentieth century was based on nothing. It was against its time. This is why, she concludes, “that only traumas and a sea of ruins came out of it” (Ribeiro: 2004a; 2004b).

We have now some of the fundamental elements required for a general assessment of the conditions that historically defined the trajectory of the Portuguese in relation to the

development of the modern world-system. Among them, I pointed out the conditions leading to an artificial settlement of contradictory forces as being central for the institutional and cultural hindrance of the full flowering of the new, of modernity. Notably, it hold back the development of the productive forces blocking at the same time transformation of the political and economic relations of production that the results of the “discoveries”, the slave trade, the spices from Asia as, afterwards, the gold from Brazil, could have permitted. In other words, it impeded the local formation and expansion of capital accumulation. The Portuguese expansion contributed, in short, to the acceleration of changes in the core of an evolving European world-system, to the formation, there, of new and powerful centers of capital accumulation, to a new international division of labor, to new forms of control of labor and resources. It was one of the defining factors of modernity. But not within the country itself where, on the contrary, an increasingly indebted Crown spent to the last cent the profits of expansion in what was usually no more than sumptuous consumption and non-reproductive investment. At the same time, to be sure, the more enlightened sections of the littoral bourgeoisie contributed to that formation of the modern world-system by accumulating within other centers of accumulation.

It can be said, consequently, that in a first phase the state in Portugal subordinated its interests to the requirements of expansion of the capitalist world-economy. Soon after, however, this situation seems to have inverted itself. The processes of capital accumulation became less important, dependent, and secondary or submitted to the processes of formation and consolidation of the state. Because the long line of succeeding monarchs and their state machineries were usually able to maintain and consolidate their power over the rest of society, such a characteristic is recognizable as a defining factor in the historical trajectory of the

country within an evolving world-economy. Notably, it was one of the central features of its decline from the core to the semi-periphery of the modern world-system and, from there, to its periphery. It is, also, a basic cause for the development of its dependent underdevelopment. As I will try to demonstrate below, it is strongly present in the characterization of its colonialism and of what can perhaps be called a Portuguese colonial model.

With a certain degree of condescending kindness towards the Portuguese, Braudel characterizes the inefficiency of their succeeding imperial projects by their “naïveté” (1949/1972: 568). I would rather characterize them by what I see as a constant, frequently fascinating, unresolved and usually unrecognized clash between the old and the new. In other words, after the sixteenth century the Portuguese can perhaps be seen as a people caught within a process of systemic transition, living between two worlds, between the past and the future of an evolving world-economy -- without choosing or assuming neither of them. To an extent that, if I could apply here a beautiful description used by Roland Barthes in another, very different, context, I would say that it was by then that their leading elites started to live **in the rearguard of the vanguard** of a new world order: as vanguard, they could already see what was ahead of them, in the future, and, simultaneously, acknowledge, lament, and salute it. As rearguard, however, they continued living in the past and enjoying it. Characteristics that, somehow, can help us understand the nature of their political choices and how they affected their relative position in an evolving world-economy till at least the late twentieth century.

On the other hand, a fundamental question must here be formulated. If the general situation of the growing economic dependence to Great Britain was indeed complemented and aggravated

by the increasing deficits for the crown in their Asian operations, who or what paid for the escalation of the Portuguese “discoveries”? Who or what supported its increasing expenses? This is a question that neither Lane nor Sideri nor, for that matter, Azevedo seem to have formulated. However, and as another, basic key to understand the nature and conditions of the European expansion out of Europe, I will try to answer it. To be sure, the response can be synthesized in a single word, a word expressing such a terrible reality that, more often than not, it is usually forgotten. That word and that reality is slavery.

8: SPACE, SPICES, SLAVES

Spices and gold, as well as the material means and the control of the strategic space to obtain and trade them, have been till now, in my discussion about the Portuguese expansion overseas, the main focus of reflection. I located it, in structural terms, not only in the early formative beginnings of the capitalist world-economy but, also, as part of it. By themselves, however, neither the expansion of trade nor the new ways to access and control it are sufficient to characterize the immense social changes in progress in the Western Europe of the late fifteenth century. To understand them as the start of a systemic rupture with the economic and social past, it is necessary to consider at least two other interrelated conditions. The reorganization, centralization and strengthening of the modes of exercise of state power, of its interests and of those of the social classes legitimizing it, is one of those conditions. Its immediate purpose was, to be sure, to stabilize and control all forms of dissention and protest in particular those assuming violent forms of social conflict. But the real objective was somehow different. It was the need to create the best possible conditions for capital accumulation by submitting to it the different machineries or bureaucracies in what became the vanguard of world social change. Although somehow premature in the European context and with some specific distinctions, the case of Portugal, as discussed above, was used to argue about those two conditions of social

and political change in Western Europe. However, besides expansion and the submission of the state to the requirements of accumulation of capital, a third essential condition for the formation of the modern world-system was still missing from that account.

That third condition is what Wallerstein calls “the development of variegated methods of labor control for different products and different zones of the world-economy” (1974: 38). It is often seen as the most important of the essential aspects to the establishment of the capitalist world-economy (1974: 37-9). To be sure, this is the condition more directly leading to a basic structural feature of the modern world-system: its inter-continental, axial division of labor. Today, as within the core in formation five hundred years ago, the advantage of a global division of labor is essentially that it offers the better conditions to generate a permanent increase of production and productivity. However, from the perspective of the capitalist, this is neither necessarily nor always the central objective of his effort. The essential for him, his main provision, is rather the generation of growing profits in a permanent interconnection with the requirements for a ceaseless accumulation of capital. Often, this coincides with the production of more goods in less time with the same or less costs. But not always: in the capitalist world-economy many other procedures can be and have been historically followed to attain that same objective. This means that the strengthening of the state and geo-economic expansion only started to make world-systemic sense when related with new and more profitable forms of access and control of productive manpower. Within the context of the European expansion out of Europe (but not only, as we will see) that mode of labor access and control started by assuming the form of slavery.

Under different guises, the focus on the search for new regions and new ways to trade spices and gold has been the dominant explanation of traditional historiography about the objectives of European expansion, in general, about the Portuguese discovery of new sea routes, in particular. In the case of the latter, this is often linked to a widely affirmed intention to

contribute to the expansion of the Christian faith by converting or evangelizing non-Christians. As often happens, however, this approach hides more than it shows (²⁸). It hides, namely, the central, if not determinant role of European slavery and slave trade not only at the outset and in the consolidation of a new world-economy based on Western Europe, but also **much before** the latter's systemic emergence. In other words, often ideologically forgotten, the modern world-system was built also on the shoulders of millions of enslaved men, women, and children. This happened, I contend, at least at two different levels of historical import.

First, and as a practice involving the enslavement of Europeans, European slave trade traversed the centuries and was still very much alive when the Portuguese in the fifteenth century begun sailing southwards, along the West African coast. Within the continent and increasingly since at least the late eleventh century, slaving was a permanent and regular source of wealth and information and it is as such that it can be considered one of the instruments of the primitive accumulation of capital that, three or four centuries afterwards, contributed directly and indirectly to the emergence of a new Western European world-economy. Second, and as a fundamental objective of the Portuguese expansion by sea, the access, enslavement, transportation and trade of African men, women and children, soon became, from the fifteenth century onwards, one of the main sources of the financing capital that allowed the continuation of that expansion, first, of that of other European powers, afterwards. Notably, British, Dutch and French traders and sailors, supported by their respective states, entered in open competition with the Portuguese for their sources of slaves as early as the mid-fifteenth century (Lovejoy, 2002: 65), first, amongst themselves afterwards. In other words, it was also in the wide seas, in

²⁸ **One of the most interesting and well organized web sites about slavery has the title “Breaking the Silence”. Founded by UNESCO it is presented with a text emphasizing that the history of slavery “is largely untold although it lasted over 400 years, from the late 1400 to the 1850’s”. On the other hand, one has to add, the historical research and scholarship on slavery in all its forms and historical specificities has registered, throughout the last twenty years, an important development. What happens is that the results found out by the latter are not being made public outside their respective academic field. What I call above the European slave trade of Europeans, that is to say, the centuries old practice in Europe of selling individuals to the trans-Saharan routes and, through them, to Africa, to the Middle East, and to the Indian Ocean region has been as well, perhaps even more, absent from public knowledge and debate.**

the African coast and for the better possible access to slaves, and not only for gold and spices or within Europe, that the first episodes of an increasing intra-European competition for the hegemony of the emerging world-economy took place. Because these elements, intimately linked and essential to understand the nature of the relationship established between Europeans and Africans at the outset of the modern world-system are not usually taken into account, I will have to expand here a bit further about them.

In what concerns the first of the two levels, it is well known that during the long centuries of the first great expansion of Europe, towards the eleventh century and closely following the Christian counteroffensive against Islam, in particular with the Crusades and the reconquest of Sicily and Crete gradually changing the balance of forces in the Mediterranean to their advantage, Europeans were exporting to the Arab world, and, through it, to Asia and Africa, not only increasing amounts of silver, because, as Crouzet reminds us, “the balance of trade was against them” (2001: 28-29), but also of lumber, salt, woolen, linens, fur, arms, and swords (Idem). After the thirteenth century, with the decline of the Arab and Muslim industrial capabilities, the Europeans started as well to export manufactures (Crouzet 2001: 28). Often forgotten, however, is the historical reality, underlined by Michael McCormick in his monumental “Origins of the European Economy” (2001), that they were also consistently trading, throughout all this period, in “one ware (that)”, he writes, “we have met more frequently than all others combined. Whether we look at merchants serving the coast, trading on the Danube or traveling to Venice, over and over again we encounter the same merchandise: the human ware of slaves, Europeans hunted and captured across the continent and exported to foreign climes. Not only was their value high... They moved themselves over land (and)... they could even be forced to carry additional wares on their way to the markets” (2001: 733-4). Markets, of course, organized around what was an increasing demand ⁽²⁹⁾ of slaves in both of

²⁹ It is estimated that between the years 600 and 1600, a total of 4,820,000 slaves were transported through the trans-Saharan routes. From an annual average of 1,000 individuals in the period 650 to 800, their

the two, then, predominant axes of trade and shipping between Europe and the rest of the world: the first, reaching south, to the Aegean Sea and towards Asia; the second one, towards the north and the Black Sea where it would trifurcate: to continue overland to central Asia; towards the Caucasus, to Iran; and, finally, through the Bulgarian empire, mediated by the Russ traders beyond it and as far as the Indian Ocean trading system. The two axes met at Constantinople, while Italy straddled the routes leading to the Caliphate and the eastern empires (McCormick, 2001: 588-9, 618 and 693). Resulting from unending wars, from kidnapping, punishment, abandonment of children, self-enslavement and other origins, European slaves were consistently being walked and shipped through those directions of trade (Peterson, 1982: 115; McCormick, 2001: 744). A life of slavery in Africa and the Near East awaited them, “these children, women, and men, whose bodies **purchased the early wealth of Christian Europe**” (McCormick, 2001: 1-2, my emphasis, ML).

At the same time, the centuries old and generalized European trading in European slaves can be also considered as an important factor of globalization, in its more contemporary meaning, because it contributed decisively to the gathering of information about the rest of the world, to an extent only surpassed in Europe by that of the Christian church and its monastic orders. It contributed as well to a growing in-depth knowledge of trading networks, their main routes, other languages, the experience of markets, and, last but by no means least, to the specialization of traders determined by its practice and implementation. To be sure, this gradual and long-term accumulation of capital, of information, and of know-how, based on the profits from the European trading of European slaves became integral, after three or four centuries and a period of generalized crisis, to the emergence, in the long sixteenth-century, of the modern world-system.

numbers increased to an average of 8,700 a year in the period 900 to 1100 to stabilize at averages between 4,300 and 5,500 from 1100 to 1600 (Lovejoy, 2000: 26; Austen 1979a: 66)

In the Iberian Peninsula, as in the rest of the continent, the trade in human beings had a history of centuries. E. E. Rich (1967: 303; Wallerstein, 1974: 44) traces it in Portugal as far back as the year 1000 ⁽³⁰⁾. According to Manuel Heleno (1933: 145; quoted in Capela 1974: 40-41) slave trading in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was a regular activity in Portugal where, in open fairs and in conditions similar to those “of horse-trading” (Heleno 1933), sellers and buyers from all over Europe would meet and trade. When the Portuguese first started to explore the African coast, they had, consequently, not only a considerable experience but also a specific interest in slaving, to an extent that makes it possible to conclude, with Wallerstein, that “the Atlantic expansion was simply its logical continuation” (1974: 44). As Capela puts it, “the Portuguese and the Europeans did not become slavers in contact with the physical and social realities of the tropics. They were already slavers when they left to the tropics” (2002: 14). On the other hand, and as the Portuguese sailed southwards along the Atlantic coast they confirmed, there, that slavery was not only a generalized social practice but also a profitable object of long distance trading, both for Arabs and for Africans.

This leads us to what I called above the second level of historical importance of slavery in the systemic emergence and consolidation of a new world-economy. It explains why the Portuguese, in the vanguard of the European expansion out of Europe, since their first explorations in West Africa and as the contemporary chronicler Zurara 1450/1958) makes clear, were interested in slaves as a source of wealth, even more than gold, pepper and ivory. This is equally underlined by Capela who concludes: “it was naturally that the slave traffic inscribed itself, almost from the beginning, as the huge mine of [the Portuguese] conquests and discoveries in Africa” (1974: 41). Accordingly, in the 1430s, African slaving had already

³⁰⁾ It would perhaps be more correct to locate in the western rim of the Iberian Peninsula that existence of European slave trading, and not, as Rich does, in Portugal, for the simple reason that, in the year 1000, Portugal was still inexistent. As an independent geo-political identity and as such recognized by Castile and Aragon (as well as, later on, by the Pope), Portugal would only appear in 1128. Rich’s reference underlines, however, the fact that slaving had already a long tradition when the Portuguese transposed it as a regular activity to the West African coast in the fifteenth century and, consequently, that it does not constitute an innovation but, rather, continuity with already existent trading practices.

become not only an accepted but as well a regular activity, an integral part of the Portuguese expansion. It benefited, as discussed above, from their historical experience. At the same time, they were also able to increase their profits from the comparative advantage represented by their monopolized contact with Africa. They had thus become in the meantime a competitive source to the older networks of slave trade linking both the African continent and Europe with the rest of the world. As such, they started, in competition with local African chieftains and with roving Arabs, to supply slaves to the trans-Saharan routes. In the process, the Portuguese were able to bypass and replace the Muslim middlemen operating in those routes (Lovejoy, 2000: 36). What this means is that they managed to gain access directly to some of the markets sought by the Arab traders. Anticipating what would happen in the east coast of Africa after the late fifteenth century, they replaced them, although only to a small extent, to occupy some of their trading networks. With it, the dominant European search for slaves started not only to increase exponentially but underwent, as well, a decisive ethnic and geographic shift: from European slaves to African slaves; and from within Europe to the western coast of Africa, first; to its eastern coast, later on.

Around the mid-1440s, as the Portuguese reached the mouth of the Senegal River, slaves were already the main source of wealth among all the riches obtained through their African expansion (Saraiva 2001: 147). As Capela points out, they had become the main object of that expansion to an extent that all the other possible merchandises became considered as secondary (2002: 12). Their trade, directly and through the duties received from other slave traders by the Crown, had as well become by then one of the central sources of capital used to finance the maritime advancement towards the southern part of the continent along the African coast.

Still according to Zurara (³¹), in their very first contacts in Africa the Portuguese activity would almost exclusively revert to slaving expeditions, armed incursions uniformly ending with the capture of men, women and children. They were then taken to the Kingdom and sold or used as slaves. This would often be part of the first reconnaissance of the coast. Military raids and kidnapping were, consequently, the main instruments to capture potential slaves in the beginning of the Atlantic expansion. In the process, the Portuguese soon learned, however, that the continuation of slaving was not possible, that is to say, was not as profitable as it could be, without the direct involvement and cooperation of the local structures of power. The problem, then, was how to obtain such cooperation and by what means. But this was a problem whose response soon became obvious. To a great extent, it consisted in what was, as Wallerstein calls it, “an old expedient of empires: the cooptation of local chieftains” (1974: 187). With it, generalized aggression and violence ceased to be the direct way to obtain slaves. In particular after the 1480s (Arnold 2002: 137), generalized violence was changed into indirect and latent coercion in that co-option of the local powers. This was how a regular cooperation in the rounding up of slaves and their preparation to being shipped as soon as the Portuguese arrived was achieved. Because there was neither extra time nor military efforts wasted, the process became an easy and regular source of increasing profits. In exchange, the slave traders supplied the local chieftains with cheap goods, swords and other similar weapons, and/or protection. It was that change in the direct agency of slaving that allowed its transformation into an increasingly more efficient, regular and highly profitable trading activity.

The main strategy of the Portuguese became, consequently, to directly involve into slaving the various structures of power with whom they entered into contact. The objective was to transform them into their instruments of capture. Therefore they created not only their

³¹) For a brief but very enlightening reading of Zurara in this perspective, a perspective not usually assumed by Portuguese or others discussions of the subject-matter, see the important paper by Jose Capela 2002a: 7-26;

complicity but, as well, what became an increasing economic dependence. In the process, they contributed to transform previously peaceful regions into devastated fields of permanent internal war and misery. At the same time they would arm and consolidate (or not) the local structures of power by guaranteeing (or not) the security of their leading elites.

This strategy, as an innovative and efficient example, started to be used also by the Spanish in their overseas conquests (Kamen, 2003: 345; Wallerstein 1974: 187). In the following centuries it was followed as well by other Europeans: “As pioneers”, Kamen points out, “the [Portuguese] invited both imitation and competition. Portuguese experience in cartography and navigation, as well as in contact with the cultures of Africa and Asia, was exploited with profit by those who came after them” (Kamen: 2003). From the eighteenth century onwards, the co-option and manipulation of local power structures became one of the main features of colonial occupation and of modern colonialism. In other words, it was made into one of the foundational mechanisms in the unequal relationship between Europe and Africa. As such, it became an essential source of the increasing underdevelopment of the latter because at the service of the rapid economic growth of the former.

Around 1441 (Marques, 1991: 41), if not earlier, West African slaves were being regularly brought into Portugal. In particular in the fields of the southern half of the kingdom, they soon “started to substitute for whites everywhere” (Capela 1974: 41). In the 50 years between 1450 and 1500, an estimated 150,000 Africans were taken to and auctioned in Portugal (Arnold 2002: 37). Many of them were used in the south and in the sugar plantations of the Atlantic islands, but many others became employed as domestic labor in the cities. In Lisbon, for instance, and from something like ten thousand in a population of 200,000 people in the mid sixteenth century, the number of slaves increased to more than 66,000 in less than 30 years

(Capela, 1974: 43). African slaves were also sold to Castile and to Aragon (³²). Soon after, they started to be sold as well to other European regions. In fact, traders from all over Europe frequented the slave fairs in Lisbon or in Lagos, in the south. Specific institutions to deal with this increasing business, like the Casa dos Escravos (Sergio 1972: 46-7) were created by the Crown. As a visitor to Portugal in the fifteenth century witnessed, through them and, particularly, through the collection of duties, “the King receives more profits from the sale of slaves than through all the other tributes of his Kingdom combined” (Leon Rosmital, quoted in Ferreira 1885: 18-19; Capela 1974: 41-43)

From around 1532, Portuguese ships began as well increasingly to transport slaves to the newly-opened Americas and the sugar plantations in Brazil. By 1600, their number had already achieved more than 350,000 (Arnold, 2002: 37). As Wallerstein points out, “slavery followed the sugar” (1974: 88).

I've been emphasizing the central role of slavery at the outset of the capitalist world-economy because the genesis of the modern world-system is often reduced to a steady expansion and growth of intercontinental trade. The reality is that it also results from and only was possible through the access, control, restructuring, and exploitation of labor. The expansion of European slaving -- in the western coast of Africa, with the so-called Atlantic trade, and with what became a regular conjunction of labor, trade, and agricultural plantation production, was fundamental for that objective. It was this quantitative expansion and the correspondent linkage between trade and labor that recreated qualitatively the dynamics of the development of slavery in Africa and within Europe. From a socially and economically marginal activity often meaning, both to Christians and Muslims, the temporary loss of individual liberty rather than a

³² In relation to their Iberian neighbors, according to Kamen (2003: 345-6), “[t]he Portuguese were also the main suppliers of African slaves, and continued to be so throughout Spain’s imperial history. Well into the eighteenth century, Spanish settlers in South America relied for slaves on suppliers from Brazil.”

permanent change of social status (Kamen 2003: 17), slavery soon became, as Lovejoy points out, a fundamental, an essential institution for the development of European trade and geographical expansion out of Europe as well as, on the African continent, to the survival and self-reproduction of the local polities (³³). It became, in short, and to use here the designation used by Arrighi (1994: 49), capitalist slavery. To be sure, the growth and transformation of slavery from the fifteenth century onwards is, consequently, both a cause and a consequence of the emergence and consolidation of the modern world-system. Simultaneously, slavery and the slave trade impacted in irreversible ways its economy. In the new systemic context, this meant the economy of an expanding Western Europe, but not only. Its effects were also deeply felt both on the African polities where the slave trade had its sources and on the American regions where the slaves were transported and used as cheap, but essential, labor power.

On the other hand, the explosive growth of slavery and its transformation throughout the long sixteenth century must be related, as a consequence and as a response, to the fact that systemic overseas expansion had to face, invariably, chronic shortages of labor. This was a consequence of demographic conjunctures of effective scarcity and, even more often, of increasing levels of local resistance under a great number of forms and manifestations. In other words, the Europeans overseas had to confront “continually recreated shortages of labor power” (Arrighi 1994: 49) that limited their overseas expansion and the eventual settlement of new producers. New World slavery, consequently, “solved the colonial labour problem when no other solution was in sight” (Blackburn 1988: 13).

³³) As a main reference, Lovejoy uses here the well-known conclusions of M. I. Finley about the history of slavery in classical Greece. In particular he follows the characterization (found in Finley 1968: 310), of slavery being qualitatively transformed, in its historical evolution, from something socially marginal into an institution that became essential for socio-economic survival and self-reproduction. A more in depth distinction of slavery in Africa before and during the modern world-system is however still wanting. Without forgetting the triangular, reciprocal social and economic impact of the slave trade in Europe, in the Americas, and in Africa, I am here considering slavery, both before and after the outset of the modern world-system, as one of the fundamental instruments of the so called primitive accumulation of capital. In other words, the slave trade constitutes one of the factors that made possible the modern world-system by generating the capital, the labor power and the geographic space required for its historical emergence, consolidation and evolution.

Finally, and this is another often forgotten aspect, the expansion of capitalist slavery both in the Atlantic and within Europe is coincident with other processes of control and exploitation of labor. As a whole, they constitute a concrete part of the systemic reorganization of the access, control, and use of labor that characterized the emergence of the European world-economy. It constitutes, at the same time, a dynamic cause and a consequence of its evolvment. As such, it seems to bring together the past, the present, and the immediate future into a highly complex aggregate of articulated processes (Meillassoux 1975) and forms through which capital was able to exploit increasing amounts of productive labor power. Since the beginnings of the long sixteenth century and within the expanding space of the new economic and social system, we can observe synchronously and often side by side, labor processes whose nature is often **theoretically** contradictory and mutually exclusive. In practice, they rather complement one another into more or less harmonious combinations or articulations whose rationale or objective is no other than the highest profit. The evidence is that there was a multiplication of wage labor following the enclosure of land within the core. But, in the same context, we have an increased utilization of slave labor in Europe, as well as in the Americas, in Asia and in Africa. At the same time, processes that take the form of a second serfdom in Eastern Europe coexist with the *encomienda* system found in Hispanic America and the slave based sugar plantations of the Atlantic and Brazil. With a variety of locally defined specificities and variants, these processes of exploitation of the capitalist world-economy become articulated, harmonized and complementary to one another in function of a single objective: that of the system, its expansion and its reproduction. The highest possible margins of profit through the appropriation of the surplus that they were able to generate are their common denominator. They also made possible the increasing transference of labor for new activities and, notably, both to the European expansion out of Europe and to a manufacturing sector growing quickly both in rural and urban areas of production. With the exception of the usually called enclosure process of proletarianization, all the other forms of access, reorganization and use of labor are

often considered as being intrinsic and characteristic of older modes of social organization and production, as belonging to the past of an emerging world-system. They are, consequently, usually seen as constituting a considerable reactionary weight in its progressive evolution. I believe, however, that such a hypothesis can be rewardingly revised according to three or four main arguments and, first of all, the reality that they all have in common the fact that they are forms of human labor power in a situation of expanding, productive exploitation by capital.

As Cooper points out, “at the heart of the matter are the fundamentally different ways in which labor can be controlled and surplus extracted, and consequently the complex and varied impact that the penetration of Africa by European governments and capital has had” (1980: 17). Secondly, that as much or more than the fact that they are or appear as different aspects of control and access to labor what constitutes a decisive and intrinsic innovation in the new, emerging economic system is their systemic articulation and the complementarities established among them in the generation of an increasing surplus value and its appropriation by capital. That is to say, it is according to that articulation that the three layers of the system, its core, semi-periphery and periphery, were constructed, consolidated, and became increasingly distinct from its external arenas, from other trading systems, or from other world-systems.

Finally, that such an articulation of “modern” and “old” forms of labor access and control, instead of being a historically transient factor in the genetic process of the modern world-system appears, rather, as being one of its intrinsic characteristics. Under different disguises, such as forced labor, household production, and other forms of use, access, coercion, supply, and manipulation of labor, including unpaid domestic labor, we can find it in all periods of its development -- in the late fifteenth century as in the early twentieth-first century. To be sure, the attempt to remunerate labor with wages that are below what is necessary for subsistence, renewal, and self-reproduction by transferring to the workers and their households, as much as possible, the costs involved in that self-reproduction is, through such an articulation and

always, the main objective of capital. It is essential to remember, however, that the process of systemic expansion does not obey to pre-established recipes. It is neither automatic nor homogeneous. According to changes in time and place, each case of regional expansion or, better, of incorporation is specific in itself. And, every time, in each one of them, important distinctions are present and must be dealt with. Usually, they constitute the direct consequence of the way the proto-systemic structures of class and power are organized. They are also defined in accordance with the ways local peasants, farmers, traders, slaves and slavers respond to newly imposed processes of appropriation of surplus. From strategies of rejection and resistance, often assuming forms based on the use of violence, to sheer consent or acceptance, a vast myriad of responses are possible. Moreover, they are always present, in each and every case. As Cooper points out, “in order to understand the directions and blockages of economic development it is necessary to study both the class structures of precapitalist societies and the precise manner in which the extension of capitalism and colonial rule reshaped those structures” (1980: 16).

In the description of the first contacts of the Portuguese with Africa we easily recognized, as well, three of the main vectors of what was going to be their mode of geographic and economic occupation of overseas territories in the African continent in the following four or five centuries. In the first place, there was uniformly the attempt to explore, benefit and occupy the existent networks of long distance trade. Secondly, the establishments of some kind of political or diplomatic alliance with the local structures of power to co-opt, corrupt, and manipulate them to their advantage. Thirdly, and once materialized the two previous points, to gain some kind of monopolistic access and control both of the local resources and to cheap labor.

These characteristics and, in particular, the second and third ones are not only present in the first contacts between Portuguese and Africans. They can be found as well, after the mid eighteenth century, among the main features of modern European colonialism. This can

perhaps ground two interesting assertions. The first is the fact that there is no change or transformation in the processes followed by the core of the modern world-system in its relationship with Africa. The only substantial difference, materialized by the expansion of political structures of the core to its colonies, is that the exploitation became more centralized, more efficient and, consequently, even more profitable for capital. The second is that the historical continuity recognizable in the unequal relationship between Europe and Africa is based on the evidence that the basic nature of that relationship did not change with time. The hypothesis that it characterized as well the process of decolonization and, presently, that it continues to be present in the so called programs of structural adjustment been imposed on the continent by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, will be discussed below.

Still in what concerns slaving and the slave trade present at the origins of the European expansion it is obvious that they constituted one of the main instruments generating the gradual involvement of traders, soldiers, and missionaries with Africa, first, with other regions of the world, afterwards. This was how slave trade became one of the main socio-economic mechanisms generating the geographical expansion of the core and its capabilities of accumulation of capital. It was also, in a permanent causal relationship, the main instrument of formation and of systemic, dependent incorporation of the new peripheral areas of an evolving world-system. As such, it is going to deeply influence its ideological and cultural matrix, both within the core and in the periphery, with characteristics that are still very much alive today in the collective consciousness of the modern world-system. Characteristics such as Eurocentrism, intolerance, the ideology of underdevelopment, the collective trauma left by colonialism, prejudice, bigotry, and racism all have here an important part of its roots.

On the other hand, the high profits achieved in the slave trade, a consequence of increasing demand on what was seen as being practically ceaseless sources of cheap supply in conditions of direct access to African agents of capture, soon became an important, if not determinant,

aspect of the growing competition among Europeans. In relation to the Portuguese, it manifested itself as early as 1562 with the first incursions of British traders and pirates in West Africa. To a great extent, this was the way chosen to unequivocally transmit to the Portuguese, at the time both allies and formal enemies since they were under the Spanish Habsburgs, its declared enemy, that the British Crown did not accept the monopolies given to them by the Pope in the exploitation of the African coast and its riches. It represented as well the beginning of an increasing involvement by Britain in the trans-Atlantic slave trade (Capela 1974: 138). Before that, however, a more powerful threat to the Portuguese monopolizing interests was represented by the Dutch who, from the 1590's onwards and using as a kind of explanatory excuse the same reasons defended by the British against the Portuguese and their monopoly, turned their maritime might not only to directly compete with them in the access to increasing numbers of slaves but also to occupy a string of Portuguese fortresses and trading settlements both along the African coast and in Brazil. As a military, naval operation, this was quite easy because Portugal had become by then, as Capela describes it, "the poor part of the family in the Iberian alliance". This means that the forced alliance with Spain, made possible due to a dynastic crisis coupled with the growing military weakness of the Portuguese, increased even more their dependence in relation to their Iberian neighbors. At the same time, it destroyed their shipping, trading and naval capabilities. Capela also tells us that a great part of the profits gained by the Dutch as slave traders were necessary and were applied to finance their struggle against the Spaniards.

Portugal regained its independence 50 years afterwards. This led to the gradual re-appropriation of the slaving ports and settlements of Luanda and Benguela, as well as those in Brazil. Nevertheless, and as Arnold points out, the fortresses of Elmina and Axim were lost forever. With them, the direct access to the entire Gold Coast became almost impossible for the Portuguese traders (2002: 37). In the northern Indian Ocean, they had lost, as well, their trading preponderance. In what I see as an extremely astute decision in the defense of their interests,

they were however able to once again reorganize their trading activities. They did it in the convergence of the Brazilian necessities in labor, followed by those of other American colonies (Cortésao, 23-24), with the western African based slave trade. Contrary to what is often defended, that such a shift from a predominant trading activity under the Indian Ocean skies to those of the Atlantic was a considerable setback, I think that the opposite should be argued. Contrary to what was happening with the price of spices, the profit margins from the West African slave trade, as Lovejoy tells us, did not cease to increase in the meantime and continued to do so, although necessarily subjected to cycles of demand, up to the mid-nineteenth century (2000: 144). It is in such an accounting approach that the fact that between 1700 and 1800, the Portuguese transported to the other side of Atlantic something like 2,500,000 African slaves, has to be taken into consideration. This number was however twice surpassed by the number of slaves transported by the British: more than 5,000,000. In the same period of time, the Dutch carried something like 350,000 slaves, the French more than 1,100,000, the Danish and Swedish, about 70,000, and North Americans, later but consistent traders, 200,000 African slaves to the other side of the Atlantic (Lovejoy: 48, based on the Du Bois database).

To a great extent, the evolution of these numbers in relation to the territorial origins of the slavers and the levels of competition they imply allow us to pinpoint the systemic development of what was already or was going to become another of the basic characteristics of an emerging world-economy, that of the rise, consolidation and decline of successive hegemonic powers within the core. Although a good cause can and has been made about the fact that, before the first half of the seventeenth century, the role of systemic hegemony had already been assumed and exercised by the Italian Republics, in particular by Genoa and Venice (Arrighi: 1994), by Portugal (Modelski: 1988) and by Spain (Modelski: 1998; Kamen 2003: 499), a more acceptable hypothesis for me, following Hopkins (1982) is that only in the systemic history of Holland, in particular after 1640, can we recognize the first features of a hegemonic capitalist

power within the core of an evolving modern world-system. I base this assertion on two main factors. The first is the fact that it was with the Dutch that the main characteristics of a hegemonic state, as defined, precisely, by Giovanni Arrighi, can be found: the ability to exert within the system, and through a permanent combination of latent or active measures of coercion and consent, a degree of authority and influence that is assumed within the core as the most able to further and lead the general interests and objectives of capital accumulation (1994: 27-9). We do not easily find those characteristics either in the case of Portugal or Spain, or in that of the Italian Republics. In the latter case, Arrighi's hypothesis concerning Genoa as a hegemonic power "whose capitalist agencies... **led** and assisted" the overseas expansion of Portugal and Spain (1993: 40, my emphasis, ML), would be more acceptable if indeed a role of leadership, different from what was indeed an active financial participation similar to that of other European nations, could be historically asserted in the Iberian expansion. Besides that, it is also true that there was a high degree of "assistance" from Genoa, not only in technological and cartographic terms but also through the participation of navigators and traders, in the Iberian expansion. However, the historical evidence up to now is that neither in the case of Spain nor in that of Portugal can one effectively speak in terms of Genoese "leadership".

Secondly, and probably more importantly, because the existence of a hegemonic power at the outset of the modern world-economy would have negatively affected, even blocked, its emergence, its organization and the expansion of its networking. That would have allowed most probably a better historical alternative to what is today our world. Instead, and at least until new historical or logical evidence can be produced, I see the first period of the formation of a west European world-economy as constituting a period of creative chaos, to use here also a concept proposed by Arrighi. It was out of it, out of a commonly felt general crisis that the different instances and structures of what became a new systemic organization of social, political and economic relationships evolved simultaneously, in different locales and with different expressions.

The fact that there was not a single political, military and economic power sufficiently strong and active to assume the hegemonic leadership during that self-generating period of systemic formation is perhaps one of the main factors that made it possible. The first centuries of the long sixteenth century were still years of crisis and chaos. The difference from what had happened before is that order and reorganization, the restructuring of the social, political, and economic relations by the great powers of western Europe, were slowly emerging from chaos and made consistent into a new, increasingly more integrated, world-system. The appearance of one of those powers as the hegemonic power of that emerging world-economy was, consequently, a later process. It was, rather, the direct consequence of the increasing competition among them for the sources of profit and capital accumulation in all its forms.

The estimates presented above about the number of slaves exported by the main European countries can, consequently, be read in their relation with the emergence and succession of the first hegemonic powers of the world-economy, the United Provinces and Great Britain. Neither the liberation of the former from Spain, paid in great part with the profits of the slave trade, nor its quick development as an economic hegemonic power can be dissociated from the Dutch aggressive and efficient involvement with slavery. To a great extent, they were the first European power to generalize the introduction of firearms in the continent by using them as currency in the local acquisition of slaves. Through it, they soon were able to dominate not only the local markets for the acquisition of slaves, but also their transportation to the other side of the Atlantic and their sale in the Portuguese and Spanish possession. The so called triangular Atlantic trade was, with the Dutch, elevated to new, higher levels of profitability.

Two centuries afterwards, the emergence of Great Britain as the hegemonic power of the world-economy cannot be understood if not related with the profits of the slave trade. By obtaining after the war of Succession the almost exclusive right to supply slaves to the Spanish

colonies, the so called Asiento, the British slavers soon ended up substituting the Dutch in the hegemonic control of the Atlantic. Through it they started to get as well the biggest share of the profits of the slave trade. As Arrighi points out, this was England's most important gain soon becoming, "for England, what Levant trade had been for Venice and Baltic trade for Holland – its "mother trade" (1994: 199). This assessment is complemented by Wickins when he points out that "the fortunes of London, Bristol and, above all, Liverpool were founded at least partly on the profits of slaving" (1981: 16).

Increasing slaving and the consolidation of the Atlantic trade also contributed to the quick expansion of the British navy, making of it the biggest maritime power of the time. In connection with it, with the new world-markets accordingly opened up and with a European phase of increasing prosperity the British soon was able to fulfill their objectives of becoming the leading industrial producer of the world. In relation to their more direct competitors, they were historically in the better position to supply the African and American markets (Wickin 1981). Slavery and its profits constitute a founding block, among the most important, for the existence of the capitalist world-economy.

All this explains as well why the estimates presented above about the flow of slaves out of Africa also show an uninterrupted ascending curve in the same period of time. The main reason is, of course and as already discussed, the renewed shortages of labor power that regularly affect the possibilities of a continued systemic expansion overseas. But that was also a direct consequence of the fact, often forgotten, that slave labor force seldom reproduced itself to natural levels of self replacement and, consequently, needed to be renewed periodically from the outside (Lovejoy 2000). In what concerns the Atlantic triangular space, the ascending trend followed by the slave trade continued to manifest itself till the last two decades of the eighteenth century. It was then that the effects of war in Europe coinciding with the abolitionist or anti-slavery campaign which took off as a public cause, mostly in England but not only,

from the 1870's onwards (Langford 2002: 128) became increasingly felt. As direct consequences, it made more and more difficult the maritime links between the two sides of the Atlantic. At the same time, it led to an accentuated increase of slaving prices in the African coast and so to a corresponding decline of the respective rates of profit. By that time, however, a considerable part of the Portuguese slave trade had already shifted from the Atlantic coast of Africa to that of the Indian Ocean and there, increasingly, from what I called above the Sofala coast towards the southern part of the continent. The new cargoes of slaves to the Americas and elsewhere would from then on originate in increasing numbers and until the very late nineteenth century from the coast of what is today's Mozambique.

To be sure, the enslavement of central and eastern Africans and their trade, through the usually called Red Sea and East African routes towards the Indian Ocean trading system, was a very old Arab-dominated practice. It affected a vast territorial region where, not always in a competitive way, it was efficiently connected with the equally Arab-controlled and relatively more important slaving networks of the trans-Saharan long-distance trading route. To give an idea of the importance of those routes in relation to the post-sixteenth century Atlantic slave trade by Europeans we can use some of the estimated numbers of slave exports from Africa as presented in Lovejoy (2000: 47, Table 3.1). According to them, from 1500 to 1600, the number of African slaves exported through the three Arab-dominated routes was of the order of 750,000 -- 100,000 of them from East Africa -- compared with about 320,000 slaves exported through the Atlantic. What happened in the following two centuries was that while the Atlantic trade increased exponentially, to 1,348,000 in the period from 1600 to 1700, and to 6,090,000 in the following century, that of the Sahara stabilized around 700,000 in both periods and after having achieved much greater amounts in the centuries before the beginning of the competition increasingly offered by the Portuguese. However, with the temporary decline registered in the Atlantic trade in the eighteenth century, the flow of slaves through the Red Sea and East Africa

trading networks registered important increases: from 100,000 to 200,000 in what concerns the former; and from 100,000 to 400,000 in the East African slave route (Lovejoy 2000: 47).

The small number of Portuguese who in the seventeenth century were settled in the east coast of Africa both employed and, sporadically, traded in African slaves. These were sent to India, to the Malabar Coast, the location of their main administrative center in the Indian Ocean. Usually, however, they were involved with other objectives, considered more profitable and less complicated than to compete with the Arab controlled slave trade. Another reason for the insignificant, marginal involvement of the Portuguese with slaving in the eastern coast of Africa was the fact that it was forbidden by the Crown to use Portuguese ships with that objective.

This had started to change after the mid-seventeenth century both in qualitative and, mainly, in quantitative terms. In fact, and as already discussed, immediately after its liberation from the more or less imposed Iberian alliance with Spain, the Portuguese Crown became directly interested in promoting the development of slaving in the east coast of Africa and, to start with, among those very few and, at least in the beginning, somehow uninterested of her subjects living or settled in Mozambique and, principally, as a way to supply the labor needs of Brazil (Lucio de Azevedo, 202; Capela: 145). With such an objective the Crown published a decree in 1642 lifting the embargo previously imposed on the transport by Portuguese ships of slaves to India. The proviso had, however, an important condition: that they had as well to transport to Maranhao, in Brazil, one-third of the numbers shipped to India (Capela 1971). Replicating what had happened before in the West Coast of the continent, this active role of Lisbon in the development of slave trading in the east coast of Africa and its link both with India and with Brazil, in particular with the important Maranhao region (Cortesao 1971: 17; Capela 1978: 143), soon started to give results. By 1645, with the Angolan slave sources still controlled by the Dutch, an increasing Portuguese slave trade from Mozambique had been added not only to

their operations in the Atlantic coast but, as well, to the already well established plundering of human bodies by the Arabs in the Swahili coast, up north. Not only in the kingdom but, also, in India, Portuguese shipping companies, bringing together nobility and traders, soon were formed. They started to operate in the eastern coast of Africa to an extent that, in the eighteenth century, the profit from the slave trade out of the Sofala coast, in particular that destined to the French islands of Madagascar and Mascarenhas, had already surpassed all other sources of profit in the Mozambican coast, including those from the trade in gold and ivory (Boxer 1969: 55; Capela 1971: 146). At the same time, the regular transport of slaves from Mozambique in ships from India to Brazil became a common occurrence as a coetaneous observer of such a triangular carter tells us (Andre Joao Antonil, 1711 (1922): *Cultura e Opulencia do Brazil por suas Drogas e Minas*, Lisboa; Sao Paulo: Editorial Melhoramentos, p. 91). To be sure, those new routes contributed to a very quickly increase of slaving in the Mozambican coast and its hinterland. But there was more: to face the increasing acts of piracy and aggression that, effectively, had destroyed her monopoly over the resources of the West African coast, the Portuguese Crown started a procedure till then strictly avoided: the selling of licenses to foreign slave traders whom, Spanish, first, from other nationalities, afterwards, were thus allowed to compete against one another and with the Portuguese, in exchange for taxes and licenses paid, as a main contractual condition, in silver or gold. To a great extent, it was those profits from slavery, complementing those that started once again to inflow from Brazil that formed the base for the political economy of the Portuguese Crown in the period following its liberation from Spain and while the attempt to regain some of the older sources of profit were being put into practice. The old times of splendor, wealth, conspicuous consumption and influence appeared however as a lost paradise for the Portuguese.

Nevertheless, Lovejoy estimates that the shift from part of the supply of slaves from the west to the east coast of Africa represented an increase of more than 400% in the number of slave exports from East Africa from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century and from 100,000 to

400,000 or about half a million people the number of eastern African slaves in the eighteenth century. While two thirds of them were sent to supply the traditional markets of the Muslim world, the remaining followed to locations in the Indian Ocean and to the Americas (2000: 62).

Besides the increasing slave trade out of the Sofala coast, by Arab, by Portuguese and by traders from other origins, the involvement of the Crown in that new phase of exploitation of African labor had a further consequence: the transfer southwards with the correspondent setting up, in 1671, of the central services of customs and duties, till then centralized in the Mozambique Island, in the small settlement of Lourenco Marques, overlooking the Delagoa Bay. Two main reasons can explain that administrative transference: first, the fact that the dominant area of influence as it was felt in the Sofala coast by the Portuguese had started to shift from the northern Indian Ocean to the southern part of it, and to the Atlantic, including, as we will see, to the Cape region; secondly, and as an obvious consequence, that Lourenco Marques, instead of the Mozambique island to the north, was able to guarantee a more efficient safeguard of the interests both of the Crown and of those involved in the control, access and sale of labor and other resources from the region. To a great extent it implied as well, contrary to what had happened in the previous centuries, a greater interest from Lisbon in relation to the southeastern coast of Africa from now on considered, in terms that start to antecede the basic vectors of modern colonialism, as an important source of resources to be placed at the service of the European metropolis. Notwithstanding their intensions, those objectives will nevertheless continue to be devoid throughout the next two centuries of any type of effective materialization, for reasons that can and will be related with what, in the meantime, was happening in the most southeastern region of the Indic coast, in the Cape.

Before the establishment of the first European settlers in the region in 1652, the Cape of Good Hope, first reached by the Portuguese in 1486, was not only frequently used but, also, evaluated, in sequent occasions, as a port of scale, assistance and supply by the latter, first, by

the Dutch, by the French and, finally, by the British. Nevertheless, it was always turned down as not suitable for the objectives and, consequently, kept out of the route that, circumnavigating Africa started to be followed in particular from the early 1600's onwards by an increasing number of ships linking Europe with the northern Indian Ocean. One of the main reasons for this shipping increase was the same that led to more than eighty years of sustained curiosity about the naval possibilities of the Cape and, finally, to its European settlement: the foundation of important mercantile companies destined to compete, not only with those, private or not, that had been created in Portugal and Spain, but mainly between themselves, for the trading profits possible to be made in the eastern world. They were, first, the British East India Company, formed by the Crown in 1600, and, two years after, the Dutch East India Company or VOC (³⁴) formed not by the state but by a group of private traders, the Council of Seventeen in Amsterdam. And it was the latter that, fifty years after its foundation, sent a handful of officers and their families to establish in the Cape one of its exclusive settlements, that is to say, a garrison destined to serve Dutch ships in their voyages to and from the East. They were supposed to produce their own food and that needed by the ships in transit, supply them with fresh water and organize themselves for survival. They were as well under strict orders to block the access and turn away those ships and sailors sailing under other flags even if, as often happened, in situations of danger. The word monopoly was by then assuming new, and no doubt more modern, meanings.

In 1658, the total number of European settlers in the Cape were 113, including wives and the children in the meantime locally born. This year is somehow important for our account because it was then that a group of 187 slaves, shipped from the east coast of Africa, arrived at the settlement. The main reason for this was, of course, labor shortages in great part determined by

³⁴ The Generale Vereenigde Nederlanstche Geoctroyeerde Oostindische Compagnie or General United Netherlands Chartered East India Company, for its full name. VOC abbreviates Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie or United East India Company.

the fact that, after an initial period of good relations with the local Khoi populations, generally designated in Dutch as Hottentots, the methods used by the settlers to make them work, use of their women and occupy, from year to year, increasing portions of the best and more fertile land, led to a deteriorating situation and a long period of rebellion ensued. In the meantime, and like the Portuguese up north, without much enthusiasm and with small returns, they had started to produce wine and wheat (Wickins 1981: 16). Slowly, they started to expand to an extent that conflicts over land started to affect the settlement, to accentuate labor shortage and to require new solutions. It was then, more or less at the same time of the first war of the Dutch settlers against the Khoi and as one of those solutions, that they decided that the import and use of slaves was necessary to guarantee the good functioning of the settlement. In fact, that can be considered as the first attempt of many similar attempts in the future to solve a problem that soon was going to become endemic: that of the scarcity and access to labor in order to fulfill increasing needs for manpower. And that was how in a little more than one century, in 1802 and according to a contemporary and careful observer who visited the Cape colony, its population was constituted by 61,947 individuals, of which 21,746 were Europeans, 14,447 Hottentots, and more than 25,750 slaves (Anthony Trollope, 1877 (1987): South Africa, Volume 1, Gloucester: Alan Sutton, pages 10-20).

To a great extent, we have here in a nutshell, in an almost perfect ideal typical way, what is going to be the prime mover leading to the transformation of southern Africa into Southern Africa, that is to say, into an integrated and structured region within an evolving world-economy. It was the needs and requirements of the European settlement constructed to serve core objectives of capital accumulation that determined a conjuncture characterized by local resistance and scarcity of labor that imply, as the only alternative, the use of slaves, first, of migrant labor from all over the region, afterwards. A process that historically implied and determined a type of regional formation based on the slow but increasingly dependent incorporation between suppliers of labor and their users. As we have seen, those suppliers

started to be the slave traders of the Atlantic African coast. Later on they were substituted by those of the southeastern Indian Ocean coast. With the abolition of slavery, in the late nineteenth century, the access to labor started to be made through its direct, physical coercion, under the form of forced, unfree labor, a situation that, to a certain extent is still present today in Southern Africa as one of its basic, essential, regional problems.

On the other hand, and to complete more credibly this approach, we have to add to it the gradual occupation of the best lands by a growing community of settlers. That was what happened, from 1657 onwards, and as some of the Cape settlers were allowed, both by the VOC and by local Khoi groups, to start small farms for food production. Soon, however, they were expanding and multiplying to an extent that their existence and operation began to interfere with the Khoi access to pastures and land. This led to the first armed campaigns against the Khoi and to the gradual loss, by the latter, of their access to the Cape pasture lands (Elphick 1985). Soon after, the settlers were practicing extensive wheat cultivation and raising livestock – in part robbed from the Khoi. New administrative centers were established as the area increasingly being occupied by the Europeans now quickly expanded northwards against and notwithstanding the permanent and frontal resistance of the Khoi. At the same time, in face of increasingly stronger and well armed communities of settlers and as a consequence of the non-military nature of the VOC, the centrality and authority of the company in the region started to be eroded. This is one of the reasons why, with the Napoleonic wars, Britain was able to easily take temporary hold of the Cape to return it back to the Dutch in 1803 and before occupying it, once again and for the next one hundred years, in 1806. The way was thus open to what I call the systemic construction of Southern Africa. Before that, however, slavery and the slave trade had to be brought to an end and new forms of access, control and exploitation of African labor and resources created and implemented. This will be the objective of modern colonialism and of its imposition on the peoples of Africa, in general, of those of southern Africa, in particular.

8. THE ROADS NOT TAKEN

The increase of slavery coincided with the beginnings of its end. It coincided as well, both as a cause and as a consequence, with the beginnings of the incorporation of important regions of the continent in the modern world-system (Wallerstein (1986: 47-76 and 101-138; 1989: 30). As we have seen this was a period also characterized by economic growth. On the other hand, and although still rising at the time to levels never before achieved, the evidence is that the dominant slave trade had started to become, as Rodney puts it, “a fetter to further capitalist development” (1982: 137). In fact, and almost by definition, slave labor was not efficient. It did not reproduce itself and, consequently, needed the existence of external arenas to be regularly renewed. Moreover, it required permanent and expensive forms of control and did not constitute directly a consumer market. On top of all these negative characteristics it could by then be profitably replaced by the production and productivity of machines whose manufacture, sale, use, production, and maintenance would constitute further growing factors for economic expansion. Although new forms of organization, management, and technological articulation of slave labor were tried, namely in Cuba with important results at a quantitative level of sugar production and the supply of the world-market, the evidence was that, due to its rising costs of recruitment and sustenance, slavery was by then condemned. A still dominant form of control and utilization of labor of the modern world-system had reached its in-built limits. At the same time, under the competition of the still expanding Cuban production but not only, the profits from the slave based sugar industry had by then started to contract while its relative contributions to the core’s economic welfare declined (Wickins 1981: 17).

The final abolition of slavery, although still far away in time, will be mainly determined by the convergence of all these material factors. As Delacampagne points out: “it was not for moral reasons but, rather, for economic causes that slavery and slave trade ended up being abolished” (2002: 78; Ruano-Borbalan, 2003: 48-9). Slavery, in the second half of the 18th century, was quickly becoming unprofitable as its articulation with the labor needs of modern industry, an industry born out of war, was becoming less possible. Consequently, slave labor and, in particular, slave trade started to be combated, rejected, and gradually replaced by relatively different structures of exploitation.

In Africa, as well, the conditions previously established to make possible the efficient and regular supply of slaves were gradually abolished. This happened first in the west coast of the continent. For more than three centuries it had been the main Atlantic source for slaves. As the regular demand from the other side of the ocean started to decline, a first response was to increase prices. Soon, however, different forms of control and exploitation of labor were locally started to expand quickly. The local exploitation of land and the access to resources, in particular to the raw materials increasingly demanded by the core, assumed as well new formal characteristics. This was the origin of the so-called “legitimate trade”, as it started to be called by the abolitionists, by legislators, by the press, by public opinion, by politicians and by travelers. It meant that all forms of trade were permissible as long as it was not slave-trade. In a first phase, the main beneficiaries of legitimate trade were the reformed African structures of power, in connection with shippers and traders of the core. Also in the meantime, an important parcel of the continuing demand for slaves and consequently of the slave trade shifted to the eastern coast of the continent. It established, there, a kind of *modus vivendi* with what

continued to be there since the 7th century and in the so called Swahili coast, to the north of Sofala, a regular flow of slaves to the Middle East, the Indian sub-continent, and to China. The Europeans started consequently to exploit the part of the coast to the south of Sofala, in southern Africa. For about one hundred years, it became an alternative source of slaves both to the Indian Ocean planters of the French dominated islands and, in particular, to Brazil and Cuba

Made “illegitimate”, slave trade became the object of naval measures to obstruct it. These were usually implemented by the British navy and, primordially, all over the Atlantic. More than effectively avoiding the continuation of trade, the first results of those blocking measures were a generalized increase in prices. Gradually, however, they started to increasingly depress its rates of profit. From the perspective of the traders and their companies based on both sides of the Atlantic, slaving started to be less profitable and, consequently, less interesting as a dominant economic activity. At a different level of decision-making but equally decisive for the decline of Atlantic slaving was the legislation approved and published in the various American territories, to cease there the use of slave labor. It forbade as well the access of slave traders and slave ships to their respective ports.

As a substitution for the “illegitimated” slave trade, “legitimate trade” was mainly about those products in increasing demand within the core, that is to say, those products needed to fulfill input requirements of industrial production. In Western Africa, they were mainly export cash-crops and namely, among them in this phase, groundnuts, palm produce, cotton, rubber, and timber (besides, of course, the traditional “luxury” goods such as gold). Legitimate trade

included as well the regular supply in food, fresh water and other needs of the ships demanding the region.

Although in a later phase, legitimate trade started as well to develop in the southern coast of southern Africa. Often it was coexistent with the continuation of slave-trade. Its main demand was for ivory, vegetable oils, hides, and food products. Like in the western coast, the latter were mainly destined for local consumption and to the supply of trading and whaling ships, including those from the United States (Hedges 1978). In the northern part of the coast, in Quelimane, peasants had started much before to produce food crops and oil seeds to supply passing ships and coastal settlements of the south (Vail and White 1980: 120; O’Laughlin, 2003: 516). In both the western and eastern coasts of Africa, the new conditions of demand soon involved actively former slavers, including local elites and their structures of power. Moreover, and as Stavrianos tells us, it soon started as well to “involve small farmers who could produce... th[ose] products with little capital, and using family labor, hired hands and traditional tools”. This was how it soon became “a mass trade involving the mass of the people” (Stavrianos, 1981: 203). At the same time, and likewise, “the imports no longer were destined only for the local elites, but rather for a mass domestic market generated by a more equal distribution of income” (Stavrianos, 1981: 204). The world market, in short, was expanding. From the second half of the eighteenth century onwards and at least till the first years of the twentieth century, the impact of this expansion, as well as of the generalization of local attempts to resist or control its destructive consequences, became a dominant, characteristic trend in a great part of Africa, in general, in southern Africa, in particular.

It was the slow ending of the slave trade that cleared the way for new types of production and supply for the world market. The transformations accordingly experienced by the local social structures of production and, with them, the position gradually assumed by those regions and their elites in the international division of labor, led to what Wallerstein and other authors following him consider to be the beginnings, since around 1750, of a first phase of incorporation of Africa in the periphery of the capitalist world-economy (Wallerstein, 1973: 7-9 and 1978: 104, 113; both reprinted in 1986: 47-76 and 101-138; Stavrianos, 1981: 261-262) (³⁵). To be sure, these transformations did not affect negatively, at least until the mid-nineteenth century, the local elites and their structures of power. It was, most probably, the contrary that in general happened (Wallerstein, 1986: 104). As they figured out what was happening they were able to quickly put into practice new and probably even more profitable ways to substitute the type of slave-trade based exchanges of the past. Traditionally involved with slaving, the basis of their wealth and power although probably not of their political organization (Hopkins, 1973: 106), they tended gradually to become as well the main intermediaries for the coordination of production and export of the “legitimate” products demanded by the core within or from their respective regions. In the confluence with an experience of centuries of control of the African segments of long distance routes of trade, whether in buying the local production or in selling it to European buyers, their local production determined by an increasing demand quickly gave origin to strong links of relationship with an expanding world market. It led, as well, in some cases, to what can be

³⁵ These dates are important because they imply a new periodization in the study of Africa, taken into consideration the first moments of its incorporation as qualitatively different from the colonial period that starts at the end of the nineteenth century with the Berlin Conference. This is a periodization different from the “usual” historical periodization, for reasons that I hope make clear below. The great majority of the historical works about the continent consider the year 1885 as the main chronological conclusion for the period starting in the 1500’s, and the beginning of another, that of “colonial domination”, without taking into consideration the qualitatively different nature of the period between 1750 and the mid-1880’s.

described as the first serious attempts by African rulers, aware of the technological gap that allowed the Europeans to dominate them and their peoples, to catch up and “modernize” (Wickins 1981: 18).

How to explain this relative independence? Three arguments must be pointed out: first, the fact that it happened and in part coincided with what was a long period of chaos, conflict, and heightened competition within the core. Secondly, and as pointed out by Rodney, because “it was only after European firearms reached a certain stage of effectiveness in the 19th century that it became possible for whites to colonize and dominate the whole world...: the same technological changes which created the need to penetrate Africa created the power to conquer Africa” (1972B: 196 and 151). Thirdly, because the productive demands of the core had not yet a counterpart in their possible supply by the African periphery and, at the same time, an important segment of an emerging public opinion created with abolitionism was against other forms of relationship with the continent, as stated for instance in the Report of the Select Committee of 1895 (Stavrianos: *Idem*; Reynolds, 1974). The result was the relative contraction of local domination by core agents and interests creating the space where it was possible the emergence and evolution of, as Davidson describes it, a multiplicity of local instances of a relative autonomy and political power of African structures of power that maintained and even increased their relations with the world-economy throughout the first phase of the African process of peripheralization (1978: 62-71). Following other historians like Hopkins (1973: 48) or Wickins (1981: 18), Davidson goes as far as to consider such an exercise of local power as constituting the basis for the emergence of what he calls forms of “indigenous modernization”. According to him, these forms flowered in particular around the early 1820’s, that is to say,

when the overseas slave trade had already started to suffer the first effects of the abolition process and as, consequently, the process of peripheralization was increasing (Wallerstein 1973: 47-66). Although a certain prudence of judgment (as much as new and more in depth research about this period) seems to be required, it is perhaps possible to interpret this situation as representing the beginnings in certain regions of the continent of what could have perhaps become some kind of “a non-colonial African peripheral capitalism” as one of the possible historical alternatives to what became the setting up of modern colonialism.

Also in this approach closely followed by a large number of African historians, Davidson seems to have little doubt about such a possibility: “It may be well to emphasize”, he writes “that these export-production booms were the work of African innovation within **existing** structures... One can only speculate on the use that these economies might have made of that modernization if they have remained independent... As it was, each of these innovators was broken on the wheels of colonial policy, even though each of them behaved precisely as the kind of modernizing agent which colonial policy was supposed to promote” (Idem, 64-69).

Discussing this same point, Rodney concludes by drawing attention “to the necessity for reconciling a recognition of African development at least up to 1885 with an awareness of the losses simultaneously incurred by the continent in that epoch, due to the nature of the contact with capitalist Europe”. Until then, he adds, Africans were “**still making decisions**” as “already forces were at work which caused European capitalists to insist on, and succeed in taking over, command” (1972B, 148; my emphasis, ML).

Another characteristic of this period in many regions of the continent was the fact that not only slaving but also locally supplied goods including agricultural production, started to register increasing profits determined by a constant and equally increasing demand, while the imported products, in general, were becoming cheaper and more accessible. In other words, this was a phase characterized by world-economic terms of trade that, relatively to what had happened in the past and, for that matter, was going to happen in the future, benefited the African producers and suppliers of labor, including slave labor. More than anything else, it was the exceptionally favorable terms of trade registered by the African products, in particular during the first half of the nineteenth century (Stavrianos, 1981: 204) that prepared those elites to benefit and profit from the considerable changes in progress. In the meantime however, a meantime of about 100 years, the forms assumed by the incorporation of Africa in the capitalist world-economy or, better, the gradual peripheralization of those regions, appear to have not only benefited those elites and their structures of power but, as importantly, to respect and maintain their considerable degree of political power, innovative autonomy, and decision making.

On the other hand, it was most probably those highly profitable and favorable terms of trade and the more or less relatively easy access to them that constituted one of the main reasons why African elites and traders ended up being replaced in this role -- after confronting, increasingly since the mid-nineteenth century, the growing competition from European settlers, merchants, and companies soon strongly defended by the new European administrations and their repressive colonial machineries. Although not determinant, the pressures by those European traders and companies on their respective governments were one of the reasons that contributed to the growing competition within the core for the occupation of Africa and the

sequent partition of the continent, the main factors leading to the slow but generalized collapse of the African processes of localized growth. Following in that order their missionaries and explorers, colonial settlers, colonial companies, and colonial administrations started then to assume as theirs the totality of the local economic initiatives and their control, organization, and profits. In plantations, mining, or trading, the existing structures were brought to an end or systematically distorted (Stavrianos, 1981: 196-97). To be sure, it was in particular after 1848, with British finally assuming the role of the world hegemonic power and proclaiming her free-trade imperialism that the European attention vis a vis Africa started to change. Not only through new forms of local administration but, as well, through the sustained arrival of Europeans looking for easy wealth in the splendor of empire-making. And, in less than thirty years, the African attempts for different, alternative forms of systemic incorporation in the capitalist world-economy had already entered into collapse.

With it, the local elites, characterized by Hopkins as African aristocracies living between present and past relations of production (1973: 143) and their innovators were plummeted into a gradual but irreversible dissolution. To Davidson, this meant the end of what he considers to have been the budding pre-colonial middle classes of the continent as an economic group or, as he also describes them, as an embryonic class of capitalists (1978: 127). Following Terence Hopkins, I would rather characterize those processes as obvious, but aborted, historically possible alternatives, simultaneously rooted on but different from African tradition and both inspired but against European modernity, that is to say, they were different from the crushing wheels of the colonial incorporation of the continent as part of the periphery of the evolving capitalist world-system which, to impose itself, had first to destroy them. Leading to the better

or to the worst, we will never know, those aborted processes became, in short, the roads not taken.

On the other hand, and as much as the relative prosperity locally registered in a first phase of the African incorporation in the capitalist world-economy, the crushing wheels of colonialism were the direct or indirect result of new and very specific world-systemic changes in their impact on the continent, at two different but interrelated levels. Firstly, because the unprecedented economic expansion registered throughout more than twenty years came to an end bringing with it the beginning of a new critical phase of the world-economy, the nature and conditions of previous forms of core relationship with Africa also started to change. Secondly, because, at the same time, the till then undisputed British power over the periphery had equally started to contract as it was increasingly disputed by other European states. This means, in short, that the dominant supremacy of Great Britain over the world-system was starting as well to decline. And that it is in this perspective that the 1884-85 Berlin Conference, convened to discuss further measures leading to the complete abolition of the slave trade but ending up dividing the continent among the world powers of the time, with the exception of a careful lurker, the United States, clearly appears as further evidence of that same weakening of the British hegemony.

In the collapse of what is usually designated as informal empire, the continent was divided and distributed among increasingly competitive core powers and increasingly placed under their direct rule and direct exploitation. As Wallerstein concludes, it was “the combination of the growing competition of British (and other European) merchants versus indigenous Africans

and the growing challenge of German, French, and American industry to British world market hegemony (that) together led to the dislocation of the balance that sustained “informal empire” and hence to the scramble for Africa” (1986 (1978): 113).

For a more in depth understanding of those mechanisms of change so overwhelmingly and simultaneously affecting not only that colonial or, better, imperial creation of Southern Africa but also the powers and interests involved, I will have to make, first, an as brief as possible detour about the economic and political development of the modern world-system that led to colonialism. This will be the main objective of the following chapter.

IV

THE SYSTEMIC MAKING OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

1 ACCUMULATION OUT OF WAR

Capital accumulation is the main characteristic that makes the modern, capitalist world-system differentiable from all the other world-economies and empires that historically preceded it. Usually defined as the process of increasing the stock of man-made means of production, it is the main source of economic growth in the short and medium run (Black, 1997: 48). This definition would be incomplete and misleading, however, if not qualified: accumulation **must be ceaseless**. This means that each instance of accumulation only makes economic sense in relation to previous as well as to future instances of accumulation. It is in this sense that accumulation of capital is, as well, **the main long -term process of economic growth of the world-economy**.

On the other hand, capital accumulation is dependent of another defining characteristic of historical capitalism. Without the renewal of conditions leading to world economic expansion, in geographic terms but not only, the rate of accumulation tends to decline and becomes unfeasible. The outcome is then another systemic crisis. New forms of economic expansion are, uniformly, the way followed by capital to overcome its crises by reaching for the provision of new revenues.

Quoting Marx to synthesize the double process of ceaseless accumulation and expansion of capital in their permanent interrelationship, Frobel et al wrote that “expansion (*Verwertung*) and accumulation are the objective basis of the movement of capital and unlimited appropriation of abstract wealth is the sole motive of the capitalist insofar as he functions as the conscious representative of this movement” (Frobel et al, 1997: 73). They add: “In other words, the determining force behind capitalist development is expansion and accumulation, and not an alleged absolute tendency towards the extension and deepening of the wage-labor/capital relationship or of the productive forces” (Frobel et al, 1997: 74)

These characteristics are present at the creation: they are part of the very matrix of the modern world-system. The attainment and definition of new geo-economic spaces, a consequence of the western European expansion within and out of Europe that started in the fifteenth century, was one of the necessary conditions for the materialization and further consolidation of the capitalist world-economy. In particular because expansion by land and through the sea co-existed with the emergence of most of the central features of the modern state within the core and resulted into the world extension of an increasingly more productive division of labor. Consequently, the creation of the modern world-system is the structural result of a coincidence in time and in space of those essential conditions. A coincidence whose development was possible because the political units and other institutions then existing or in formation in a Western Europe **in crisis** were politically too weak and too divided to confront and neutralize the mutual, interrelated strengthening of those conditions. That was what had happened before in many other regions of the world. Also at the time, the rest of the world lacked the power and the unity to confront the arrival and expansion of the Europeans bringing with them what was

to become a new, radically different world order. **These are also the reasons why the creation and expansion of the modern world-system was neither a result nor an evidence of strength or superiority. It was, rather, an expression of the weakness brought about in Europe by a generalized economic and social crisis,** characterized by war, social upheaval, disease and institutional destruction. What this means is that we can not consider the formation of the capitalist world-economy in the long sixteenth century (1450-1640) as the European-based achievement it so often is considered to have been. It was, rather, the unintended consequence of the junction on time and space of random social, political and economic features that were well known from the past and had regularly been confronted and dealt with during the previous three thousand years of the history of the humanity. In fact, previous world-economies had not lasted long before internal dynamics transformed them into new empires or, perhaps more often, being conquered and swallowed by old ones. The “survival” of the modern world-economy and its expansion has nothing to do, on the contrary, with a supposed superiority of Europe.

The conquest and domination of new geographic spaces in their intrinsic relationship with capital accumulation is then a basic characteristic of the historical trajectory of development of the modern world-system. Today, as historically, this is also why we find them at the roots of the conflicts that continue to ravage the globe. Those conditions are present, often as the main determinants, at the beginning of most of the wars that since the fifteenth century have increasingly affected it.

The succession of the seven separate world wars that between 1689 and 1815 opposed militarily France and Great Britain, with their respective allies, are perhaps the first large scale historical evidence that the control of processes and structures of capital accumulation within the core implies the domination and control of the rest of the world-system as an effective or potential space of economic expansion – and vice versa. This is usually not taken into account in the extensive scholarship about what is often called the second Hundred Years War. But, to be sure, this is an aspect that we can easily find present both at its beginnings, around the 1660s, and at its end, with the Vienna Peace Congress of 1815.

In what concerns the built up that led to war, Buffinton dates it from the first years of the 1660s. His words are particularly enlightening: “It was at this time”, he writes, “that France already enjoying a position of ascendancy among the continental powers, set out... to challenge England and Holland in the race for commercial and colonial empire” (1949: 4). That is to say, while Holland and, soon enough, an England still recovering from the defeat suffered in the First One Hundred Years War, found overseas their respective sources for profit and power, France organized itself not only within but, after its triumph over the Hapsburgs, at the leadership of Europe. Still according to Buffington, “it was only when France began to rival England as a commercial and colonial power, and when the predominance of France on the continent appeared to threaten the commercial interests and the security of England, that a clash of interest developed between them” (Buffington 1949: 104). In other words, in the conquest of world supremacy the control of the core, the semi-periphery and the periphery are not separated conditions. They constitute, rather, a single, indissoluble, simultaneous

requirement. They are complementary, foundational components of the same historical social system.

To be sure, this seems well assumed by the leaderships of the contenders militarily confronting one another, with their variable allies, from the last two decades of the 17th century onwards. It appears as well very much present not only during but also as the long succession of wars, affecting four continents, started to come to its end in the first two decades of the 19th century. By then, England was not only the first colonial power in the world. It was also the world's factory, its dominating trading power. It had become as well the guarantor of a necessary balance of power within Europe. Its competitors, their power, navies, wealth and overseas influence, had been destroyed.

The violent conflict among powers of the core in the long eighteenth century was, consequently, about the setting up of the conditions allowing the control of capital accumulation. It was as well about its dominant circumstances, including how and where its structures and main institutions would be located and who would mainly benefit from them. It was, in other words, about who was going to dominate the interstate-system as its hegemonic power. It seems a paradox, or maybe not, that it was that long European conflict for space control that became, or soon was manipulated to become, the fuel capable of feeding what ended up being as well a new cycle of expansion of the world-economy.

That was so because as war and conflict ravaged within Europe, affecting at the same time three other continents, ever needed and always renewed material requirements in land and sea

increased exponentially. From guns, food or uniforms, to ships, canons and fortresses -- besides the need to reconstruct what in the meantime had been destroyed -- the military and civilian needs determined by war drove forward production and productivity taking the world-economy to unprecedented levels of growth. This is what McNeil designates as the “industrialization of war” (1982: 224). We can perhaps say, in other words, that war became in this period the leading sector of expansion of the world-economy. Among its consequences, which were going to deeply change both war and the world-system and its development, the quick industrialization of war led to or made possible the transition to managed economies, mass production, the introduction and generalization of the use of interchangeable parts, new, more profitable systems of manufacture, as well as the increasing utilization of new means of transport and communication (McNeil 1982: 223-261). To a great extent, we can also locate here one of the conjunctures that led to the abolition of slavery and its transformation into or accommodation with changed regimes of labor control and exploitation. It led, as well, to a growing demand for raw materials both from the periphery and, increasingly, from the external areas of the world-system. The quick enlargement of the periphery in the second half of the eighteenth century was the result of the gradual incorporation of those external areas, their peoples and their resources. Notably, and within the contours of the present work, this is what happened with important regions of the African continent, their peoples and their resources (Wallerstein, 1986: 47-76 and 101-138; 1989: 30).

The unprecedented world-economic growth that started to be registered around 1750 was consequently the result of the historical confluence of a generalized increase in the rate of

industrialization and production within the core with geographic expansion for labor, raw materials and eventually new markets.

As the century approached its closure the long European conflict started to wind down as well bringing to a close the paradox combination of war and economic growth. But, even in the relative absence of war, economic growth continued. With it, a triumphant Great Britain had by then started its more or less clear rise as the dominant power of the time. Moreover, by enabling the independence of some of the overseas colonial territories of her competing powers within the core and by conquering most of the remaining ones in the periphery, she was able to consolidate her power over land and sea, within Europe and out of it. In less than fifty years and with the beginnings of the new cycle of expansion of the world-economy that was registered around 1850 she had been able to bring together the necessary conditions to become the undisputable hegemonic power of the world-economy. A systemic hegemony exercised over the core and its structures of accumulation as much as over the periphery and its potential for economic expansion. In other words, Great Britain had brought together, under her direct access and control, the existing and future conditions for capital accumulation.

The British systemic hegemony created conditions for the growing combination of new geographic spaces with machines, people, states, and nationalistic angers and aspirations. It originated a new Age of Expansion, as European historiography continues to designate the period that starts around 1848 (Cunliffe: 1974). Twenty-five years afterwards, however, when the world-economy began a new cyclical downturn it plunged as well into a terminal crisis a still, by then, undisputed British hegemonic power. Around 1897, when the distant beginnings

of the United States as a future hegemon were for the first time asserted, Great Britain was already following what in reality had become the irreversible path of her systemic decline.

To be sure the previous period had been a period of unambiguous economic prosperity both to Great Britain and to the world-economy. From 1850 to 1873, its dominant characteristics were high profits, growing accumulation and increasing demand, in particular within the core. As it usually happens, this led to growing competition not only among firms but also among states. The continuous need to innovate through the development and adoption of new technologies and processes became a permanent issue of the time. Although characterized by increasing conflict, bordering war within the core, this was a period during which diplomatic processes of dialogue and compromise among the powers of the core were usually chosen to avoid military solutions. Under the hegemony of Great Britain, this is why it is still called today the period of the Pax Britannica.

2. BRINGING ORDER AND PROGRESS BACK HOME

The beginnings in the mid-19th century of a new cycle of world-economic expansion had little or no impact in Portugal. As it had happened throughout its long history the Portuguese elites continued to live a life of sumptuous consumption that had nothing to do with the real needs of the country. Sporadic and very brief attempts to assume a different path had uniformly been inconclusive.

Economic modernization and industrialization had been however part of the national objectives defended by an important sector of the Portuguese dominant elites. In the meantime the

country had continued to be one of the more backward and underdeveloped countries of Europe. All the attempts to modernize it, in particular those started in the last decades of the eighteenth century had seen its results annulled by competition and inefficiency.

This failure can perhaps be better understood by taking two orders of reasons into account. The first respects the interests and main objectives of the dominant elites of the country, their divisions and their conception of political power and its exercise. The second order of reasons is a function of what continued to be a disastrous, unequal economic relationship with Great Britain based on the Methuen Treaty (³⁶). To a great extent, it is such a relationship that characterizes the Portuguese mode of incorporation in the world-economy for more than three hundred years. This became particularly evident in the 19th century. As Great Britain assumed the leadership of world production, increasingly cheaper British goods, and textiles in particular, entering Portugal and Brazil became the biggest burden faced by what continued to be an incipient national industry. More than that, it blocked its development. The fact that the British goods competed directly with those produced in Portugal limited the possibility to export them. This resulted in successive bankruptcies in Portugal. More importantly, it discouraged potential investment in new industries. At the same time, they were indirectly affecting, as well, the base of the Portuguese economy, its agriculture, and nullifying all the

³⁶ **The unequal, dependent relationship of Portugal in relation to Great Britain assumed its dominant characteristics in the seventeenth century and lasted, actively, for more than four centuries. This relationship can be traced to the early fourteenth century when for the first time Portuguese wine started to be traded with English woolen cloth. In 1703 it assumed the form of the Methuen Treaty, made famous by David Ricardo, as a treaty of equal, comparative advantages between the two kingdoms. In the short term, its main objective was the need felt by the Portuguese to guarantee the alliance of Britain against what was seen as the Spaniard permanent threat of annexation. To be sure, what Methuen seems to express is rather one of the major consequences of the Portuguese decline from its position within the core of the world-economy to its semi-periphery. In other words, it expresses the real position of Portugal in the eighteenth century within a changing international division of labor.**

usually moderate attempts to modernize it. This is a point that will perhaps become clearer through a necessarily brief reference to the Portuguese dominant elites, their composition and behavior.

A central feature in such a discussion is the fact that we find at the base of the social process leading to the formation of the Portuguese elites, in the 16th century as in the 19th century, the long-term continuity of what I called in the first part of the present work the patrimonial type of power dominating the country. This means that embodied and represented by the successive kings, its exercise was still the main political reference in Portugal in the first half of the nineteenth century. And, to a great extent, this continued to be a central characteristic of the political structures of the kingdom till the forced abolition, in 1910, of the Portuguese Monarchy and its substitution by the First Republic. In relation to the past, even the recent one before the “loss” of Brazil, the main difference was that in the 19th century the patrimonial power of the Crown was limited to what became a relatively easy attribution of honorary titles and other concessions of the same type. It was as well consecrated by successive Constitutions. The various attempts to change it by a weak and disorganized liberal opposition ended up in failure. The result was that also until the end of the monarchy, the economic role of the landed aristocrats was so overwhelming that, as Oliveira Marques concludes, the “leadership in public affairs naturally had to belong to them, either in part or in whole” (1976: II, 26).

On the other hand the old aristocrats were, usually without exception, landowners. At the level of the dominant elites, to have land and to live out of it was one of the most important signs of prestige. Consequently, to buy and own land became as well an important objective for the

new, “constitutional” aristocrats. It was also a good investment. The main exports of the country were, precisely, from wine to cork, agricultural products. Old and new landowners enjoyed consequently the possibility of increasing their wealth. As Marques tells us, a result of all this was that “by the end of the century the old aristocracy and constitutional aristocracy were so intermingled that it would have been difficult to make a distinction between them on other than historical grounds” (1976: II, 26).

This would be little more than a source of amazement if, in fact, the continuity of the patrimonial power of the Crown and its exercise did not constitute one of the main factors in the reproduction and perpetuation of the Portuguese structures of underdevelopment. As in the discussion of other economic and social features the meaning of the relative importance of a politically dominating class whose members are as well landowners must be seen in the perspective of the historical relationship of Portugal with Great Britain. A relationship that was mainly beneficial to the landed and agricultural interests as it was based on the import of industrial goods and on the export of wine and other primary products. Various attempts to change this type of unequal dependence ended up in as many failures. The results were double. In the first place they consisted in the continuity of a backward agriculture that grew through the expansion of its cultivated areas. Secondly they slowed down the development of a very incipient industry and the efforts that in the 1830s started once again being made in that direction.

Portuguese historiography considers, in general, a number of different waves in the efforts to industrialize Portugal before the advent of the 20th century. The first, between 1675 and 1690,

is seen as a phase of pre-industrialization. The second one, often designated as Pombaline, lasted less than a decade, from 1769 to 1778 but achieved important results, particularly in the Lisbon region. The third one followed the first triumphs of liberalism in 1820 and constituted the base of the industrial growth of the Porto region. A fourth phase started around 1835. It followed a long decade of internal turmoil and was mainly characterized by the quick mechanization of many of the projects initiated in the previous phases. Describing it, Payne gives an interesting picture of the state of industry and of modernization in Portugal in the mid-nineteenth century: “In general”, he writes, “the mechanization of Portuguese industry began around 1835 but depending as it did on the importation of steam engines and other machinery the process was very slow; **by 1845, only 30 of 634 manufacturing plants... possessed steam power**” (1973: 535, my emphasis).

Complicated by a multiplicity of internal conflicts and very often determining them, the economic situation in Portugal during this period had become even worse with the frequent closure of markets by war, with the French invasions of the country and, finally, with the independence of Brazil. Throughout more than one century, the Portuguese had been living out of that South-American colony not only through the gold regularly received from there but also as a destination of migrants and, notwithstanding the growing trade influence of Great Britain, in terms of their balance of payments. As Payne tells us, in the decade from 1796 to 1806, Brazil had accounted for three-quarters of all the Portuguese commerce with re-exports totaling from 60 to 80 percent of the totality of its exports. The greatest part of this trade was lost even before the “loss” of Brazil itself: “using the level of the year 1800 as 100, Portuguese manufactured exports (altogether) ... declined to 66 in 1805, to 10 in 1810 and recovered to

only 27 in 1820” (1973: 534). Negatively affecting this situation even more, prices in the world-economy from 1820 onwards went through a long period of deflation with trade, in general, declining even further.

The independence of Brazil in 1822 and its recognition in 1825 had however given birth to new attempts of transformation in Portugal. Without its former colony and its gold, the kingdom was forced to look inward to try to evaluate its realistic possibilities of economic survival. Two different kinds of measures, at the political and economic levels, were then initiated. The first kind of new measures was related with the actualization of the political institutions of the kingdom, their liberalization and their adaptation to the new realities of the world outside. The second concerned the development of the country’s agriculture, through the extension of its cultivated areas and the introduction of modern modes of working them. These seem to be, and are often presented as such, contradictory measures. In reality, they complement one another also in the sense that they consented and made some things to change in order to stay the same. Moreover, it was the tensions of such a complementarity that characterized and gave form to the political, economic, and social life of Portugal for the following one hundred years. That is to say: until the end of the Monarchy in 1910 and throughout the first three decades of the Portuguese Republic.

There was as well a third order of new procedures concerning the still very vast overseas territories and their administration. Important measures were approved, notably in what concerned the abolition of slavery. Overall, a vague idea that perhaps Africa could be a second Brazil (as Brazil had been a second India) started also to be accepted by the Portuguese leading

elites. Anyway, both a new attitude in relation to Africa and the new colonial measures to make its territories part of a single process of Portuguese economic growth had to wait the second half of the century, and the covetousness of other Europeans, to come of age. I shall discuss this below. Before it, however, I shall discuss a bit further the living conditions of Portugal before and after the independence of Brazil by dealing with the political and legislative reforms quickly introduced in the basic law of the kingdom, first; with the timid attempts to modernize it, afterwards.

In what concerns political reforms, we have to date them from the two or three first years of the 1820s. A vast number of legislative measures were then approved by the Cortes. They affected property in all its forms. Among other important decisions, they abolished or reduced taxes, eliminated the religious orders, and placed their vast estates on sale. Moreover, they extinguished the old rights of the nobility, including corvees, exclusives, and rights of passage. In other words, they affected the Portuguese rural society in many and different ways (Marques, 1976: II, 2-8).

Still according to Marques (1976: II, 2), the confessed objective of the new body of laws was the “the complete destruction of the ‘feudal’ ties” in Portugal”. Limiting agriculture both in the quality and in the extension of its production, those ties were the main obstacle to its rapid development. The models followed were not only those of France during the revolution but also what had been happening since then in the rest of Europe. They were primordially based on a Physiocratic conception of the national economy, not very different from that still being practiced in the rest of Europe. And, in fact, they started to change the situation of the

Portuguese agriculture. The cultivation of rice and potatoes was introduced. Cork, also, was extensively developed and its export grew by more than 100 percent from 1870 onwards. Vineyards, almond and other groves, expanded as well. The yield per hectare increased with the introduction of better techniques. For the first time the import of wheat started to decline and, after 1838, Portugal became an exporter of grain to its overseas territories. However, the political turmoil of 1832-34 and 1846-47, often reaching levels of a generalized civil war, became important obstacles to its consequent implementation and effective results. They tended as well to limit the amplitude and the necessary radicalism of those social and economic measures that were made into law.

In this process, the Portuguese Crown assumed a central role. Coming back home after the proclamation of the Brazilian independence it brought as well in its royal luggage some of the moderate liberal ideas that led to the inscription, on the flag of the new Portuguese-speaking country on the other side of the Atlantic, the words made famous by August Comte: Order and Progress. To be sure, order and progress was precisely the recipe needed in Portugal.

From the perspective of the Crown what made those words into a program for the future of a kingdom without Brazil and its gold was the fact that the country continued to be ripe with internal divisions and political dissent. In reality, that was how the Portuguese had lived throughout the previous fifty years. The invasion of the French Napoleonic forces, instead of contributing to the forging of a different degree of unity, had made the division between conservatives and a multiplicity of liberal factions even more acute. The intervention of a “liberal” Great Britain and the absence of the Royal family aggravated them. Accordingly,

different political movements continued to confront one another in long rhetorical exercises, usually claiming similar objectives of liberalization and economic growth. In the main cities of the country, these confrontations often tended to become armed and deadly. This is the main reason why, by the direct incentive and pressure of the Crown, a first modern Constitution became an immediate objective. For the Portuguese in general, it would consequently be a constitution imposed from the top down.

The major results of this attempt were sanctioned by the so-called Constitutional Charter approved in 1826. It was a badly elaborated, sometimes highly confusing document. Based on the constitution of Brazil, which had been based on the French constitution, it was presented as a kind of bridge, a compromise between conservative and liberal ideas, politics and objectives. Simultaneously, it gave the crown the authority to moderate, as a fourth constitutional power and with the right to veto, between the legislative, the executive, and the judicial powers of the state. It introduced a house of lords with seventy-two aristocrats and nineteen bishops (Birmingham, 1993: 113). A highly conservative document, the Charter had been designed to appeal and get the approval of the nobility, the clergy, the landowners, as well as of the relatively wealthy but diminutive and weak merchant bourgeoisie of the cities. At the same time, and by giving the Crown the right to veto, the new Constitution consecrated its historical function as the patrimonial reference of the country and its state. Although subjected to many adjustments, changes and amendments in the following decades it kept uniformly as such in its future versions the principle of a Royal veto.

Those adjustments and amendments, usually resulting from increasing civil conflict, reflect also the fact that the 1826 Charter was not a document capable of fulfilling its moderating objective. To be sure, this was a direct consequence of the fact that it tried to bring together and harmonize not only a large number of different interests and objectives but also interests and objectives that were contradictory and mutually exclusive. From its reading today, the least one can say is that it was a document divorced from the social and political realities of Portugal in the first half of the 19th century. It was also a very conservative document in the sense that it left intact the unequal relationship of the crown with Britain. As such, it strengthened a dominant rural conservatism at the same time marginalizing a very weak working class and blocking its growth. Finally, it led to what can be described as the political and economic capitulation of the historical role and destiny of an equally very weak, divided, confused, and demoralized bourgeoisie.

It was consequently inevitable that, two years after its solemn approval the country once again became violently divided -- this time between those who were for or against the Charter. This was the beginning of another long civil strife with peaks of violence in 1832-1834 and 1846-1847. Their main results, a succession of constitutional changes and amendments, did not however change the Charter's basic nature. To be sure, it was the proclamation of the Portuguese Republic in 1910 that finally brought it to an end (Oliveira Marques, 1991: 106).

The most serious decisions concerning the further industrialization of the country as a way out of a generalized crisis were those attempted in the late 1830s. It was then that a moderate political movement solidly based on industrial and trading interests and including a vast

number of artisans and workers as part of its social base took power in Lisbon. With the support of the Crown new reforms were quickly introduced. But this climate did not last long. In 1838, the attempt to enact a new constitution, a compromise between the different political factions in the country, collapsed. It established the principle of an elected senate, made more effective the separation of powers and introduced measures of political and administrative decentralization. At the same time, however, the new Constitution once again kept many of the Crown's previous rights. Among them, it sanctioned those allowing the King to continue to use an absolute right of veto, to dissolve parliament if deemed necessary, and to name the ministers and other members of the government. It was, in short, a continuation of what historically had been a patrimonial monarchy, still all-powerful, with a nominal parliament.

Such a compromise did not please, once again, any of the confrontational factions. The result was the continuation of the generalized turmoil in the country, in particular in the cities of Lisbon and Porto. The solution, particularly after 1852, was the institutionalization of the coup after counter-coup succession of more or less liberal and conservative governments in Portugal. This was construed into an equally more or less efficient system of political rotation that continued to reproduce itself as such even after the proclamation of the Portuguese Republic in 1910.

We can now look with more detail to the third order of measures assumed as a consequence of the independence of Brazil and concerning the Portuguese overseas territories. The changes introduced in 1838 included two important decisions. The first concerned the official abolition of slaving, slavery and slave trade in Portugal and in the Crown overseas possessions. This was

the object of a decree published before the end of the decade. It was also the main result of constant British pressures with that objective. Notwithstanding the good intentions of some of its defenders, however, the decree was not implemented with the necessary strength to assume the role of a decisive anti-slavery measure. Secondly, what can be considered as a coherent colonial policy was theoretically defined for the first time. It defended as its stepping stone the complementarity between economic institutions in Portugal and the proposal of various projects of colonial exploitation.

The Portuguese attempts to overcome the “loss” of Brazil by modernizing its economy and political institutions is, consequently, coincident and, in the mind of its theorists, conceptually related with the need to establish new metropolitan policies in relation to what was called overseas possessions, dominions, or more often the Portuguese overseas empire. This was determined by the ambitions of the ruling classes to transform the African colonies into a new Brazil. According to Sideri (1990: 180) this only happened after the first failures of the economic reform within the kingdom. It was those failures that made the colonies to appear as being the only chance to put Portugal once again on its feet. A similar solution, in short, to what had happened with the exploitation of Brazil in the previous century. However, the circumstances in the 18th century that made of the exploitation of Brazil the main support of Portugal were in mid-nineteenth century already completely different. Namely, the core powers were by then starting to create conditions to divide Africa amongst themselves. Hammond stresses that the Portuguese started to care about Africa only when their title to empire came to be at risk (1966: 65-66).

Until then, the opinion of the Portuguese about Africa was not only a secondary aspect of the political life but, as well, deeply divided. Some considered the African territories to be a financial burden. Others, probably the majority, were more or less indifferent to if not ignorant about, their existence. A small part of the country's elite was however deeply attached to them both in nationalistic terms and as a possible alternative to the crisis affecting the kingdom.

In 1852, the publication of separate budgets to the Metropole and to the colonies appeared as strongly supporting the position of those who considered the colonies as a heavy weight on national finance. They showed an average expenditure of 956,000 milreis (or 210,000 pounds) with the colonies, against revenue of 824,000 milreis (or 180,000 pounds). This represented a deficit of about 30,000 pounds. Similar deficits continued during the 1860s (Sideri, 1990: 181; Hammond, 1956: 66; Vogel, 1860: 397). This is why the "sale" of the colonies to other European countries was by then seriously considered by different Portuguese governments. Among them, a German proposal of 25 million pounds for Guinea, Mozambique, Goa, Macao, and Timor was "almost accepted" (Young 1917: 321). It ended up being refused for two main reasons. The first, related to the continuous change of governments, resulted from the delay in a definitive response from Lisbon. The second, perhaps more important, was the fact that the exchanges with the colonies registered a first surplus in the fiscal year of 1870-71. This increased the expectations about the possible role of the colonial territories in the economic development of the kingdom. If the African territories, notwithstanding their very low level of development, could be profitable, then the possibility of their becoming a new Brazil was indeed a reality.

The project of unifying Angola and Mozambique in a single territorial unit under the Portuguese flag has its roots here. To be sure, it clashed head on with the British interests in Central and East Africa (Sideri, 181). But this assessment must be qualified. Portugal was neither an exporter of capital nor a manufacturing center: on the contrary. Contrary to the main objectives of other European colonialisms, its main objectives were not to trade goods or invest capital. Surpluses both of goods and of capital were, to be sure, absent. What the Portuguese state wanted was, rather, to expand its very limited areas of historical settlement in order to show the world that it detained there some kind of political, commercial, “effective” presence. These objectives did not clash frontally with those of Great Britain. To a great extent they were even an advantage in the British perspective. The recognizance of their occupation by Portugal was the best way to subtract them from the German or French colonial expansion at the same time keeping them firmly under the British sphere of influence. As a colonial power, Portugal fell into the informal colony type because of its structural backwardness. Sideri is right however when he points out that this was not only the cheapest type of colonialism but, also, the most rewarding type for the British interests.

It is within this historical conjuncture, I contend, that it is possible to find the deep reasons why Portugal, a very underdeveloped and politically weak country, was able to keep its imperial possessions in a phase of increasing competition for Africa. This must as well be related to the argument I defend below that colonialism, as understood in the European core of the late 19th century, involved not only geographical and economic occupation **but also geo-strategic control**. In many of its African territories Portugal was able to fulfill this function in the British perspective. Effective attempts to develop those areas economically were however

absent and, if not, they would be bound to fail. In other words, and as highlighted by Sideri (1990: 183) the way Portugal related to its colonies, with Brazil first, with Africa afterwards “operated mainly to the benefit of England”. At the same time, the determination assumed by Portugal to keep an empire “reinforced her dependence on the latter”.

There was however a strong, growing opposition within Portugal against this increasing domination by Great Britain. In short, it can be said that it basically defended the ideas of the time. According to them, and as Thornton (1965) points out, the *raison d’etre* of the colonies was to produce those raw materials which the mother country could not produce. By doing so the overseas territories would make possible for the mother country to utilize, market, and invest the respective profits in the expansion of the metropolitan manufacturing potential. Until then, the relations of Portugal to its African possessions had been reduced to the maintenance of a handful of small administrative posts. But the situation could and had to be changed. With capital to invest and an efficient administration, the colonies could be transformed into important complements to the metropolitan efforts to finally enter the modern world. They could as well become its preferential markets out of Europe. Finally they could also be the most adequate outlets for a growing Portuguese emigration -- as Brazil had been before.

As the above discussion makes obvious, Portugal had neither the needed capital to invest nor, as a chronically bankrupt country, access to its lending sources. On the other hand, the regular migrants were in their overwhelming majority choosing and demanding other shores. As Oliver and Fage point out, Angola and Mozambique were, in the third quarter of the 19th century, no more than “ill-defined trading preserves reaching towards the interior of the

continent” (1962: 181). Without capital and immigration, what would come out of this Portuguese colonial project was the setting up of a more or less efficient administration.

In what concerns the Portuguese East African dominions, perhaps the most striking evidence that comes out of the 1826 Constitutional Charter is that Mozambique does not exist as a territorial unit but only as the designation of the island of that name in the Indian Ocean. In the second paragraph of the Article 2 of the Charter, listing the Portuguese dominions in Africa, what is referred to as Portuguese East Africa (*Africa Oriental Portuguesa*, in Portuguese) is a group of six territories designated as “Mozambique, the Rivers of Sena, Sofala, Inhambane, Quelimane, and the island of Cape Delgado”. Effectively it will be only near the end of the century that the present borders of Mozambique, as well as those of most of the other Southern Africa territories, will be defined and accepted as such.

What the Charter lists, and this is why it is such an interesting reference, are a number of what in the past were fortified settlements and trading posts, the latter functioning or not within those settlements. Mozambique, the headquarters of the representative of the Portuguese king, and Ibo, the northern limit of all Portuguese settlements at the time, were fortified islands. Other settlements like Inhambane, Quelimane, or Lourenco Marques had small garrisons usually formed by deported or exiles from the kingdom, African troops locally trained and two or three Portuguese soldiers. Besides being isolated, the latter were usually ill-trained, ill-paid, and ill-armed. Uniformly, they would be either in a state of revolt and insubordination or under siege and attack from the surrounding peoples. This was a situation very similar to that contemporarily being lived in the other Portuguese western African territories listed by the

Charter: Bissau and Cacheu on the coast of Mina; the fort of Ajuda; Angola, Benguela, and their dependencies Cabinda and Molembo; the Cape Verde islands; and the islands of S. Tome and Principe (also, Hammond, 1966: 37).

As the kingdom continued submerged into civil war and instability the exercise of colonial authority in Africa was a secondary concern. Critical times, in which the Portuguese were placed in a position of eminent defeat, became frequent. The solution was in general to gather the help, by paying it, of African customary chiefs and kings or that of *prazeiros* and their armies. Among those situations in which the Portuguese colonial occupation was threatened by local resistance made into full-fledged rebellion there were the cases of Inhambane in 1849, Angoche in 1861, Massangano until its fall in 1887 or in the military campaigns against the Gaza emperor in 1896 (Pelissier).

In the characterization of the general situation of the Portuguese dominions at the time, Hammond quotes from an article that was published by the influential *Jornal de Commercio*, in February 1861. The article emphasized the need for the colonies to be “used” for the “industrial and agricultural advantage” of Portugal. At the same time, its author pointed out that “after three hundred years Portuguese Africa is virtually as barbarous as it was in the beginning” (64).

Of all the Portuguese dominions, however, those in the Eastern African coast were the least interesting for the Portuguese elites. For Pinheiro Chagas, for instance, they were no more than “nests of forced exiles and slaves” (1843: 86). Describing them in 1860, Vogel writes that

“having lost (their) direct relationship with the mother-country” the Portuguese East African territories had become a mere “branch-agency of Portuguese India” (561-2). This was confirmed by what was not only a very weak but also falling balance of payments. A situation that became particularly evident in the mid 1870’s when the totality of Mozambique’s foreign trade was valued at less than 500,000 pounds. Moreover, and according to Perry, in the five years 1870-1875, a previously positive balance of trade had started to fall as the imports grew from 81 thousand to 122 thousand Sterling without correspondence in its exports that fell from 139 thousand to 79 thousand Sterling. In 1874 Mouzinho de Albuquerque, the commander of the Gaza military pacification and governor of Mozambique suggested, in a long letter to the king, the sale of Mozambique in order to make of it “the Jewish state that Jews all over the world are trying to create” (AHM, Mouzinho de Albuquerque Archive ⁽³⁷⁾).

Twenty years after, the situation continued to be hopeless. The only change, apparently, was the designation that another constitutional amendment in Lisbon had attributed to what continued to be a handful of coastal settlements in East Africa: that of Mozambique as an “overseas province of Portugal”. Notwithstanding the new name, an incisive British consul described it in 1890 as continuing to be formed by small and scattered settlements that existed more “in the position of ‘cities of refuge’ outside a slaveholding state than [as] centers of government within a province where all have been proclaimed free” (Hammond, 1966: 62). Ivory and what most probably was still an increasing but semi-clandestine slave trade

³⁷⁾ I first saw and, in a training exercise, transcribed this letter – actually a handwritten copy by Mouzinho destined to his personal files as the original was sent to Lisbon -- during a course on historical archival research in the early 1970s. It was kept among others in the MA archive of the Arquivo Historico de Mozambique. As far as I could find out there was no response from the Crown. I do not know if this letter has been made public since then. At the time it was considered as not yet published and practically unknown.

constituted the two main economic activities. The fruit of cashew trees, brought from India and quickly multiplied due to the good offices of monkeys and other animals, were used to distill alcoholic beverages which were then sold all over the interior.

The main reasons for this lack of development were pointed out by another British diplomat, Frederick Elton, in 1875. His conclusion was that the occupation of the vast and fertile districts known as Portuguese possessions could not properly be considered as being an “effective colonization”. They were rather characterized, he added, by a generalized lack of security for capital, emigrants, enterprises and other features of an effective territorial occupation (Hammond, 74/75).

This multiplication of foreign reports and other descriptions about Mozambique of which the ones mentioned above are just a small sample, show however that something new was happening. To be sure, they meant that the new Portuguese “overseas province” was somehow becoming the object of what in its history appears as manifestations of a sudden interest and attention. Two main reasons can be mentioned to explain it. In the first place, the opening up of the Suez Canal in 1869 placed its ports for the first time in what became the quickest and more direct sea route to and from Europe (Hammond, 1966: 75). More or less at the same time, diamonds and gold were discovered in South Africa. As we will see with more detail below, this was a double detonator for the future of Southern Africa. First because it led to the first South African War opposing the British military might to the independent Boer Republics. Secondly because it resulted, simultaneously, into the formation of the region and its quick transformation

In both developments, the Delagoa Bay of southern Mozambique and its harbor at Lourenco Marques was an important geo-economic objective. It was through it that the main access of the South African hinterland to the sea and, consequently, to the outside world was possible. This had been the reason why, during the early 1880s, both Great Britain and Germany had made public their interest for the eastern African Portuguese territory. In fact, it was to counter those and other effective and potential foreign intrusions and cupidity that the Portuguese finally decided to put into practice some kind of a “modern”, imperial, profitable colonial policy.

The already mentioned above international proclamation of the rights of Portugal to the whole territory between Angola, in the west coast, and Mozambique, in the east coast of the continent, was perhaps the more spectacular public manifestation of that policy. That is the origin of the so-called Pink-Colored Map incorporating the whole Central Africa from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic and placing it under the Portuguese flag. This colonial dream consisted thus in the definition of a single territory occupying Central and part of Southern Africa and linking Mozambique and the Eastern African coast with Angola and the West African coast, as a colony of Portugal. The famous objective of Rhodes, to link the Cape with Cairo under the Union Jack, was another of the colonial mega-projects of the late 19th century. A third one, less discussed but as elating in its time, was the French project of a vast empire linking the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, and the Indian Ocean (Fage and Oliver, 1998: 191). The three cases were, of course, incompatible. But all of them led to more or less confrontational conflicts until their full abandonment, already in the 20th century.

The Portuguese project was, to be sure, a far-fetched objective for a country that had become one of the poorest of Europe and that continued to live through a period of internal conflict and instability. Moreover, the territorial ambitions reflected by the Pink-Colored Map confronted head on not only the African interests of Great Britain but also those of France and of Belgium. It was, consequently, condemned to failure from the beginning – and fail it did, before the end of the century. This was, however, a slow process. It started to develop in 1894 when in Berlin other more powerful colonial states started to give formal expression to what had already been happening in Africa throughout more than half a century. It was there, at the table of the Berlin Conference on Africa, that the first part of destruction of the Portuguese Pink Colored Map took place. Not because it had been presented or discussed there but, rather, as a consequence of other decisions that transformed the meeting into a central reference for the construction of European modern colonialism in Africa. But, we must ask, why was that meeting so important? What did it change in the long-term relationship between Europe and the African continent? These are some of the questions that I will now have to address.

3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MODERN COLONIALISM

The Berlin Conference of 1884-85 did not start anything new ⁽³⁸⁾. It was, rather, part of the diplomatic, interstate recognition of what in the previous fifty years had increasingly become a reality in the soil and to the peoples of Africa. To a certain extent, it bestowed with the political

³⁸⁾ This is the point made, I do not know if for the first time but undeniably in a very convincing way, by Hargreaves in his work about the partition of Africa. But I disagree with him when he defends that “the vague provisions of the Berlin Act had little real effect upon the scramble”. (1963: 104-107). This is one of the points I will discuss below. As often happens in diplomatic agreements, it was precisely because they were vague that the Act provisions could be and were “used” as open diplomatic and political references to legitimate at the level of the inter-state system much of what happened -- not only after but also before its signature.

legitimacy of the core what was an instance of a larger on-going process of trans-continental territorial occupation of the external arena of the world-system. If compared with previous processes of expansion, it was the nature and some of the characteristics of this occupation in Africa which were indeed new. It was to be called colonialism, modern colonialism (³⁹).

Since at least the mid-19th century and following in that order their missionaries and explorers, colonial settlers, colonial companies (⁴⁰) and, for the first time, colonial administrations had already started to assume there the totality of the local economic initiatives and their control, organization, and profits. During more than four centuries the European powers had been content to restrict their holdings in Africa to a handful of scattered trading stations. Usually located in the coast, their control passed from one state to another as its strength in Europe waxed or waned (Collins, 1969: 1). Now, that period was quickly coming to an end. And, to a certain extent, the catalyst for change was going to be the newly unified Germany, a country with strong ambitions but without overseas possessions. Much more was however at stake in what constituted a new but very different type of expansion of Europe into the rest of the world.

³⁹) It was to distinguish what was new in this form of modern European expansion of his time if compared with other, older, forms of expansion like formal empires, informal empires, internationalism or colonialism that Hobson coined the term Imperialism (6-7). The fact that such a distinction and its origin became more or less forgotten is one of the reasons why, at least since Lenin (1917), there has always been and there is still so much confusion about the term. This is one of the themes emphasized and in depth analyzed by Giovanni Arrighi in his important 1978 reflection *The Geometry of Imperialism* (1983, London: Verso). In what concerns Lenin's characterization of imperialism it is interesting to transcribe here what Arrighi points out: "If we... put (his) vision into a historical perspective, two things must strike us at once: its consistency with the characteristic scenario (a scenario of world "stress... contradictions, conflicts and convulsions", Lenin, 1972: 14; add ML) of the thirty years that followed its formulation; and its growing irrelevance to the situation which has gradually emerged in the thirty years since the Second World War" (1983: 15).

⁴⁰) "The chartered companies of the 19th century, like their predecessors of an earlier age, served a dual purpose, promoting economic activity and advancing political control" (Wickins, 1988: 300).

To be sure, the European core had been actively expanding outside Europe for many years. In particular this was made through the migration of its different peoples, the peoples of its nation-states. Then, after the early 1880's, the power and structures of those states started to be as well installed in those regions of extra-European settlement. In the words of Giovanni Arrighi, what then started to happen was that the geographical expansion of Europe became based on the extension of the political power of its nation-states (1983: 35-38).

In the African continent this meant that existing structures of agricultural production, mining, and trading were brought to an end or systematically distorted (Stavrianos, 1981: 196-97). With it, and as discussed in a previous chapter, the African elites and their implicit or explicit attempts to innovate were plummeted into a gradual but irreversible dissolution. As Hopkins has characterized them, they became, from then on, African aristocracies living between present and past relations of production (1973: 143). To Davidson, this represented the end of the blossoming of the pre-colonial middle-classes of the continent as an economic group or, as he also describes them, as an embryonic class of African capitalists (1978: 127).

The colonial occupation of Africa sounded consequently the death bell to the unfolding of a possible alternative economic process of Africa's incorporation in the capitalist world-economy. In the perspective of the African peoples it could have been a very different process. It could have led to a more acceptable, more just and less oppressive and destructive social order than the violent phase of European colonialism that followed. However, and one has to

be clear about this, it would most probably have been as well a process tending, in the long run, to similar results. The world-system, to be sure, would have been the same. And the profit-making solutions would have been determined, as they were in the historical reality of the following one hundred years and as they are today, by the interests and objectives of its centers of accumulation. Those same objectives that when in 1884 the European powers met in Berlin were already being actively sought by them all over Africa. Even in what concerns southern Africa, a region particularly contested, the public resolutions of the Conference did not change and were not very different from what could have been previously expected.

This is an obvious conclusion if we look closely at the Act of Berlin, the final listing of those public resolutions, and compare them with what was already happening in great part of Africa. The division of the continent, notably, is not part of the document. On the other hand, and as in the ten or twenty years preceding the conference, Africa will continue to be actively divided and occupied by Europe in the following two or three decades. This is what allows Wesseling to consider three different historical periods in the European partition of Africa. A first one mainly dominated by the advance and consolidation of French and Belgium pretensions in the continent, is by him defined as terminating in 1884. It was followed by what he calls the heyday of partition, from 1885 to 1895. Finally, a third period, an “epilogue”, prolongs the process of colonial occupation of Africa to 1912 (1997: 96). Fieldhouse adds a further phase, which he extends till 1939 and calls that of the “redivision” of the continent. He considers it to be, as well, an integral part of “the last European (geographical) expansion” (1965: 235)

In Southern Africa, those last two phases -- of “redivision” and the “epilogue” -- are particularly important. They include the so called Boer War or, as it is designated now, the First South African War of 1899-1902. But they include as well the rise, decline and collapse of the colonial pretensions of Germany both in the Transvaal, to part of today’s Mozambique, and to South West Africa, today’s Namibia.

To be sure, both the Boer War and the expulsion of Germany from South West Africa and Tanganyika were part of the same process of effective partition of Southern Africa. More precisely, they were part of the British interest in the appropriation and continued control of the region. But both events had very little or nothing to do with what had been agreed in Berlin in 1885. On the other hand, the borders of the various territories within the region, in particular those of today’s Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Angola will be traced, and not without conflict, only in 1891. To a certain extent their definition even went against what had been implied by the discussions and resolutions of 1884-85. A question becomes consequently imperative: why, then, was the Berlin Conference convened? Why was it so important? Why was it necessary?

In the first place, it seems today very obvious that a great part of the central importance of Berlin evolves from the different symbolic meanings it was able to assume both in time and in geographic space. For the world-system of the late 19th century, within its core in particular, it assumed first of all the value of an act of “civilizational superiority” embodied in what was designated at the time as “a concerted civilizing movement” for Africa by the main powers of Europe (Wack, 1905: 105). It represented as well the possibility of experimenting new forms and procedures for the political regulation of its peoples. This was considered necessary, within

the core, to guarantee their “progress and development”. At the same time, some kind of effective regulation was required to avoid “the distrust and avarice frequently observed when several European peoples occupy in common a vast and fertile territory inhabited by savage tribes” (Ibidem: 106 and 107). The obvious inference from this type of euro-centric reasoning is obvious. It was with those objectives that the continent was assumed as an object of political administration by the European powers. And this is what will lead to its partition, that is to say, to the drawing, imposition and mutual recognition by the core of its internal and very artificial borders.

The reality was that in the Berlin Conference only a very specific and relatively reduced definition of those internal borders, for the then designated Congo Free State had been agreed. All the others were considered in their generality but more or less ignored. “There was no carving or dividing up of the black continent in Berlin”, Wesseling tells us (1997: 87). On the other hand, it is precisely this image of Europe dividing the continent at the table of the Conference that has become the meeting’s main symbolic image. To be sure, it is part of a rhetorical, core-centric, self-congratulatory imaginary about Africa. But, because of its explanatory power, such a symbolic image was equally adopted to represent the indignity of its anti-colonial opposite. And it is such a characteristic that allows, for instance, a careful and active anti-colonial analyst like Kwame Nkrumah (1967) to write that “The original carve-up of Africa [was] arranged at the Berlin Conference of 1884” (⁴¹). We can see this statement,

⁴¹) The symbolic image of Africa and her peoples “carved up” at the table of the Berlin Conference of 1884 became indeed a dominant and often repeated idea. In December 2003, for instance, it was used in almost the same precise terms worn by Nkrumah forty years before in a lecture about the present situation in the continent by Leonard H. Robinson. One of the most prestigious members of the African Society of the National Summit on Africa of the U. S., Robinson was speaking at the Miller Center for Public Affairs of the University of Virginia (Rsrch Channel, 9400 DN, 12-05-2003)

consequently, as an expression of the political perspective of Africa. And, more efficient than a thousand words, it depicts graphically the real meaning of what after 1895 became a fundamental part of the political base of what colonialism was going to be in the continent. To a great extent, the anti-colonial weight of its symbolic meaning is also the reason why I am discussing it in the present work.

More importantly, in the long term evolution of the relationships between the European core and the peoples of Africa, the Berlin Conference of 1884 appears as a point of no return. To start with, it consolidated the generalized destruction of all African attempts in the continent to find and follow African ways to overcome the depredation of slaving and overcome it. In so doing, it formalized as well, for the next one hundred years, the end of the relative autonomy that, even in the most difficult times of slaving, many of the African political formations had been able to maintain in their relationships amongst themselves and with Europe. But all this, in different degrees of implementation, was also already being imposed on the continent. Besides, these were not the questions directly discussed or even mentioned at the tables of the Conference. To the delegations around them, Africa, its peoples and its conditions were a faraway reality, of no concern. This leads us to a more general conclusion: the Berlin Conference of 1894-95 was no more than the very tip of an iceberg of conjunctural and structural social processes evolving under the pomp, imagination, and circumstance of the 19th century European diplomacy. It is those processes that shall interest us here.

Two of the features of the Conference, intrinsically related but usually not taken into account, will perhaps help us to better understand its real historical meaning. In the first place, the

Berlin Conference appears as a kind of diplomatic testing ground for the evidence that a previously all-powerful Great Britain was no longer the dominant influence of the world-economy. This explains why it was convened by Germany, at the time the European power more directly contesting the position and role previously occupied in the world-economy by Britain. Moreover, Germany was the only country within the European core without any kind of extra-European territorial possessions. As Wack points out, in 1884, “Europeans and their descendants already occupied, under different forms of law, as states, colonies, protectorates, leaseholds, spheres of influence, over 82 per cent of the lands of this planet” (1905: 104). The same had happened and was continuing to happen in Africa. The obvious meaning of the active division and occupation of the continent by other European powers was that the British informal supremacy had been defied there: in Africa as in the rest of the external arena of the world-economy. It could, therefore, also be politically defied and confronted around a conference table. That was the arena chosen by Germany.

The Berlin Conference was consequently the occasion through which other European emerging powers, Germany and France, in particular, wanted not only to claim their “rights” to Africa but also to have their world importance recognized and legitimized. In what concerns the continent, they wanted, in other words, the right to enjoy the slices of “the magnificent African cake” as the continent was called by one of most important members of the conference, the King of the Belgians (Wesseling, 1997: 92) -- slices that had to correspond to the roles and positions they had or considered to have attained within the core of the capitalist world-system. But in what concerns the world, their objectives were larger and more ambitious. They wanted not only to make known those roles and positions but, as well, more importantly, to have them

recognized diplomatically and legitimized as such. In accordance to agreements capable of testing once again the relative power of a previously all-powerful Great Britain. At the same time confirming that its world hegemony and empire were indeed coming to an end.

Secondly, British hegemonic decline and the corresponding ascent of Germany and other increasingly powerful countries, like the United States in America, Russia in Europe, or Japan in Asia, was recreating and aggravating latent situations of conflict which, under a vast range of forms, had historically affected the main core countries. It was an open conflict complicated by an increasing, effective and potential, economic competition. It led to the possibility of a new world war which became a very concrete prospect inscribed on the social horizons of European economic recovery.

Those more or less hidden tensions within the core were already being felt as well within the African continent (Ilfie, 1995: 187-89). Still according to the contemporary testimony of Wack, situations of confrontation based “on avarice and distrust” among Europeans were increasing everywhere. They resulted, he wrote, from “many complications, arising from competing expeditions, conflicting explorations, unregulated trading operations, the advent of evil adventurers, the devastating slave trade, and a combination of other causes -- commercial and political” (1905: 107).

The Berlin Conference appears, consequently, as an instrument that could be used to put an end to a situation of increasing confrontation. But this was, as well, only part of the big objective.

More than everything else together, the main intention of the different delegations appears to have been the objective of guaranteeing and extending the situation of relative peace in which, finally, Europe was living. The meeting was, consequently, part of many other initiatives, congresses, conferences, treaties, and agreements that populate the days of European diplomacy at the time to avoid open confrontation and conflict. In Berlin, the objective was, and to a great extent it was achieved, to guarantee some kind of balance of forces in Africa -- a balance of forces capable of avoiding or, at least, of postponing the possibility in Europe of inter-core wars detonated by territorial occupations in the periphery. As an instrument to help defuse complicated situations of growing conflict on the African soil it was an exemplary and very efficient part of the efforts in that direction. As Wesseling tells us, it followed what was still at the time an accepted way for the Europeans to avoid major conflicts: "Territorial questions", he writes, "were settled in advance. Moreover, these were arrangements about regions that those involved did not know and certainly did not care much about." (1997: 98).

This explains why the decade between 1885 and 1895 was, in Europe, one of the most peaceful periods in a long time (⁴²). It was, of course, the strange calm before the destructive storm that followed. But it appears to us today as the result of what was being actively sought by the effervescent activity of inter-core diplomacy in the last decades of the 19th century.

⁴² "The decade 1885-1895", writes Wesseling "was the most peaceful in modern history. In the great statistical study on war by Singer and Small we see, for example, that in that period there was only one great war (between China and Japan) and one smaller war (between the Congo State and the Arabic slave traders). This is to say that during the partition itself there were practically no European or colonial wars" (1998: 98).

Convened in name of a peaceful and wider understanding among core countries, the Berlin Conference was, consequently, and first of all, a meeting of states for whom the world-system had once again become too close to war. Consequently, imperative questions of power, security and its exercise formed the real background of the meeting. Around its tables, in its lobby, and in its corridors, the hard reality of a menace of war never ceased to be present. As a corollary, we must then conclude, the Africa being re-invented in Berlin had, primordially, the import of a geo-strategic stage. The inter-state recognition of vague political principles of its occupation has, consequently, to be seen as having been made in accordance with objectives that were as well geo-strategic objectives.

To be sure, there was also another underlying and overarching reason for the Conference. It was convened in a particularly difficult phase of the world-economy, a phase of contraction and decline of capital accumulation that was being felt at least since the early 1870s.

The need for expansion, that is to say, for new markets and, at the same time, for cheaper processes of production, that is to say, supplied with cheaper inputs and cheaper labor, was an imperative. Consequently, why not follow the usual analytical approach to the reasons of the Conference and see it as having been primordially determined by that economic conjuncture? Because the reality was that Africa appears in the 1890's as being one of the last regions of the globe where new markets and other potentially profitable conditions, with the possible exception of raw materials, were immediately available. This becomes clear if we look at the flows of capital, goods and persons leaving Europe since the mid 19th century to go overseas: “a noticeable tendency was for capital, labor and goods to flow together towards territories of

European settlement” (Wickins 1981: 296). They did not go to Africa (⁴³). Their outflows were towards the Americas, in general, to the United States in particular.

This is one of the main reasons why the Berlin conference about Africa appears primordially as a stage where strategic games of power were played. It was, in other words, a testing ground for larger processes of inter-core competition: processes that had been generated and were already in act in the world-economy. But it did not result in anything new. This is what leads Wesseling to conclude that “one of the most remarkable aspects of the Berlin Conference [was] that it seems to have been one of those rare things in world history, a competition with only winners, a lottery without blanks... [Even] Britain... the country **against which** the Conference was originally arranged... did very well and survived without great problems” (1997: 91, my emphasis). On the other hand, he adds “...much of what was considered to be a success was a success only in the supposition that the Berlin Act would be applied in actual practice. As is well-known, this was not to be the case; many of the arrangements were to be violated, particularly those concerning free trade and freedom of navigation” (1997: 92).

I am not, here, trying to belittle the central importance that as a historical reference the Berlin Conference has in the context of an advancing colonial occupation of Africa: on the contrary. What I am here suggesting is that such an import is in general attributed for incomplete, partial reasons. There is no doubt that, in the first place, and with little changes, the Conference

⁴³) **The following is the relative world-distribution of British foreign investment by continent, between 1865 and 1914, in %:**

North and South America – 51% (of which the US – 34%);

Asia and Australasia – 24%;

Europe – 13%;

Africa – 11%;

(Simon, 1968: 23; Wickins, 1981: 297)

established a structural relationship between the objectives of the European presence in Africa and the concept of effective occupation. Contrary to what is often repeated, however, this was a very vague, unclear, indecisive conceptual definition, apparently applicable only to the coastal areas (Alexandre, 1998: 113). In the final document of the Conference, the Berlin Act of 1895, its characterization is, probably intentionally, left fuzzy, vague, and general. And it is not true that it is there characterized as being the basic principle of European presence in Africa, its central feature. This means that, basically, with small differences, the Conference recognized the *status quo*. Secondly, by accepting and formalizing in its conclusions very vague principles, it left open the decision of major questions -- and, among them, that of the political geography of an effective occupation. In other words, the Conference opened the door to the diplomatic, interstate recognition of the division of the continent among its participants and, in so doing, legitimated it. But the effective division, the carving up, was still to come.

Thirdly, the Berlin Act stated as well a new principle as essential to the harmonious exploitation of Africa. According to it, the basins of the Niger and Zaire Rivers had to be opened up to free trade, free navigation, and the free circulation of people and goods. Its meaning was, obviously, to serve as a precedent to the opening up of the whole continent. This was an imposition, we can easily conclude, of the old hegemonic power trying to defend her overseas markets. But this was also against what, in the meantime, had become the accepted colonial practice all over the continent. As Wack describes it, “under the operation of the old *Pacte Colonial*, the policy which prevailed in the colonies of the European Powers discriminated greatly against the subjects of all save the mother country. The commercial policy of such colonies was that of the Power which governed the colonial territory, whether

that was an extension of the home territory or merely a dependency” (1905: 104). In other words, against the increasing and often violent competition reflected in the closed policies of an ascending protectionism, free trade was presented and accepted as a solution. Although clearly stated in the Berlin Act as one of its principles, as it had already been assumed as such in Vienna in 1848, it was however condemned, in its application to African colonialism, to be little more than a theoretical reference. The main reason was that, as Arrighi tells us, “beyond certain limits there was *a fundamental incompatibility between free international circulation of goods and ideas and the development of politico-military rivalry among states*” (1983: 55; emphasis in the original). This meant that, apart from Great Britain, no European power appeared interested in implementing it in Africa. Their colonies became condemned to be closed and isolated from the rest of the world. The globalization of the principle of free-trade was not, however, a gratuitous reference. In many other situations it was used as the main argument to “legitimate” the opening up, often by the force of European and American gunships, other non-European regions and their corresponding markets.

Finally, Berlin sanctioned the principle of the installation of political European administrations in the continent. More than the principle of effective occupation or that of free trade, this was in the context I am discussing it here, the most innovative of the measures assumed by its delegations. Wack was well aware of it in 1905: “The Berlin Act and the economic, that is, domestic, régime[s] which it sought to establish [...] were, with various inadequacies and experimental defects, the logical expression of the drift that political science as applied to the law of nations had assumed in Europe as early as 1874” (104). It was, also, assumed in relation to what apparently can be seen as a pyrrhic, almost superfluous question. When the so called

Congo Free State was accepted as an extensive territorially bounded political unit in Central Africa, the King of the Belgians, Leopold, presented himself as its King. Accordingly, the Congolese people would become his subjects in Africa just like, or almost like, the Belgian people were his subjects in Europe. This was not a completely new procedure. Both Great Britain and Portugal, as well as, to a lesser extent, other European powers, had already applied all over the non-European world forms of local governance in many of their overseas territories. Usually, this was done by linking them to their respective Crowns and to state regulating institutions in intrinsic relationship both with their local economic objectives and their nationals who had settled there. But the local exercise of power was made in terms of personal representations, usually of the king or queen, not as an extension of the metropolitan state apparatus and its institutions.

What was new in the relationship of the European core and Africa in the late 19th century was then the effective imposition of the power and sovereignty of the European states over and above all other forms of exercise of local political power. This meant that, first of all, expansion started to assume the meaning of political occupation. Secondly that political occupation represented as well the administration and submission of the local peoples and their structures of power. Finally that the colonial administrations were the only authorities as such recognized and legitimized by the core. In other words, the colonial administrations already installed or to be installed in Africa would be, from then on, in each one of the territories of the continent, a direct extension of the political, juridical and financial attributes of their metropolitan states. Quoting Hobson (282), Arrighi points out, “what was above all now occurring was not the territorial expansion of the nation (of its settlers) but the extension of its

political power to territories, far or near, of peoples 'too foreign to be absorbed and too compact to be permanently crushed'" (1983: 37). To a great extent, this principle was legitimized by the conclusions of the Berlin Conference.

To the characterization of European colonialism in Africa the extension of the power of the European state with the generalized imposition of its spatial, diplomatic and political features in what was a hazy adaptation to a completely different environment, is fundamental. A parenthesis is, however, required here. That extension and imposition of the state only became possible because, for the first time, the Europeans possessed the medical and military technological capacity to do it. After the mid-19th century they had become able to confront the diseases affecting and weakening them in the continent, among which the debilitating effects and the elevated death rates till then provoked by malaria. Simultaneously, they were able to increase and consolidate their military superiority, in particular through the relatively quick evolution of the armaments used by their armies in the process of submission of the African peoples. This evolution can be observed, for instance, in what concerns the type of individual guns used by the European forces in Africa. In the first decades of the 19th century the Europeans in Africa were using old muskets in which a small range of fire was even more restricted by a difficult and slow operation. In the mid century, however, the musket had already been substituted by the much more efficient and precise breech-loading rifle. But this evolution continued and, in the eve of the 20th century the European soldiers in the continent were generally armed with even more deadly and devastating guns of quick repetition. What this means is that modern colonialism was possible in Africa because the use of force by the Europeans achieved levels that made obsolete and easily defeated most of the traditional

strategies and their instruments of confrontation against foreign invasion of the continent (Illiffe, 1998: 192-93).

The fact that the occupation of Africa was as well a military occupation was not solely determined by the need of the colonial administrations to confront local resistance and local rebellions. To be sure, this was the main objective. The escalation of armament in many of the colonial territories was destined to be as well an element of dissuasion against other European colonial powers. Oliver and Fage point out, however, that armed conflicts between the nationals of different European powers “became increasingly frequent” (1993: 190).

Here, once again, we have the evidence that Africa was primordially considered by the core in accordance with very specific considerations of a geo-strategic order. More than the interests of capital, already being served in the continent, it was a global context characterized by a growing inter-core preparation for war that led, in the following years, to the formalization of the division of Africa. But division meant, implicitly, that a new, multi-polar system of political and economic decision making for African affairs (Alexandre 1998: 112) was replacing the African influence of Great Britain as the dominant power of the world-economy. It was, consequently, an expression of the increasing inter-rivalry and competition between the economic interests of renewed European powers among themselves and between them and an old, declining hegemony. Accordingly, it reflected their defense and security interests in terms of a growing militarism equilibrated by a permanently renewed systemic balance of forces. The various objectives, economic interests and geo-strategic considerations, are interrelated to an extent that they are usually considered as being a single one. But in the characterization of

colonialism in Africa as a way to look at the continent today, it is important to separate and consider each one of them separately.

This will help us as well to understand the particular historical trajectory of the Portuguese presence in Southern Africa, since the late fifteenth century and its transformation into a characteristically weak Portuguese colonialism. Because, here once again, it seems obvious to me that if the interests of capital were the main reason for the partition of Africa then Portugal would have been a more or less marginalized participant in the division of the continent. More than that, it would have ended up with its (very limited and non-effective) African presence substituted by those of Germany, Great Britain or France. However, and because what would strategically benefit Germany or France would be against the British interests and vice versa, the very weak and underdeveloped Iberian country ended up as one of the main beneficiaries of the African partition. In other words, Portugal was not as Wesseling pretends the great and only loser (1997: 91-92). It is true that a great part of the so called Pink Colored Map was alienated into the formation of the Congo Free State (Alexandre, 1998: 113). With it, Berlin also destroyed the banner under which a relatively influent expansionist movement in Portugal was claiming for the exclusive rights to inter-African trade and domination between the coasts of Mozambique and Angola, But it is as well true that Portugal, as “a small, underdeveloped country already with difficulties to manage an empire too vast to its resources”, was able to keep a crucial part of its African territories (Alexandre 1998: 113-14).

Following strategies historically used to keep its independence in relation to a stronger Castile, Portuguese diplomacy decided and was able to assume in relation to the crossfire of interests

about Africa the role and position of a potential, future ally for each one and all of the main colonizing powers. Because for the Germans and for the French, a Portuguese alliance could be an asset against Britain, they picked it up. To be sure, they were aware of the British pressures and aspirations to important areas traditionally occupied by the Portuguese and, in particular, to those allowing the access to the Indian Ocean of the landlocked Transvaal and the future Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The Portuguese would need, consequently, new, strong allies and supporters like Germany or France to be able to confront the British pretensions. For the British, on the other hand, the fidelity of their old and very weak ally was never in question -- notwithstanding small problems and tensions seen by both sides as possible of being overcome. Besides, the alternative would have been a triple division of the territories claimed by Portugal, against the British interests and possibilities to control the region. And, to be sure, they expected that the Portuguese would have, sooner or later, to ask for the help of their traditional friends to be able to defend themselves against Germany -- as they had always, historically, counted on them against Spain or, for that matter, against France.

This is why the colonial rights of Portugal to a great part of Southern Africa ended up being acknowledged, at least theoretically. More than that, and notwithstanding the loss of part of its territory to the Congo Free State in Berlin, the Portuguese came out of the talks with at least the illusion that a future international recognition for the remaining part of the territories they claimed between Angola and Mozambique was still a possibility. In Berlin, surprisingly, the nationalist and expansionist Pink Colored Map was destroyed -- but not totally put aside by the Portuguese as an impossible, delirious dream. Part of the territories making the east-west linkage remained open to dispute. And, in its pretensions to them against those of Great

Britain, the Portuguese received a more or less open recognition and acceptance from the French and German states (Alexandre: 116).

In Portugal, this was reflected, obviously, into a justified public expectation that served to at least temporarily overcome the collective pain felt about the lost territories. But it was also the main reason why the 1890 British Ultimatum (⁴⁴) for the abandonment of all the Portuguese pretensions to those intermediate territories and its immediate acceptance by Lisbon led to an immense and generalized humiliation of the Portuguese political elites (Alexandre: 114) that soon mutated into an increasing political opposition to the Monarchy. Twenty years afterwards this opposition culminated into the collapse of the House of Braganza and the proclamation of the Portuguese Republic. It was also as a result of the Ultimatum of 1890 that the territorial boundaries of today's Mozambique and Angola ended up being mapped and recognized as such in the following year (Alexandre, 1998: 119). The borders of today Southern Africa were not a result of the Berlin Conference.

Of the two main objectives for the division of Africa, the economic exploitation of the continent is what usually is considered when discussing this period. Hobson described it as the result of the manipulations of a small group of monopolists and financiers, who were trying to enlarge their profits by investing abroad and, consequently, reducing wages of the metropolitan workers while increasing their production. For him, the movement for the advancement of

⁴⁴ The British Ultimatum to Portugal in January 11, 1890, consisted of a brief diplomatic note stating that Portugal had to retire its military forces and subjects from the areas in conflict (Chire and Machona) under the explicit threat of rupture of diplomatic relations and, implicitly, of the use of military force (See Alexandre, 1998: 111-118).

Africa was no more than a sentimental factor to make easier the financial objectives implicit in the new colonialism or imperialism (Hobson 1902/1991). This is also one of the theses defended by Lenin (1917). According to it, it was the needs of monopolistic capitalism to expand and find new regions for profitable investments that led to partition. And political control, the specificity of colonialism, was required because it was a guarantee for the extraction of greater profits. There is however no concrete evidence about those manipulations of capital. And, as Hobson also points out, the balance between the costs of colonialism and its profits started by being and was still in the passage from the 19th to the 20th century a very negative balance. On the other hand, the evidence is that neither the Berlin Conference nor the partition or occupation of Africa itself aroused the interest of business men (Wickins 1981: 296) -- that is to say: the interest of capital.

On the other hand, the need to increase profits was, indeed, a permanent objective in the relationship between the systemic core and Africa: in the nineteenth century, as before, after, and as it continues to be today, in the early twenty-first century. It is, consequently, a long-term, structural objective. Following Schumpeter this point could better be resumed by saying that although capital was probably more or less indifferent about the partition of Africa in the 19th century it did not excluded the possibility of taking advantages of it in the future (1919 (1960): 91 and passim). Or, in the words of Collins, “clearly, the mother country profited from colonial trade and raw materials, but the economic benefits were more the derivative advantage of colonialism than its driving force” (1969: 231).

This is the reason why, in my approach, the second purpose, the beginnings of colonialism based on objectives that are primordially of a geo-strategic nature, appears at least as important. Formal colonialism also means, and meant especially in Africa, what I call **pre-emptive colonialism** (Mota Lopes, 1991), the occupation of potentially profitable areas not to exploit them directly but to “neutralize” in them the possibility of their competitive exploitation. Germany, namely, is a good example of this attitude. As Iliffe tells us, it had “no wish” for African colonies (1995: 188). But, somehow reluctantly and as late as 1884 it ended up installing protectorates in South-West Africa, Cameroon and Togo, with the stated objective of protecting its commercial interests in the continent (Iliffe 1995: 188-89). In similar terms to those I used above to explain the particular case of Portugal, the division of Africa among the big powers of the time and its formal colonization represented, as Stavrianos points out, not only “what would be gained through annexation [of new overseas areas] but what would be lost through [their] annexation by others” (1981: 261-262). It is, consequently, an objective that must be considered within a shorter, conjunctural period of historical time.

In this materialization of pre-emptive colonialism, two other, different, social processes can as well be identified. They are mentioned here also because of their historical and cumulative impact in the general situation of Africa today. The first one, probably found as well in other situations of inter-core competition and rivalry, concerns both the limitation of areas of production and the very reduced number of export commodities in which each one of the colonies and other peripheral territories quickly tended to specialize itself. To be sure, this was a requirement of the international division of labor. It was also a result of the fact that agriculture and mining in Africa were complementary suppliers of raw materials for the

respective colonial centers. But this can as well be considered as a way to reduce risks, by not invading domains of production of rival colonial powers, and to keep those territories out of inter-core competition. This hypothesis is suggested by the following: more than 11 million square miles of the outside world were annexed between 1876 and 1914. However, in the eve of the World War I the European industrial powers were still each other's best customers (Landes, 1969: 241). As far as Africa is concerned, the totality of its exports to Britain in the last quarter of the 20th century, although the most important of all the continent in quantitative and qualitative terms, never surpassed 5% of total British imports. As Hobson writes in his classic study about European imperialism, "at whatever figure we estimate the profits in this trade, it forms an utterly insignificant part of our national income, while the expenses connected directly and indirectly with the acquisition, administration and defense of these possessions must swallow an immeasurably larger sum". The trade from Africa, he underlines, is "the smallest, least progressive, and most fluctuating in quantity, while it is lowest in the character of the goods which it embraces" (1909/1991: 39-40). This is a situation that, and as it will be discussed below, appears as undoubtedly being very similar to what seems to be happening today. On the other hand, the fact that the expenditures with defense were much superior to the profits from trade seems as well to underline the central importance of objectives that are mostly of a geo-strategic nature and its materialization into what I call a dominantly pre-emptive colonialism in the European scramble for Africa.

There was however a second and equally important conjunctural objective. In somehow classical terms, Gunder Frank describes it as being also "the first problem the Europeans faced to build an export economy—or any kind of economy: ...to assure themselves of a supply of

labor and to eliminate or control rival indigenous sources of employment and of competitive agricultural produce” (1979: 160). Then as today (although probably more important today in the case of Africa) it seems clear that part of the periphery has to be maintained as a potential reserve of unskilled and extra-cheap labor. In the perspective of capital, it constitutes a powerful dissuasion to labor and its organizations to push to the limits their challenging of capital. This is true within the core but also is true of the ways capital follows to control and exploit labor and resources out of it. Rosa Luxembourgh, namely, was among the first to point out such a relationship with control strategies of areas of production. It is also related, she adds, with the fact that “capitalist production can develop fully only with complete access to all territories and climes... [and so] **it must be able to mobilize world labor power without restriction**” (1951: 362; emphasis added).

This reflection about the pre-emptive characteristic of formal colonialism confirms once again that the absence of development of the productive forces in Africa and the corresponding structural distortions on them imposed by colonialism are the result of specific processes of capital accumulation at the center of the world-economy. Simultaneously, those processes limited the internal development of each one of the colonies **and** the expansion of their economic exploitation in response to political conditions among and within the core countries. These processes are probably less evident in situations of rivalry and increasing competition but the permanent existence of peripheral reserves of cheap labor seems to be as important to the core powers of the capitalist world-economy as a regular supply of labor force. As a reality or as a permanent possibility, it is the existence of those reserves of cheap labor that makes possible the organized regularity of supply of labor force. One would not be possible without

the other. They complement one another. It is a necessary condition, in short, for the self-reproduction, expansion, and survival of the capitalist world-system -- in the 19th century as today.

Notwithstanding, formal colonialism in its expansion and consolidation in the continent represented also an increase of economic exploitation of the African resources and of domination of its peoples. This happened, namely, during what was above referred to as a third period of partition of Africa, the period between 1887 and 1913-20. It coincided with a phase of quick industrial expansion of the world-economy, usually considered as the A phase of the Kondratieff cycle that, starting in the late 19th century will prolong itself to 1913-1920. Those tendencies and objectives were then possible to be consolidated inside the new administrative divisions of Africa. They reflected themselves not only in the expansion of already established chartered and concessionary companies, but also in the creation of new ones engaged in cash crop agriculture, on trading, and, mainly after the turn of the century, in mining operations (CEA: 1980).

With relatively small investments, those companies were able to gather and accumulate in their countries of origin huge colonial profits. In connection with their governments, they defined to a great extent the process of exploitation in Africa, attracted growing numbers of white immigrants from Europe, and were simultaneously cause and effect of the generalized use of forced labor. When the deterioration of economic conditions at the center affected the demand

and prices of the very limited number of primary products they exported ⁽⁴⁵⁾ and in which they tended to specialize as large scale producers, they passed out the losses for the local producers reducing the prices of the products they bought and increasing those of the goods they imported to sell locally. In other words, situations of crisis for those enterprises did not mean innovation and diversification but merely the intensification of the processes of labor exploitation.

Active and centralizing colonial administrations, in place and capable of imposing various forms of taxation and guarantee an abundant and cheap labor force, made all this possible. Simultaneously, these administrations promoted and got involved in public works to serve the growing needs of production and export of cash-crops and minerals. Towns were built with this objective and labor and capital was invested in administration, roads, railways, harbors and other infrastructures. This was also how the territorial and political space of Africa was reconstructed according to characteristics that divided it into at least three, different but highly interrelated socio-economic and cultural areas of livelihood. In the first place, modern urban zones of export-import and administration were constructed, usually at the sea shore. They were built to be simultaneously in contact with the rest of the colony and with the world-economy **through** their respective colonial centers in Europe. Secondly, there were the vast rural areas of the interior where cash crops were produced usually through the use of a vast array of constraint methods. It was also there that colonialism recreated the existing households in order to make them accessories in its control, access and exploitation of labor and other

⁴⁵⁾ This situation was already then aggravated by the competition of similar products from the United States (vegetable oils and fats), from India (groundnuts), from Australia (tallow), from Latin America (coffee, cocoa, etc).

resources. Finally, there was the formation of an intermediary area, capable of supplying the food and functioning as a permanent labor reserve to the needs of the urban zone. This tripartite geographic division continues to be the dominant spatial structure of production in Africa today. The main difference, if it this is looked at against what was happening during colonialism, is that the links between the towns and the other two zones tend today to become increasingly weaker in a great number of cases or have already been more or less completely disrupted by internal conflicts and the violence of structural adjustment, in others.

To be sure, many of the elements discussed in the previous analysis are common to the situation as it was lived in Southern Africa at the same time. However, we must not totally generalize them. Important socio-economic variations result in what are different socio-economic conjunctures in the region. Notably, the discovery of gold in the Transvaal in a critical and particularly complex conjuncture of contraction of the world-economy and the dynamism it brought not only to South Africa but to the whole region was a fundamental element of its differentiation in relation to the rest of the continent. As I will now try to show, this is what led to distinctive forms of colonial occupation, exploitation and oppression in the region -- leading to what became as well different forms of anti-colonial resistance, struggle and liberation.

4. MFECANE, MAPPING, AND MAKING OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

One of the direct consequences of colonialism was, therefore, the gradual destruction of the locally based, African alternative processes of incorporation in the capitalist world-economy.

As already discussed above, those processes were very different from the forms of colonialism and imperialism that followed. On the other hand, this transformation had already started and was being consolidated when, in 1884 and in the presence of an attentive United States delegation, the main powers of the European core met in Berlin to discuss some of its aspects. It was there that the new reality being imposed on the peoples of the continent started to be formalized to assume new stages of core legitimacy. For them this was necessary because, in an unprecedented way, that new reality was being accompanied and guaranteed by the extension into the continent of core administrative, political, and military machineries and their local installation. Moreover, and besides a more direct and in depth plundering of labor and other resources, the colonial occupation of Africa had among its objectives, and also as already contended, very specific considerations of a geo-strategic nature. It was those considerations that were often transmuted into priorities leading to territorial occupation. In other words, both the gradual occupation of Africa and, for that matter, the Berlin Conference had economic objectives that were intrinsically European. They had been set up to be played as trump cards in the conflicts and competition within the core (July 1998: 298). Consequently, neither the wellbeing, nor the objectives or the interests of the peoples of the continent had to be taken into account.

In what concerns southern Africa, in general, the Cape and Natal colonies, in particular, it was with a certain degree of delay in chronological terms that partition started to be imposed into the region. To be sure, the Cape colony continued for a long time to be considered by the British, as late as the mid-1880's, as being little more than a scale to and from India, the Jewel of the Crown. At the same time, the Portuguese, in the words of a contemporary observer,

continued to limit themselves to the eastern African seashore and to “cling to it **as crabs do**” (Brazio 1843/1942, my emphasis ML). For more than two hundred years they had not expanded their interests besides those related with trade in slaves and ivory. They had continued, as well, to dream their dreams of abundant gold. Although indirectly disputed in Berlin, the region did not justify yet, as it had been required by other colonial regions of the continent, a process of pacification and conquest tending to neutralize effective or eventual threats to their occupation and security.

Two events were necessary to move the British and, later on, the Portuguese, out of their local lethargy. First, Germany took over a vast region in southwest Africa in 1884 and tried to link it with the Boer Republics in the meantime created against the will of Great Britain in the Transvaal. The response was the British establishment of a protectorate over the people living between the two areas through the creation of Bechuanaland (July 1998: 308), today’s Botswana. This was the beginning of a complex process of competition between the two European powers for the hearts and minds of the Boers and their Republics that I have already discussed in a previous chapter. Because neither hearts nor minds were conquered, the result for the British ended up being a military solution, the so called Boer War or First South African War. Secondly, and even more important, because diamonds first, gold afterwards, were discovered in the region and started to be exploited. The strong financial impact of the latter in the overcome of the severe cyclical crisis then being lived by the core of the world-economy soon changed everything.

It can consequently be said that it was gold, its discovery, systematic exploitation, and, principally, its regional and systemic impact that established the rupture between the past and the future of southern Africa. It started to construe it as an integrated and incorporated region of the world-economy. It was in the process of that transformation and regional construction that South Africa, as a political formation, started its trajectory from the margins of the periphery, to the periphery and, soon after, to the semi-periphery of the world-economy. In other words, it was through that process that South Africa became the dominant economic power of an integrated region.

Moreover, it was the discovery of gold that brought to its end the process of localized, alternative socio-economic transformation that, also in the region, had started when slavery and the slave trade were abolished. A process of transformation initiated and led by local structures of power and their dominant elites. Basically their objective had been the local substitution of the slave trade, still a very profitable activity, by other forms of trade -- trade in products which, obviously, had to respond to the demands of the world market. This happened both in the Cape, as slavery became officially abolished there, between 1828 and 1833 (⁴⁶), and in the rest of the southern part of southern Africa. In particular, this is what later on happened in the vast region centered on and to the north of Delagoa Bay where an even longer and more complex process of abolition was started, some years afterwards (Capela 1993; 2002, *passim* but, in particular, p. 228-81).

⁴⁶) **Breaking the Chains, Slavery and its Legacy in the Nineteenth-Century Cape Colony**, edited by Nigel Worden & Clifton Crais (1994: Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press) brings together an important collection of texts about slavery in the southernmost part of Southern Africa. See, in particular, the editors' Introduction (p. 1-24) and Clifton Cries: Slavery and Emancipation in Eastern Cape, p. 271-88.

Basically, then, what in structural terms happened in southern Africa was very similar to what had before happened in the western coast of the continent. In both situations, we find that their main features are identical. As slave labor became illegitimated, local elites and their structures of political power in contact with settlers, traders and trading ships demanding the region, organized themselves to utilize the situation in order to continue to benefit from the expansion of the world-economy.

I have to mention, here, however, that this objective could be and was sometimes the opposite. African elites also organized themselves and their peoples to directly resist and confront the effects of that same expansion. Both types of response existed often side by side. Notably, we find the strongest cases of an anti-systemic response as we get away from the Delagoa Bay and, along the coast, get nearer the territories and peoples living northwards. But we will find there as well the strongest cases of social units that continued to be slave-traders as they had been before and others that in the 19th century transformed themselves with that same objective. Different historical trajectories had led, there, to what became very different responses and forms of articulation to the local impact of the development of the world-economy under the dominant form of slavery and the slave trade. To be sure, the historical forms of articulation with the northern Indian Ocean systems of trade of the so called Swahili areas were continuing, as active as they had been historically, if not more. What then happened, as already pointed out above, was that the beginning of the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade to the Americas, including Brazil, resulted there in the rise of new forms of slaving and slave trade this time through the southern Indian Ocean. The consequence was, to be sure, a steady increase of slaving in the area to levels never before achieved. The new demand for

slaves was not only quantitatively greater but also cumulative with what historically had been and continued to be a regular demand in slaves from the vast Middle Eastern and Asian regions, as far as China, through the northern Indian Ocean. Moreover, and also in the 19th century, increasing labor-shortages suffered by the sugar producing Indian Ocean islands, then under French colonial administration, started as well to be solved with slaves from the area. Besides being the main supplier of the needs in slaves of the northern Indian Ocean, the coast and hinterland of what today is Mozambique started as well to supply them to Brazil and Cuba as well as to the Mauritius, Reunion, and Madagascar.

That complementarily of a continued slave trade to Asia with this shift in the flows of slaves from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean brought new benefits to local slave traders, old or new, and notably to those of the Swahili coast. At the same time, however, that increasing demand was resisted and confronted in some other coastal areas and to the interior of the continent by other social and political units of the region. As previously discussed, they either tried to isolate themselves, namely by migrating to other areas, or more often they responded to the new demands as they had confronted the old ones: by migrating away from the area or, more often, through their systematic, often violent rejection.

There were three main consequences from the shift to the Indian Ocean of an important part of the Atlantic slave labor flows and the increasing demand they determined. In the first place the whole area became the stage of a ceaseless, very violent and destructive war. Secondly, it led to the quick enrichment and to the increasing power of many of the leading elites of the social formations involved in the growing slaving and slave trading. They included, perhaps

dominantly, the slave-masters of the Zambezi Prazos. Thirdly, it resulted in the generalization of constant slave-riding military operations that deeply affected the security of the peoples of the region affecting them at the same time in social, political, economic and demographic terms. They affected as well the way they related themselves with one another.

This was substantially different from what was then happening in the southernmost Indian Ocean coast and in southern Africa. To be sure, and to go back to the point I was discussing above about their structural similitude, the fact is that when we place side by side western and southern Africa in the 19th century, important distinctions between the two regions become as evident as their similarities. In the first place and in what concerns the Cape region, it was the arrival and local settlement of an increasing number of Europeans that started to change it deeply. They originated, as Ngubane tells us “a chain of reactions which continues to this day to influence the relations between black and white” (Ngubane 1971: 2). Europeans who, after the expiration of their contracts remained in the region and established themselves as farmers soon started to be increasingly followed by other Europeans in search of a better life. For that they needed land. And, in the context, this meant that they would force the local peasants out of their land and of the pastures of their cattle. This expulsion of the African population, by force or not, led to their reduction in number, to disease and to general impoverishment (Ngubane 1971: 1-23). Secondly, and as a consequence, the reference to local elites in southern Africa includes also those formed by European settlers of different nationalities. Among them, there were the descendants of the first Dutch colonists, the Boer. Initially the dominant colonial elite, they had however started to be replaced in that role by British settlers, a cause and a consequence of the local expansion of Great Britain.

Dissatisfied with the British growing presence and, in particular, with the local prohibition of using slaves, a measure which they considered illegitimate, foreign, and an interference in their ways of living, the Boers decided to forsake the colony and, after the mid-century, to migrate to the north in search of new land. What later on became known as the Boer Great Trek northwards has here its beginnings. Thirdly, and contrary to what was still happening in the West coast of the continent, the demand in the southern Africa region was not only for raw materials or agricultural products, including food, but also for non-slave labor. As the first attempts to import indentured labor from India and China turned out to be too expensive, this was what some of the local African kingdoms soon started to be: regular suppliers of labor power, although not as slave labor, within the region. From sellers of bodies, they became thus the sellers of the labor that those bodies made possible to be exploited by capital. This soon became an important complement to the role they had been already locally fulfilling, that of suppliers of food, including agricultural products and meat, not only to local settlers, their families, their workers, administrative officers and soldiers but also, mostly, to fulfill the needs of the ships regularly demanding the region, both through the Cape and through its most important port of the time, at Delagoa Bay. Fourthly, and also somehow very different from what was happening in the western coast, the post-slavery period in southern Africa was characterized by a long and deadly period of confrontation among local structures of power, and their elites, both African and European, against one another and amongst themselves.

A fifth feature in the characterization of southern Africa in relation to what was then happening or had happened before in the western coast of the continent must be as well mentioned here:

the local introduction of maize, mostly by Dutch settlers. Soon becoming the basic food staple of the region, the cultivation of maize in the Cape colony had two or three interrelated consequences that were going to deeply affect its social and economic development. To start with, the introduction and generalization of its consumption was reflected in a very quick demographic increase of the African population. At the same time, it made them more vulnerable because more liable to be affected by drought and other natural calamities. This was a direct consequence of maize being, contrary to local food staples, ecologically less equipped to resist and endure the southern Africa environment. The result was frequent crop failures leading to frequent periods of hunger. In what concerned the occupation of land, this complicated situation became even more complex due to the continuous arrival of settlers or by their migration northwards. Moreover, and as all this became a decisive factor in the struggle and competition for land and other scarce resources in the region, the local populations became gradually more poor, more destitute and, consequently, more dependent on the European settlers. To be sure, we can detect here all the deleterious effects of European colonialism in Africa, from the brutality of the forced foreign occupation to generalized hunger, conflict, dependency and increasing underdevelopment. This is how southern Africa was somehow transformed, despite all the possible distinctions, into a kind of micro-cosmos of what was as well happening in the rest of the continent

In the general characterization of the region, a last feature must be as well pointed out. To a great extent it summarizes and brings together most of the other features. It was for the first time and in “an almost revolutionary” way (Introduction JSAS 2001: 399) made clear in the work of Shula Marks (Oliver and Sanderson ed, 1975: Volume 6). According to her, more than

one thousand years before the first Dutch speaking immigrants arrived at the region, African farmers were already working and harvesting its land, tilling its soils, brewing beer and ranching cattle. Besides appropriating the best land, land which was already occupied and was being worked, the arrival of the Europeans did not represent the advancement and improvement with which it is usually associated. Based on anthropological and historical evidence, Marks assertion is as well validated by 16th century narratives of Portuguese sailors. Recovering from local shipwrecks, they tell us how they were received and cared for by Xhosa and Zulu families who would then take them to the Delagoa Bay, in today's Mozambique, for them to be able to join the ships frequently arriving there and return back home (Documentos sobre os Portugueses na Africa Oriental, Vol IV; Teal). They also tell us that the routes they followed towards Delagoa and under the guidance of their rescuers were as well used for local and long distance trade. This means, we have to conclude, that the southern part of the African continent was already by then being constituted into an integrated region, into a more or less consolidated interrelationship of social, trading and cultural networks.

Newly arrived settlers, however, ignored or did not want to know about the past. They saw themselves as legitimate pioneers beginning new processes of development. Moreover, they were convinced that they were the real embodiment and representation of the values of Christendom and civilized progress against savage barbarism. This is important because it became one of the foundational strains of the structures of knowledge and ideology of a vast majority of white South Africans (⁴⁷). It continues to be, today, undeniably present in the post-

⁴⁷ Notwithstanding the fact that the evidence “that black peoples had long preceded white peoples as the pioneers on all of Southern Africa frontiers” started to be reluctantly accepted in official South African schools and state public discourse in the early 1970s.

apartheid country. More than that, we find already in that settler ideology the seeds of what was becoming in the 19th century and is still in our time a dominant paradigm of core-based knowledge in its relationship with the rest of the world. We find here, in short, the seeds of “developmentalism”. To be sure, what the generalized ignorance of the Cape settlers was already expressing in its more basic form was “the assumption that “societies” pass through stages towards common end-points” (Wallerstein, 1977: 6). They were the first, the foundation of those stages. Or so they thought.

On the other hand, it was the convergence of all these factors with the changing trading, social or cultural behaviors of the local European and African structures of power that, from the 1830’s onwards, originated or made even more violent the interconnection and mutual strengthening of effects and consequences that, for the following one hundred years, were going to restructure southern Africa transforming it into Southern Africa. As it is possible to conclude from the above-mentioned reports of Portuguese sailors, even those region-making conditions or potentialities were already being locally generated much before the arrival and settlement of Europeans at the Cape. What started to happen as the 19th century came to its end was, however, a qualitatively very different process, a process of the capitalist world-economy.

On the other hand, it was in the intersection of the European often brutal settlement in the region, in their local and systemic implications, with the history and livelihood of the local peoples that determined the rise and setting off of two, large scale social movements. In both cases, those of the so called Zulu Mfecane and of the Boer Great Trek northwards, they ended up leading to armed conflicts and war with the dominant or aspiring colonial powers of the

region, in particular with Great Britain and Portugal. As such, they deeply affected and changed southern Africa. But not only: at the same time they created the conditions and, in the perspective of the core, the justifications for its systemic transformation. This coincided in time with two other social processes. The first was the slow but effective increase of the interest and, consequently, of the presence of the Portuguese in what soon after became known as Portuguese East Africa or later on, as the Portuguese overseas province of Mozambique. The second was the advance being locally made by the British. Notably, further north, that expansionism was being led by another arm of British imperialism, the British-South African Company or BSACO. In both margins of the Zambezi River and in a great part of central Africa, it was the all-powerful BSACO that recreated the conditions for new processes of multi-directional colonial expansion under the Union Jack.

In the formation of Southern Africa we have consequently in the 19th century four crucial processes of occupation and social change that unfolded more or less simultaneously. Besides the changes introduced by the new Portuguese attempts to control their territories, including an exponentially increasing slave-trade in the central and northern areas of today's Mozambique, there was the Mfecane and the conditions that culminated into the first South African War. Finally, there was the course of action through which, in the last years of the century, an already terminal British Empire started to expand and consolidate its control over the region – contributing at the same time to its formation and consolidation as such.

All of those processes of change follow in time and, to a great extent, can be related with the long term abolition of the slave trade and, in particular, with the systemic reasons that

determined it. Nevertheless, they are very different processes, of very different types. They were intrinsically related because they had the same structural origin. As the Portuguese attempts to establish a coherent colonial policy in the region in the 19th century has already been discussed, I will now turn to the three other social processes then in progress and changing southern Africa into Southern Africa.

In what concerns the Mfecane, the first of the two great regional social movements, it involved the great majority of the peoples of southern Africa from Natal-KwaZulu to Tanzania into large scale geographic migrations and resettlements often based or leading to violent and deadly armed conflicts. Its beginnings can be dated from 1818. Its open manifestations of violence and war can be said to have started to wind down only in the 1840s. Its consequences, however, continued to be felt in the following years, they are still very much present today in the region. They included a vast reorganization of the regional space and the transformation of its peoples in terms of identity or ethnicity, of access to resources and of territorial settlement.

In its more restrict meaning the Mfecane had its origins in what is today known as KwaZulu-Natal. It soon became a complex process of military and ethnic reorganization of a great part of the southern Africa region, from its southernmost point to the north of the Zambezi, first, beyond the Rovuma River and into modern Tanzania, afterwards. Many reasons and causes are usually mentioned when trying to explain the Mfecane. They include factors internal to the various African political units involved, some of them related with disrespected succession rights and other types of localized social tensions. More important, however, are the explanations that point to an increasing competition for scarce resources in a region where

demographic growth and a growing European occupation made them even scarcer. At the same time, the activities of slave raiding centered in Delagoa Bay were, as already discussed, tending to an end (Hamilton 1995). But not only because, notably, the access to ivory necessary to trade for goods like cloth, beads and brass used to guarantee the following by juniors and buy cattle (Mitchell, 2002: 371) started as well to decline. This was mainly due to the quick contraction by hunting of existing elephant herds in the region. In short, the increasing competition to supply the settlers, traders and sea merchants growing demand for slaves and ivory in a situation in which both were becoming scarce had resulted in the adoption of other alternatives. Among them, the supply of food to European and American whalers and other intercontinental ships calling at Delagoa (Hedges 1978; Mitchell: Ibidem). This resulted, however, in the multiplication of what was already a great level of competition that soon turned into frequent armed conflicts among chiefdoms. To be sure, the situation was used for and complicated by cattle raiding, land occupation and, in an escalation of violence, by the sale of guns and ammunition by the European traders.

On the other hand and as already mentioned, the introduction of maize cultivation in the 18th century had resulted in a quick growth of the demographic rates of the African population. The substitution of local crops, more environmentally adequate, had however reduced their capability of resisting natural mishaps like the frequent droughts that in the first half of the 19th century affected the region and the crop failures caused by them. Among other consequences, this led to important transformations in the use of the **amabutho** or military regiments. They had been initially formed to monopolize, through the intimidation of other possible African producers, the supply of the European needs for food. To confront the effects of the drought

they started to be used also for the violent conquest of more fertile land and, soon after, for geographical expansion (Wright 1995, quoted in Mitchell: 372). It led as well to the quick growth and consolidation of increasingly more strong and warring elites (Bonner 1983).

At the end of second decade of 19th century, war was escalating among different chiefdoms while others were trying to get away from the growing disorder by migrating up north. As the most fertile land was already occupied there, more conflict ensued with similar and cumulative consequences. At the same time, internal conflicts within different African groups in the region led to divisions, to new migrations, and invariably to more armed conflict. The Gaza Kingdom, in Mozambique, was a result of those internal divisions. With the Zulu Empire, it soon became one of the two the most important socio-economic territorial units of southern Africa. Other polities, resulting from similar internal conflicts and circumstances, multiplied themselves as far as today's Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania. In a similar but inverse process, many small polities integrated themselves or were forcefully incorporated into other wider and more powerful political formations which tended to form wider, regional and often very powerful coalitions.

The extended conflict of the early 19th century in southern Africa led to a generalized disruption of local polities. Among them and after long years of military expansion and war, both the Gaza Kingdom and the Zulu Empire became easy preys to European "pacification" campaigns. Mitchell, who has published an interesting archeological approach to the study of the Mfecane, concludes that the generalization of social insecurities was its main result. This was so because, he writes, they were "dramatically enhanced and eventually transformed as the

19th century witnessed the extension of colonial rule and European settlement across all of southern Africa” (2002: 379).

The second social movement that deeply affected southern Africa in the 19th century was the migration northwards of Boers or Afrikaners that culminated in the Great Trek away from the British administrative presence in the Cape. Although following a different trajectory of causal relationship, the first stages of that regional migration coincided in time with the Mfecane. It led, around the mid-1890s, to the formation or consolidation of independent, self-determined, Afrikaans or Boer republics. It was the increasing presence of Germany as well as the discovery of diamonds and gold in the territory that those republics had occupied, in particular the Afrikaner controlled Transvaal that led to the British military intervention against them. This is what is usually called the Boer War, perhaps more correctly designated as the first South African War.

Like the Mfecane, the Boer War had its conjunctural roots in the reality of the southern Africa region in the 19th century. Contrary to the Mfecane, however, the Boer War soon became a central feature in the conflicts and competition then being lived within the core of the capitalist world-economy. Notably, it will bring fully into the context a European power that, as we have already seen, was in direct political and diplomatic confrontation with Great Britain. That power was Germany.

In my discussion about the Conference of Berlin, I pointed out that Germany was, among the main European powers of the time, perhaps the least interested in Africa. This would however

change in the last decade of the century. Competing with Britain and, to a certain extent, counting on the support of Portugal after the British Ultimatum of 1890, the Reich was going to appear, in particular from 1893 onwards, as a serious contender to colonial possession in Southern Africa. It had be, in other words, Great Britain's most threatening great-power rival in the region (Henshaw 1998: 528).

Before that, and also as mentioned above, Germany had declared the region of the west coast of Africa between the Orange and Kunene rivers as her protectorate. In less than ten years, it had been able to extend its control to what became known as "South West Africa". The only serious response against it came from local peoples, in particular from the Herero and Nama. This led to what Shillington, among other authors, calls "one of the great wars of African resistance, between 1904 and 1907" (1995: 329). Although originating a beginning of unity among those peoples, the German intervention soon was able to transform it into a reality of division, dissention and conflict. As in other regions of the continent, this became the main factor of their weakness. Its military defeat and violent repression by the German army led to their submission and transformation into oppressed subordinates forced to labor in the mines and farms of the German settlers. The German occupation of today's Namibia came to an end in the early months of 1915 when it was substituted by that of the South African army at the orders of the British command involved in what was then escalating into the Great World War of 1914-1945.

Usually not taken into account, however, the colonial policy started by Germany in the first years of the last decade of the nineteenth century defined also a significant change in relation

to what had been seen till then as Bismarck's colonial policy of disinterest – or, perhaps better, of “involved disinterest”. Its first objective and for a while its field of experimentation was, as well, Southern Africa.

According to Seligmann such a policy change was the result of changes in the German governing elites. It was, for him, a function of a different world perspective and its political application at the highest levels of the Reich decision making. Explaining it, he writes that “it seems clear that the nature of Germany's South African policy was dependent upon both the composition of the administrative elite and the balance of power within it” (1998: 60 and *passim*). This is probably correct but we have to take into account that the new colonial policy of the Reich started to be implemented as the German presence in South West Africa started to be taken for granted. It happened, as well, in a phase mainly characterized, in world political and diplomatic terms, within a context of growing competition between Germany and Great Britain. We have also to take into account that the latter was facing at the time increasing difficulties in the region, both in the Transvaal with the Boers and, to a certain extent, in Mozambique with the Portuguese. The German dominant access to the region was not only made easier by these circumstances. If successful it would be another evidence of the British decline in the world-system.

It is reductive, however, to limit the interest of Germany to the region to a diplomatic game. To understand that interest we have, in particular, and dominantly, to underline the role of the strong pressures both of German-based capital, worried with the access to raw materials, and of the consequences of changes then being reflected in the formation of the German public

opinion. Moreover, and if we want to prolong on time what then was happening we can see a trajectory in the making that, following Arrighi's assertion, constitutes a characteristically nationalistic form of territorial expansion (1978: passim). In fact, the German interest in Southern Africa appears as a direct projection of the Prussian expansionism that led to the political unification of Germany (Arrighi 1978: 80). On the other hand, the German South African policy of the late nineteenth century can be also characterized by what is going to be dominant features of the world-policies of the Reich in the first half of the 20th century. Seligman points out this important aspect when he underlines that, for Germany, the "South African policy was both an end to continentalism and a prelude to Weltpolitik" (1998: 7). Finally, it is important to underline that at least two of those features will also become essential to the doctrine of National Socialism. The first was the so called principle of vital space morally justifying the need for geographical expansion by all means necessary. The second was the formation of an active public opinion based on that principle and united around the idea of the preeminence of Germany in relation to the rest of the world (Deutschland uber alles) and easily capable of being manipulated and used for its political objectives.

German colonial aspirations about Southern Africa appear, consequently, as being both a prelude for Hitler's Nazi expansionism and in the direct continuity of Bismarck's conception of colonialism.

In Southern Africa, these characteristics started to become obvious around the Transvaal issue. The open support of the Boers and their struggle for the survival of their self governing Republics was its basic objective. It was materialized at two different levels. In diplomatic,

interstate terms, Berlin started to assume strong and enduring positions against all British attempts to consolidate and expand its local influence (⁴⁸). Materially, it included the clandestine supply of armament, ammunition, and even military advisers for the rebellious Boers. Not surprisingly, this was made possible or, at least, easier, by the direct support of an important part of the Portuguese in Delagoa Bay and, indirectly, by their government.

Those German positions, principles and practice confronted head-on two of the most important features of the British policy to the region. As Henshaw reminds us, during de 1890's Whitehall had become increasingly obstinate against all possibilities of interference of rival European powers in the affairs of the region. At the same time, it was as well unyielding about the possibility of the Transvaal gaining independent access to the Indian Ocean through Delagoa Bay (Henshaw: 528). This included, to be sure, the direct control of the railway that linked Delagoa with the gold mines of the Rand.

The German objectives were, somehow, more complicated and extensive. They came about during a complex period of diplomatic confrontation with Britain. A confrontation that had as a direct consequence, as a way to neutralize it, the possibility of the partition of today's Mozambique between the two European powers.

In late 1894, when the Rand railway was being concluded, that possibility of partition was secretly formulated and discussed by both countries. According to it Germany would receive

⁴⁸) Namely, in 1895, there was the strong German opposition against the British intention of incorporating the Transvaal into the British South African economic federation to form a so-called "Greater Rhodesia" (Seligman, 1998: 75). Also, in the following year, the German strong condemnation of the Jameson raid and, against London's public version of it, the attribution of its responsibility to the British.

the northern part of the colony and Great Britain the remaining south. The separating line would be the Zambezi River. Accepted in principle, such a partition was however the object of a final condition which was never solved. It concerned, precisely, Delagoa Bay and the railway linking it to the Transvaal. The German position was that the partition of the colony could not marginalize the South African Republic. And that it would only be acceptable if both the access to the sea and the railway was attributed to it, as a third party in the agreement. In other words, the occupation of Delagoa Bay by England would not be tolerated by the Reich. And the South African Republic, a thorn in the heart of Great Britain, would have not only to be recognized but, as well, strengthened in its sovereignty. The secret partition of Mozambique between Great Britain and Germany became thus dependent of what the British often referred to as being “the key to South Africa”, the Delagoa Bay.

The Anglo-German attempt to partition Mozambique seemed to disappear immediately before but also with the beginnings of the Boer War. After a last attempt to avoid the conflict, that included a threat of military intervention, the German political interest in Southern Africa appeared to diminish. An Anglo-German agreement was signed in 1898.

Throughout the following three years of the confrontation between England and the Boers, Germany kept, as agreed and against its own public opinion, a position of neutrality towards the conflict. The alliance of Germany with the Transvaal, so feared by the British, did not happen. It ended up, as so often happens, serving the interests of German firms. Under the principle of “business is business” they became actively involved in the supply of arms, ammunitions and foodstuffs to the British forces in the region. On the other hand, further

German attempts to expand and occupy new areas in Southern Africa became once again obvious some years afterwards, during the European war. They were mainly directed to northern Mozambique, seen in Berlin as a territorial continuity to southern Tanganyika. Military invasion and occupation were however defeated by the Portuguese both militarily and through diplomatic negotiations in Europe. In the meantime German colonial interests were somehow transferred to Latin America, in particular to southern Brazil. It was with that objective that the emigration laws of Germany were specifically re-written and approved to encourage the settlement there (and in Venezuela) of its citizens (Seligman, 1998: 5).

The sudden disengagement of Germany from its support of the Boers after a long period of sustained support and immediately after the beginning of their conflict with Britain has constituted one of those open, never completely explainable events in Southern Africa history. Consequently, it has been the object of as many different interpretations as the authors approaching it. Dealing with an impressive number of primary documents, Seligmann discusses some of them to arrive at two possible or at least more plausible explanations. First, there was the eventuality that the continuation of the Reich's intervention in Southern Africa would result in the further alliance in Europe of Britain and France against Germany. Such an outcome would be highly detrimental to the German general interests (1998: 128). Secondly, Germany's retreat happened because in territorial terms the ultimate objective of her pressures on Southern Africa was not the Transvaal but the need to obtain strategic concessions from Britain in the Pacific Ocean, in Samoa. This was attained in 1899, the year in which the Boer War started, with the signature of the Samoan Agreement and Britain's acceptance of the German purchase of Spain's Pacific island territories (Seligmann 1998: 131-32). As a British

diplomat remarked at the time, Samoa and the Transvaal were not disconnected in the mind of the German emperor (mentioned in Seligmann 1998: 132). A third feature leading to the settlement concerned another possibility of the partition of the Portuguese East Africa colony, today's Mozambique. I will come back to this question below but in the context of the German-British settlement it appears as being a less important feature than the other two.

On the other hand, I contend, the role and the relative importance of German-based capitalism in Southern Africa constituted an even more important reason for the political disengagement of the Reich from Southern Africa. To fully understand it, we need to recall Arrighi's assertion that "German imperialism... neither initially possessed nor ultimately acquired a supranational capitalist dimension" (1978: 127). In other words, in a period when England, as a way to overcome its declining hegemony, was increasingly becoming the supranational financial fortress of the world-economy, the objectives of German expansion continued to be mainly based on national requirements and necessities. It is the "nationalist" character of German imperialism (Arrighi, 1978: 80) that explains the priority given by it to new commodity markets, to the direct access to resources and to provisions of a geo-strategic nature. We have here, consequently, a direct confrontation between two world powers using very different instruments of struggle. For the German producers and industry, the loss of commodity markets like those of Southern Africa would be incomparably more harmful and damaging than to their financial-based competitors in England.

This is the reason why it can be useful to look at the curve described by German trade with South Africa in the period immediately preceding the Boer War and the German relative

retreat, in political terms, from the region. In the statistics about the origin and value of goods imported by South Africa between 1892 and 1898, Germany occupies the third place in importance immediately after Great Britain and the USA, (British South Africa Export Gazette; quoted in Seligmann, 1998: Appendix 2, Trade Statistics). There is however an important difference about the three trajectories. Their values increase substantially from year to year in what concerns commodities but, in the case of German goods it registers, starting in 1896, accentuated annual declines. This would not be as important as it appears if Germany had not increased its economic participation in Southern Africa in the previous decade from practically nothing to about one fifth of all foreign capital in the region (Seligmann: 65). In other words, Southern Africa, in general, the Transvaal in particular had become one of the most important world-markets for German industry. In less than ten years, South Africa had started to import increasing amounts of German iron and steel, chemicals, machines, utensils and munitions. At the same time, a large number of the most powerful German firms had opened up South African based agencies, firms like Krupp, Siemens, Goertz or Lippert and the Deutsche and Dresdener banks. Moreover, German businesses in the Rand produced much of the water and electricity consumed in the region and detained the monopoly of whisky and dynamite (Seligmann 1998: 66).

A conclusion seems consequently possible here. It relates the importance of the Southern African market to the industry and other economic interests of Germany with her open political retreat from the region in the eve of the Boer War. Further involvement would be detrimental to those interests. The retreat was, to be sure, the best guarantee that those interests would

survive the conflict, as they indeed did. Samoa and the geo-strategic access to the Pacific Ocean complemented the packet as a cherry on a cake.

The eventuality of an Anglo-German partition of Mozambique was consequently annulled by the beginnings of the Boer War and the substantial change of the German policies in the region.

The usually called Boer War was, to be sure, two different conflicts. The first one, in 1880 and 1881 ended up with the recognition of the right of the so called Boer Republics to self-government. The second one was declared once again by the British against the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, in October 1899. Its reasons become clearer if we take into account that in the previous years the extremely rich gold deposits of the Transvaal had started to be commercially exploited. It ended up three years after with the submission of both Boer Republics. In Britain, both the public opinion and leading elites started by expecting a quick and decisive victory in that second campaign against the “backward” Boers and their complete submission. The defeats suffered by the British Army in the first years of war changed that dominant idea and had. This had two unexpected consequences. In the first place, it led to a complete turn of the public opinion: from a war of pacification, the second South African War became considered an imperialist war against the “brave” and “proud” Boers fighting to defend their independence, their culture and their sovereignty. To be sure, this was indeed what the Boers did, by all means necessary, including a well organized and quite successful guerrilla campaign. The outcome of this second conflict however was never in doubt and, in the very hot summer of 1902, the British army, in the meantime strengthened by more than 30 thousand

volunteers from the white dominions of the empire (Australia, New Zealand and Canada, besides South Africa), was able to impose a settlement. In May, the Peace of Vereeniging was signed. In the Transvaal and in the former Orange Free State both the war and the peace were lived as another unforgettable and unforgiving humiliation.

The second unintended consequence was the fact that, in London, strangely, the effects were very much the same: humiliation. There, however, the feeling reflected the lack of efficiency and preparation shown by the British Army. It also was felt as a generalized sensation of defeatism: it was not only South Africa that had been threatened but, as well, the proper existence of the British Empire. As Searle tell us (2003: *The Politics of National Efficiency and of War, 1900-1918*, pp. 56-71 in Wrigley, Chris ed., 2003), it was by then that “a new political catchphrase rose to prominence: “national efficiency”. The Spectator noted in 1902 that there was a universal outcry for efficiency in all the departments of society, in all aspects of life and that, from every side, the cry went out: give us efficiency or we die” (56). The lesson of the Boer War had to be learned or else, as everybody was feeling and claiming, from politicians or journalists to the “common” people, the empire would not survive the new century. They were right, of course: the empire collapsed before the mid-century, although for different reasons. The generalized outcry, however, had important effects not only in what concerns the British imperial and domestic policies but also in what became known as the post-war reconstruction of South Africa.

It is in such a context that a question must, however, be asked. What made it so easy for two European countries like Germany and Great Britain to decide about possessions held by a third

one? The obvious response is, of course, that Portugal was one of the poorest and most powerless countries in Europe. Its government was perennially on the brink of collapse. Although recognized as a colonial state, the fact was that the Portuguese had neither the economic means nor, for that matter, enough people to manage their extensive overseas possessions. As a corollary, the idea that they had no effective right to them lurked in the background of all diplomatic discussions within the core about territorial expansion. Moreover, the political and economic weakness of Portugal and its five million inhabitants was reflected in the fact that the country's yearly fiscal deficit regularly exceeded more than one million British pounds. In the middle of the last decade of the 19th century, its national debt surpassed the 30 million pounds. Always bankrupt, Portugal was living on international loans supplemented through the sale of many of its public assets both in Europe and overseas. It was in this conjuncture that the possibility of floating Delagoa Bay to the highest bidder soon started to become a possibility. Here again, it was the pressure of Germany against its acquisition by Britain or by British interests that delayed the sale, first; annulled its possibility afterwards.

The disastrous financial situation of Portugal and its need for yearly loans piling up in a cumulative debt was also the main argument used by Britain and Germany to legitimize the possibility of their partition of the colony. Both countries were, in effect, among the main lenders and creditors of Portugal. When the eventuality of a partition of today's Mozambique came about, the basic argument legitimizing it was the fact that Portugal was in considerable arrears on both loans. The possibility of partition started however to abort when the Germans discovered that the Portuguese were secretly negotiating a further loan with Britain in order to

liberate them of all pressures from the Reich. With that loan, combined with the beginning of the Boer War, the Portuguese neutrality in relation to it and the at least temporary settlement of the Southern African dissensions among Great Britain, Germany and Portugal, the eventuality of an immediate partition of Mozambique appear to have disappeared. Only apparently, however: the partition continued being part of the Anglo-German agreement as one of its secret conditions. According to its terms, if for any reason Portugal would default, then the immediate occupation and division of its East-southern African colony would be the inevitable payment.

On the other hand, it was a second secret clause of the Anglo-German agreement of 1898 that in the short term was going to become an even more complicated feature. According to it, the development of the port and trade facilities in the southern part of Mozambique, including the Delagoa Bay region, had to be opened up not only to British but also to rival foreign firms. This was closely followed by the approval of two concessions. The first for a German company became known as the Eiffe or, from the name of the other side of the Bay where it was built, the Katembe concession. The second, probably as a device to balance the German influence, was obtained by a British firm through what became known as the Lingham concession.

The opinion of the British Colonial Office was not however the same that the Foreign Office had assumed in that agreement. For the former, in this frontally against the latter, the opening up of Delagoa Bay meant essentially that sooner or later it would be also at the service and supportive of the Boers and their ambitions in the Transvaal. At the same time, an efficient port and railways based on the Portuguese territory to serve the hinterland would be a powerful alternative to the British dominated ports and railways of Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East

London and Durban. In other words, it would be an important factor against the British colonial interests in the region. More than that, it could as well lead to outcomes capable of affecting permanently the control of southern Africa by Great Britain. Based on documentation recently uncovered, Henshaw presents a long list of those possible outcomes as stated in the official exchanges within the Colonial Office and between it and other British state institutions. Among them, the development of Delagoa Bay was seen also as a potential threat to the British strategic dominance of the Cape sea route. It could also end up endangering British interests on gold, trade and capital investment in South Africa. Moreover it could also end up transforming southern Africa geopolitically, producing a “United States of South Africa”. In other words, it could have meant the end of the “Dominion of South Africa” and place the region outside the British Empire (Henshaw, 1998: 529 and passim). As a further consequence, it would have represented a huge shock to the already affected prestige of Great Britain in the world-economy.

It was the confluence of all those possibilities about the role and relative importance of Delagoa Bay in southern Africa that constituted the main argument for the British option of a military solution for the question of Transvaal. There is no doubt that in the First South African War immediate, direct economic motives were at stake. But these motives must be seen in a wider context than that of the single British control of the Transvaal and the submission of the Boer community in South Africa. As Henshaw (1998: 527) concludes, “British concerns about Delagoa Bay were a key, and hitherto neglected factor, in the origins of the South African War”

Before continuing with this discussion about the formation of Southern Africa not only as an integrated region but also as a region of the capitalist world-economy, a brief digression about the gradual formation of its space, about its mapping, is however necessary. Because, coinciding with the development of all the above processes, what was also being discussed on the field was the more or less artificial demarcation of its new borders.

New and artificial borders for two main reasons: first, because they were traced inside the four walls of European diplomatic offices by representatives of the different colonial powers involved and in accordance with their relative balance of power. They are little more, consequently, than traces on a map. These are the borders, the national limits, which continue to be in place today. Secondly, because those colonial border were traced over and above the reality of the human groups of Southern Africa, a reality which had already been historically defined in terms of regional space.

The geographical and political space of the peoples of southern Africa was defined and characterized by the history of its peoples in general, by the Mfecane and its consequences in particular. Similarly, the geographical and political space of Southern Africa as an integral part of the modern world-system was defined and characterized by the expansion of colonialism in the region and its partition among European colonial powers. This is true in what concerns the vast regions of the future South Africa and Mozambique, as well as those of today's Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. This is also true of the vast regions to the north in the meantime occupied by the BSACO. With high profits accumulated both in Kimberley, through diamond exploitation, and from gold extracted in the Transvaal, the BSACO and its well trained units of

armed agents, launched a long process of occupation along the Zambezi River and beyond. It had among its objectives the search for new deposits of diamonds, silver and gold. Benefiting from the still present effects of the Mfecane and in name of the British Crown, it proclaimed various protectorates to place them under the Union Jack. Among them, the so called Mashonaland and the Matabeleland where increasing resistance against European rule culminated into the multiplication of very violent rebellions. Later on, in 1898, this resulted into the forced unification of the two regions into a single British possession. The justification was the large number of Europeans that in the meantime had settled there. It was also through BSACO that Britain attempted to reach and occupy mineral rich Katanga. This project, however, did not come to a long-term fruition.

To be sure, the British advance and occupation of central Africa through the good deeds of the BSACO went directly against the Portuguese dream of unifying both coasts of the continent as depicted in the Pink Colored Map. It caused new diplomatic conflicts between Portugal and Britain. As already discussed, those conflicts ended up with the primacy of the colonial interests of the latter over the shattered national pride of the former.

Thus the extension and consolidation of British colonial rule and the European settlement in southern Africa at the end of the 19th century were mainly determined by the discovery of gold and by the need to recreate the best conditions to its exploitation. This is what led to the involvement of the British, first, the Portuguese, afterwards, in a military process, of repression and conquest not only of the still rebellious Zulu Kingdom and Gaza Empire but also of various African political formations as they had been shaped all over the region by the

Mfecane. At the same time the British defined the submission of the Boer Republics, in particular Transvaal and Orange, as their major objective. It was materialized in less than one year. By 1901 the South African War had ended, with the more or less complete subjugation of the Boers to Great Britain and its interests (⁴⁹).

Both the Mfecane and the Boer War and other pacification campaigns happened, consequently, within the context and as functions of an evolving world-system as it impacted southern Africa to be, as well, affected by it. I tried to emphasize that in the perspective of the formation of the region both movements had important consequences to the existence and structure of what is today Southern Africa and its peoples. Both the Mfecane and the Great Trek in its consequences can effectively be considered as decisive systemic processes for the formation of the region. In what concerns de Mfecane the reality is that the geographical settlement of the different ethnic or linguistic groups of the region within what became their respective territorial

49) South-African historiography gives an important place to what it designates, generally, as the “reconstruction years”. This is the general designation under which are considered period that, following the Boer War, led to the formation, around 1910 of the Union of South Africa. According to Smith, that is “a period which has come to be regarded as crucial in the shaping of twentieth-century South Africa” (Iain R. Smith, 2002: Capitalism and the War, pp. 56-75, in David Omissi et al, 2002: The Impact of the South African War, London: Palgrave, p. 62). He is right, of course but, perhaps, for the wrong reasons. First, because the debate surrounding those years is usually limited to the more or less influential role of imperial Britain and British capital in the general molding of South Africa. Secondly, because that approach ends up introducing what are extraneous political factors into the analysis of the period. The result has been a reading of the reconstruction years that emphasizes both the distinction of interests assumed and defended both by British and by the Afrikaner and its reflection on political choices at the time. and the deep divisions existing within the different economic interests in presence, Boer and British, to be sure, but also among the different gold-mining companies. To David Denoon (1973: A Grand Illusion: The Failure of Imperial Policy in the Transvaal Colony During the Period of Reconstruction, 1901-1905, pp. 68-9), for instance, capitalism in the South African reconstruction years must not be seen as a single, monolithic “whole”, united around perfectly defined economic objectives and common political ways to achieve them. On the other hand, the real nexus of the question in South and southern Africa at the time must be also characterized by four other factors weighting on the perspective of capital, at different levels. In the first place, Great Britain was by then both a declining power and the declining hegemon of the world-economy. Secondly, there was a still defiant and humiliated Afrikaner population with a high potential for rebellion. Thirdly, the very strong and generalized resistance offered by the different African social units could not be ignored. Fourthly, and as important, the scarcity of labor determining a very high level of intense competition not only for rights and conditions of economic exploitation but also, primordially in the present approach, to labor suppliers.

limits was one of its results. With it, however, the Mfecane led also to many of the extraneous contradictions then created among some of those different groups. Because these divisions and tensions represented an important advantage as an instrument of colonial control they were not only kept alive but often exacerbated as well. This is why and how they continue today very much present in the whole region.

To a great extent, it can consequently be concluded that the territorial borders of the different colonies in the region were traced, without any other objectives than those of the colonial powers, their balance of power and their interests. The end of the Boer War by a relatively triumphant Great Britain consolidated them. Those were the borders of the different colonies constituting the region as they are, today the borders of the different independent states that form Southern Africa.

On the other hand, these borders have nothing to do with the regional reorganization as it was done by the Mfecane. This reorganization established as well its own borders and territorial divisions in the region from the Cape to the Rovuma River. Some years before the beginning of the division of the region between colonial powers, its settlers and its companies, that division of southern Africa according to its peoples and its history had already been concluded and was in process of consolidation. It was a division and a type of spatial organization that today is not politically recognized. But, to be sure, it continues to be today a fundamental base for the development of modern forms of cultural identity and territorial location of the different peoples of the region.

This is the reason why, after the end of colonialism and apartheid in the region, we continue to have not one but two different geographic characterizations, two different maps of the same Southern Africa. One represents the reality of its peoples and their history. The other is the result of colonial occupation and of decisions taken at the level of the inter-state system of the world-economy. The two maps do not coincide with one another nor show any type of correspondence in national, linguistic or cultural terms. But they continue to be present, with all their lack of political correspondence and their mutual contradictions, in what is Southern Africa today, one map under the other in a kind of subterranean, underground, continuous and permanent tension. Despite its obvious importance for the present and to the future of the region, this is, to be sure, an often forgotten reality.

As it exists today, post-colonial and post-apartheid Southern Africa in political, social, economic and geographical terms is consequently a creature of British colonialism. It was also through the consolidation of British colonialism in the region that Southern Africa was politically and economically integrated as a region of the world-economy.

This formation followed a pattern common to the new colonial interests and forms of administration which at the time were developing within the British Empire with its more than 350 million people. According to Tomlinson, it was in the last years of the nineteenth century that powerful interest groups and policy makers in Britain clearly defined a new and more coherent body of economic policies to the Empire. It was a policy “distinct... and (able to) rescue her producers and consumers from the threats posed by national industrial decline and foreign competition” (Tomlinson 2003: 198). The reorganization of the region, after the

discovery of gold and its large-scale exploitation, was also a follow up to the increasing success of the abolitionist campaign all over the world. It served well the objectives of Great Britain against its declining economic growth and hegemonic role in the world-system.

The colonial interests and the new objectives as they were reformulated in London, assumed that the colonies were both a privileged market for the metropolitan products, in particular to those being produced by an expanding industry, and the main source of the raw materials and food products required by that production. To be sure, the basic but vital objectives were those of keeping costs down, including labor, and at the same time the rates of profit as higher as possible. The different territories of the British Empire were also the destination of an increasing European migration, with complicated consequences, both positive and negative, at the level of the labor market (⁵⁰).

In geopolitical terms, the Empire functioned as a self-protecting entity that kept more or less united in terms of mutual security and defense their different territorial components. This objective was served by the mightiest navy of the world. It required, consequently, a vast network of strategically located naval bases. Those of Gibraltar, Malta or Cyprus, in the Mediterranean had been designed to protect the British interests in Africa, from Egypt to Somalia and, later on, to the Cape. In the northern Indian Ocean old and new bases located in the Persian Gulf, the Gulf States and in Aden had also become increasingly involved in the maritime security of the new route to and from India in particular after the inauguration of the

⁵⁰ For capital, one of the immediate consequences of massive migration to the overseas colonies was, to be sure, the rapid increase of metropolitan wages. However, it represented as well, in the perspective of capital, many social and political advantages. Among them, it contributed to uphold security and colonial occupation overseas at the same time diverting, relaxing and keeping within acceptable levels the social tensions in the British Isles.

Suez Canal. In the same region, the Trincomalee naval base was the source of the permanent defense of the northern Indian Ocean, as far as Ceylon. (Kitchen, 2003: 182).

Finally, the British imperial machine of security and defense extended itself to the eastern and southern coasts of Africa, towards the Cape region and to both sides of the Atlantic. To a great extent, it replicated in a higher level of security and efficiency what the Portuguese had started and the Dutch continued in the northern Indian Ocean when they arrived there. They considered the sea as the most important strategic space of the overseas expansion and, through bases strategically placed, defended it both from the armed threats of other states and from the attempts of control by other traders.

In administrative and economic terms, and considering India as a case apart, three main colonial patterns of political domination and economic exploitation could be detected within the British Empire. According to the local presence and number of British settlers they were classified in relation to London in what was a strict hierarchy of duties and rights. In the beginning of the 20th century, when both Great Britain, as the hegemonic power of the world-economy, and her Empire as a source of protected access were already in decline, that hierarchy was formed by three different levels of importance. First of all, at the top of it, there were the white settler colonies of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the Cape and Natal. With India, they constituted the main objective of British investments of capital overseas, in particular in infrastructures. They were also the main destinations of settlement. Accordingly, they had developed Westminster type of local parliaments which were recognized as such by London. They were directly subordinated to the British parliament and constituted the

foundation for increasing degrees of self-government. Secondly, there were the colonies where the settlement of British subjects was not as important. They enjoyed consequently a lesser degree of self-government. Their administrations were led by a handful of professional public servants placed there by the Colonial Office in London and responding only to it. This was the case of some of the British colonies and other territorial possessions in the West Indies and in Africa, including Kenya at least for a while longer. At different levels of imperial import, there were also the colonies kept merely for commercial and/or for geostrategic reasons including, as underlined by Kitchen, the former slave-trading colonies in West Africa, Nyasaland and Rhodesia. As already pointed out, the latter was ruled by a concessionary company, the BSACO (2003: 182). Finally there were the cases that could not be reduced to any one of the other patterns and, among them, those of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal in Southern Africa. They had been impeded to become Boer self-ruling republics and, to a great extent, had an undefined, somehow embarrassing position in the imperial hierarchy. The solution found by the London Colonial Office was to bring them together in administrative terms with the Cape and Natal into what became known, after 1910, as the Union of South Africa.

One of the most immediate results of the hierarchical positions of relative imperial importance among the British colonies was the fact that those with less or no settlers were expected to develop some kind of dependent subordination in relation to the more autonomous white settler colonies. This would represent a first step towards a possible integration. Because, as we have already discussed above, the latter were often affected by recurrent shortages of labor, that relationship of dependence was usually forged by transforming the other colonies and protectorates into their reserves and regular suppliers of cheap labor as well as, to a lesser

extent, of raw materials and agricultural products. This was particularly true in relation to what became the Union of South Africa which was to be increasingly supplied with migrant labor from the protectorates of Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland. It was also what happened some years afterwards in the meantime created Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. To a great extent, the Federation existed around and to fulfill the needs in labor and food of Southern Rhodesia, its richer and potentially more important component. It was also the colony where the settler population was the more numerous. Moreover it soon became the privileged political and economic link with the equally settler occupied and administered South Africa. Among the many reasons explaining it, there was the close relationship between mining houses, firms and other businesses in the two territories as well as the frequent settlement in the Federation in general, in Southern Rhodesia in particular of a growing number of whites originating from South Africa. The possibility of uniting South Africa with the Federation, a project made in London with the support of South Africa but aborted by the firm opposition of the white Rhodesians, was however the beginning of a certain degree of competition intrinsic since then to the relationship between the two colonies. In practical terms, it resulted as well in a division of functions in the region, in particular in what concerned the access to cheap labor and other resources. The position of Mozambique as a labor reserve of the two British colonies illustrates well that division of attributions more or less agreed between them. According to it, the mining houses of South Africa were authorized by the Portuguese colonial administration to recruit or receive labor only from the southern part of Mozambique. To the north of the 21st parallel the recruitment rights were attributed to Southern Rhodesia.

That transformation of the Portuguese colony of Mozambique into a labor reserve was, consequently, another direct result of the discovery of gold in the Transvaal in 1896. Like the other territories around South Africa, with the exception of Angola and the future South West Africa, today's Namibia, the region was constructed around the sequent great scale exploitation of that precious metal, as well as the fact that its reserves were estimated in about one half of the totality of the world reserves. This constituted the main factor leading to the reorganization of the region into an integrated region of the world-economy.

Gold had been known to exist in the Transvaal for some years before its discovery. Only in the second half of the 1880s was it asserted that its extraction could become economically viable (July 1998: 351). In a greater scale than in what concerned diamonds in Kimberley ten years before and because of the deep nature of its deposits, gold extraction in southern Africa required increasing numbers of a huge labor force and its regular renewal. This was to become the origin of an African labor force mainly supplied and recruited, usually as forced labor, in the neighboring regions. It attracted, as well, continuous waves of European migrants, independent miners and, since the local exploitation required the use of heavy machinery, European and American-based and owned companies. It soon led to the multiplication of small and large urban agglomerates, to an increasing need in food and services. At the same time, this economic activity resulted in a quick advance of the agriculture and in a certain degree of industrialization. It led also to the most polarized forms of institutional and vulgar racism, a racism that affected as well local Boers, still with their political capital in Pretoria, and thus once again disturbed in their ways and culture. The exploitation of gold in the Transvaal and its impact determined, as well, the construction of railways linking the mines to the sea at Delagoa

Bay and the Lourenco Marques harbor. In the beginning those new railways were mainly used to import the heavy machinery, equipment and other products required by mining. They soon became active with many other types of goods. A similar project, with similar objectives, linked as well Bulawayo, in Southern Rhodesia, with the port of Beira, in Mozambique.

In the early twentieth century, by then solidly in the hands and control of Great Britain, Southern Africa was producing more than 30 percent of all the gold produced in the world. With it, and by the end of the first decade of the new century, all the serious obstacles opposing the transformation of southern Africa into an integrated region of the world-economy had been removed and the route to the creation of Southern Africa was being followed at an accelerated pace.

That reconstruction brought together, in a single territorial unit of symbiotic but uneven complementarities, colonial interests of Great Britain, locally defended by its colonies, protectorates and the BSACO, and of Portugal, trying to keep hold of what is today Mozambique, under the dominant, historically rooted supremacy of the former. It had been designed to confront all and every threat of competition, local or from other European powers, among which Germany, present in the South West Africa and, to the north of the Rovuma, in Tanganyika. It was also the result of the basic necessity felt by the mining houses, by large farm holdings and by industry to guarantee a regular and efficient access to cheap labor. This was made through the short term construction and transformation of rural households all over the region. At the same time, the region was also being formed as a highly productive and profitable complex of exploitation of other local resources. The exploitation of gold and other

minerals was essential with that objective. Equally essential, and possible, was the quick modernization of large scale agriculture and the initial setting up of a subsidiary industry in South Africa. On the other hand, we must not forget other consequences that are usually not mentioned or taken into account. Among them, to be sure, the growing social and economic polarization that since then started to be the most obvious characteristic of the region. It continues to be today, as well, the most immoral and nefarious social characteristic of Southern Africa. A polarization lived not only within its different territorial units but also among them. Southern Africa was constructed also in the permanent complementarity of its growing inequalities.

It was also in such a context of regional complementarities that the so called Portuguese East Africa was transformed into Mozambique. In alternating succession it was as well to be considered by the Portuguese colonial administration and until its liberation in the mid 1970s either as an overseas province of Portugal, a colony or even as a Portuguese Overseas State. Notwithstanding the successive changes of designations, the main social reality of Mozambique as part of Southern Africa was its transformation in the 19th century as a reserve of cheap and abundant labor power. And this was its dominant role and place not only in the context of Southern Africa but, as well, in that of the modern world-system. It was that role that basically defined the model of colonial submission to which its peoples were submitted throughout more than one hundred years and, with small changes, till its liberation in the mid 1970s. It is to an attempt to draw that colonial model in its general lines that I will now have to turn.

V

THE COLONIAL MODEL: LABOR WILL SET YOU FREE

1. COLONIALISM AND PERIPHERAL TAYLORISM

Around 1870, the still on-going economic expansion of the world-economy started to give signs of weariness. Three years afterwards it collapsed on what became known as the Great Depression of 1873. Coinciding with the first signs of crisis, the till then undisputable hegemonic power of Great Britain started as well a long decline (⁵¹). Ten years after, when a new cycle of expansion started once again, it was an expansion, in the words of Burns, “without any sense of a general world order” (Burns et al, 1986: 1076).

Great Britain was still one of the leading industrial countries of the world-economy and its financial center. But she was not able anymore to counter growing challenges to its hegemonic role by other core countries. In particular she was not able to counter the growing systemic

⁵¹ British decline can be to a certain extent measured through the following table about the UK share of world exports of manufactured goods, 1880-1993 (in percentage):

1880	41.4
1890	40.7
1899	32.5
1913	29.9

Tim Rooth, 2003: Britain and the International Economy, 1900-1930, in Wrigley ed, p 215; Saul, B 1965: The Export Economy, Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research, 17, no. 1, p. 12.

influence of a newly unified Germany and of the United States. The following period will accordingly become characterized by sharply increased international political and economic rivalries leading to new forms of geographical expansion, territorial occupation and other types of inter-core competition. It led to the consolidation of new forms of nation building and, ideologically, to generalized and divisive forms of aggressive nationalism. The scramble for Africa and the division of Asia among core powers have here their main determinants.

The thirty years of expansion between 1849 and 1873 can and are usually described as having been based on an impressive sequence of important technological innovations regularly introduced as part of the productive process. Among them, there were substantial improvements in steel production, in the availability of electric power, in chemical production, and in the enhanced design and expanded capacity of steam engines, including steam turbines. There were important changes, as well, in the use of liquid fuels and the correspondent engines of internal combustion. The access and generation of energy in all its available forms became an important indicator of effective or potential economic growth. The long economic expansion was also associated with a very quick and generalized growth of transportation by sea, through ocean shipping, and by land through better and longer roads and railways. As Gunder Frank points out, this was also the time when the technological gap between an increasingly industrialized core and an increasingly underdeveloped periphery became quantitatively, qualitatively, and, at least so far, irrevocably greater (1980: 23; also, 1978b; Hinkelammert, 1970).

This pattern of economic expansion was common to all the core countries, including an emerging United States. In all of them, as well, the accentuated increase in the scale of manufacturing required a correspondent increase in the control, efficiency and productivity of the work force. And it was out of this basic condition that new forms of access, control and exploitation of labor evolved to become, at its three structural levels, a central feature of the modern world-system in the transition from the 19th to the 20th century. In chronological terms, such a development was not simultaneous: it happened within the core, first; in the periphery and semi-periphery afterwards. However, the different forms assumed by it soon became complementary, like the two different faces of the same coin.

Within the core, those new forms of labor control were coincident with the quick generalization of parallel processes of integration of small or middle-sized firms into a corporate type of organization often leading to the vertical and horizontal formation of cartels and monopolies. Determined by a quick expansion of markets and their demand, that integration implied the use of increasingly more sophisticated and productive manufacturing systems and their continued mechanization. Largely, this was both needed and made possible by the introduction of new productive and organizational procedures at the level of the working process and of the extended factory floors required by it. Bringing together growing mechanization with the separation between planning and the execution of labor (Lipietz 1983: 462), those new processes of management are usually designated as *Taylorism*. They allowed the measurement and, consequently, the “scientific” calculation and restructuring of wage scales. They implied as well the need for workers to re-learn skills and new labor processes, as determined by the quick introduction of new technologies and new machines. Simultaneously,

Taylorism “achieved a “real subordination” of labor to capital to an unprecedented degree” (Lipietz 1983: 462). To be sure, its ultimate objective was to increase profits, that is to say a growing production and productivity at steady or declining costs.

The introduction of those new processes of labor control and further exploitation resulted in a quick expansion of worker’s opposition and protest. It was one of the main causes leading to their self-organization as a confrontational response. After a quite long process of repression by capital, this led however to the generalization of democratic rights at the level of their respective states. Basically of a political nature, those rights included the formal recognition of the new forms of labor organization. Their real objective, however, was the gradual socio-economic integration of labor according to ideological processes centered on principles of an increasing nationalistic nature. In other words, labor organizations became historically clustered around the primacy of the nation-state and coincided with its consolidation all over the core. One of the most paradoxal characteristics or, better, disjunctions of the capitalist world-economy in an anti-systemic perspective has here its roots. From the long 16th century onwards, it was the expansion of capital that increasingly defined the expansion of the world-system. Capital thus organized itself globally, it became global. Simultaneously, the forms of anti-systemic opposition determined by that expansion, within the core and outside of it, tended increasingly to be nationally based and organized. Labor thus organized itself nationally, it became increasingly national – and, very often, nationalist.

Simultaneously, it was the combination of different processes of production based on those new forms of labor control with the increasing productivity determined by constant

technological innovation that explain to a great extent the unprecedented prosperity and expansion of the world-economy in the first two decades of the second half of the 19th century. It was served, as well, by the generalization of efficient procedures of labor rationalization and cost control. From 1870 onwards, however, this same combination started to originate a gradual saturation of markets. A conjuncture of over-production characterized by a correspondent decline of demand soon became the defining characteristic of the world-economy. It resulted as well in periodic contractions reflecting falling profits and leading to declining wages and unemployment. This culminated in 1873 in the Great Depression of the 19th century. The systemic repercussions of the crisis lasted more than a decade.

By the mid-1880's, however, the first signs that the world-economy was coming out of recession started to be noticeable. Among them, the containment of prices and the creation of a more disciplined economic environment resulted from the introduction in interstate relations of the so called gold standard. As firms started to cut their prices, capital began to be easier to borrow with banks charging less for their loans. At the same time, workers tended to lower their claims for higher wages. A consistent recovery of the world-economy started. It was however a slow, tentative and localized recovery. Then in 1896 gold was discovered in different regions of the world-economy. There were important findings in Australia, Alaska and Canada. As we have seen, the richest strike of them all was however located in southern Africa, in the Transvaal.

Besides becoming decisive for the acceleration of the new expansion of the world-economy, the regions where gold was discovered had another common aspect: none of them was located

within the core. With the need for new territories and cheaper resources, this was probably one of the main reasons why the new expansion of the world-economy became characterized by a correspondent geographical expansion of capital towards its external arena. As it was been already discussed above, this was a geographic expansion with new, different systemic characteristics. It was called modern colonialism. In particular it culminated what had constituted since at least the mid 18th century (Wallerstein 1986: 14, 68-69), an on-going process of Africa's systemic incorporation. It was the convergence of all these factors that made of colonialism a central feature of the late 19th century expansion and restructuring of the capitalist world-economy.

In particular in what Africa is concerned, colonialism implied a very specific transformation. As already discussed above, the main aspect of change, there, was that slavery or, better, the slave-trade, started to loose slowly but irreversibly the determinant importance it had achieved as part of the basic processes of capital accumulation within the core. It was as a direct consequence that a new conjuncture was recreated. It allowed a locally-based appropriation of surpluses. But, in the perspective of the core, this was unacceptable. Consequently, the change of slavery into new processes to allow the regular use, the control and the exploitation of labor and other resources in the continent became a priority. Similarly to what was happening in the core, the main objective of those processes was the appropriation of the greatest possible labor surplus at the lowest levels of wage costs. It led to the imposition of new processes of labor control which were structurally similar to those already implemented within the core but, simultaneously, very different from them. What I am asserting here is that the forms of forced labor that will become the central characteristic of modern colonialism in Africa, in general, in

Southern Africa in particular, correspond structurally to the generalization of Taylorism within the core. They were legitimized by the same ideology and values assumed there by its dominant social elites. They belonged to the same structures of knowledge underlying the capitalist world-economy. One would not have been possible without the other. They complemented one another.

In chronological terms, the transition from slavery to those new forms of labor control was relatively short. In the last decade of the 19th century and consequently even before the complete eradication of the slave trade, those renewed forms of exploitation of African labor had already been conceived, tried and applied in the continent. One of the main differences between them and those practiced within the core was the fact that their costs could be reduced even more. To be sure, in both cases those costs were inferior to what was materially necessary to the survival and self-reproduction of the workers involved. In Africa, however, the system of forced labor could guarantee even more profits for capital. In quantitative terms, that is to say, in what concerns increasing profitability, it reduced even more, to its absolute minimum, the cost of labor. In qualitative terms, that is to say in what concerns its regular and efficient access and its control, forced labor was not only a system that made workers pay for their own exploitation and reproduction. As Omer-Cooper correctly points out about the extension of this system in Southern Africa, it implied the effective limitation of all the measures capable of directly or indirectly “undermine the possibility of exploiting them to the full as extra-cheap labor” (148). They included, of course, the ruling out of political rights. In the perspective of capital, forced labor in all its forms had also the extra ability of reducing substantially all forms of workers’ organization and their passive and active opposition to the system. It solved, thus,

one of the main problems of capital within the core. Forced labor, it seems, was the improved and upgraded version of Taylorism in its peripheral application.

In southern Africa, the gradual emergence of forced labor as an avatar for slavery was particularly evident in the extensive region situated to the north of Delagoa Bay, in the coast and hinterland of today's Mozambique. As already pointed out in a previous chapter, the peoples of those territories were deeply affected by the 19th century shift from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean of the still prevailing European and American slave trade. They were, consequently, the main victims of what constituted a new and very strong demand for slaves. On the other hand this new demand, in particular from Brazil but also from Cuba, became cumulative to two other flows in the meantime determined by the needs in slaves both from the sugar producing French islands of the Indian Ocean and from part of the Swahili coast, where plantations equally based on slave labor had as well been set up. With the continuation of the Swahili secular slave trade destined to the Middle East, India and China, this meant that in a period when slavery was declining in the Atlantic world it was, on the contrary, increasing as never before in the Indian Ocean. To be sure, the increasing demand resulted in old and new slavers and slave-traders of those areas having their wealth and relative power increased exponentially. As the slave markets of Brazil and Cuba finally started to become officially closed, in 1850 and 1866 respectively, the slave trade assumed more or less clandestine forms. This led to the intensification of the British and, to a certain extent, the Portuguese patrolling of the routes followed by the slave ships. Simultaneously, the demands for slaves overcame the possibilities of supplying them; prices and profits increased even more (⁵²). In Mozambique,

⁵² **Slave prices are related to conditions of their supply but this was not the only factor affecting their rise. We have some interesting data to evaluate this in what concerns Brazil from the 1750s onwards. In the**

where the trade was more or less tolerated by the Portuguese diminutive administration, it continued to be the dominant resource of the colony. For quite a while, the abolitionist measures then being introduced in the world-economy did not distress the local slavers, on the contrary. But it was those measures that, at the same time, became the conjunctural base on which were seeded what was going to be in the following one hundred years the dominant form of labor control in the colony: forced labor, generally known as **chibalo** and often presented as contract and migrant labor.

To be sure, the main preoccupation of all those profiting from slavery was not always the inevitable effects of its abolition in itself. It was, rather, and as the extensive work by Frederick Cooper has been showing convincingly, **what to substitute it with**. This was an interrogation whose answer was declined according to the different interests in presence. The old and new slave traders wanted it replaced by an equally profitable activity. The slave masters in the continent and out of it wanted to continue to access cheap labor. Finally in the case of the colonial administrators or civil servants what they wanted was primarily to get rich and return back home as quick as possible. For that, they had to satisfy their metropolitan hierarchies as well as the local traders and masters -- at the same time guaranteeing the profitability of the

period to the 1820s, a phase of increasing demand for sugar in the world-economy, slave prices increased as well from something like an average of 75,000 Reis in the 1780s to 200,000 in 1820. Slave trade started to shift away from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean in the second part of this period and was mostly unregulated. There was no inflation and slave prices were mainly driven up by increasing demand. In the following 30 years till 1850, the year of the official abolition of slavery in Brazil, prices continued to go up. The proximity of abolition and the prohibition of trade in 1830 did not affect the growing curve of their prices, on the contrary: they rose to 450,000 Reis in 1840 and to 650,000 in 1870. They started then to fall, a direct result not of supply changing conditions or of abolition but of the replacement of slave labor by free labor imported from Europe in particular destined to the coffee plantations. Slave prices fell to 450,000 in 1880 and to 400,000 ten years afterwards (Mattoso, Katia M. de Queiroz, 1979: *To Be a Slave in Brazil, 1550-1888*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, pages 77-79). Anyway, it was the regular increase of prices in the last 100 years of slave trade that contributed to the prosperity and wealth of the slavers of the Mozambican coast.

colony and keeping it safe and peaceful. Forced labor as a substitute for slavery was the solution common to all those self-interested expectations.

Even in the Mozambican coast the trade in slaves became increasingly more difficult as the 19th century was coming to its end. Relatively frequent patrols and inspections by ships belonging to the British navy or based on Mozambique became a standard practice in the Indian Ocean. This became the main background against which a new reality started to unfold. Accordingly, one of the first attempts to surmount the increasing difficulty in gathering slaves was the system adopted by the French sugar planters of Madagascar, the Comoros Islands, and Reunion. When their nearer and cheaper suppliers in the Mozambican coast became increasingly more difficult to reach they started to use the very extensive and highly irregular coastline, as far north as Zanzibar, in a permanent game of hide and run away from the Portuguese and British abolitionist enforcers in the Indian Ocean. This was however a difficult and consequently too costly way to access labor. It was also a very slow process that usually took too long to be concluded.

To beat these limitations, the French planters of the Indian Ocean started to nominally enter into what was described as five-year labor contracts with workers from Mozambique. These workers were assembled at the coast through the agency of slave-traders or slave masters of the region who, for a fee, also represented them in their dealings with their future employers. Moreover, these workers were usually captured by force in the interior according to procedures that had been established for slaving and slave trade. Obviously, they were not entering voluntarily into a contract with an employer. When the ships taking them away were stopped in

mid-course to be investigated, their condition would however be that of legally contracted workers. This was how forced labor started to substitute slave labor in the capitalist world-economy: through a mere change of nouns.

Although Lisbon refused authorization to these practices, when it was requested in 1854, the local Portuguese authorities in Mozambique ended up allowing them. They not only had very scarce means to enforce the decision but, as well, received huge earnings to turn a blind eye and not enforce it at all.

To a great extent, the first “contracted” workers in Mozambique to the sugar plantations of the Indian Ocean can be considered as a fundamental reference to what happened in the following years. Gradually, the practices related with slavery originated or were changed into practices to guarantee forced labor: with or without contract. In the meantime, laws approved in Europe were systematically submitted to local interpretation in Africa and applied or not according to local interests.

The local interpretation, manipulation and application or not of abolitionist laws approved in Europe for the colonies constitute an interesting feature to the understanding of the transition between the two labor regimes in Mozambique. A good example is constituted by the local responses related with the long held practice in Angola and Mozambique according to which the **pombeiros**, the usually Afro-Portuguese bush traders, often slave traders, who regularly linked the two Portuguese possessions in their deals, used **libertos** or freedmen as non-remunerated carriers and porters of their goods to the interior of the continent and back. These

forced carriers were recruited by the local administrations which would be paid in cash per worker supplied. This fee had obviously the objective of more or less legitimizing this use of conscripted, forced labor. A first attempt to stop this practice was approved in Lisbon but was not applied. In 1839, it was still very much alive. It was then and once again the object of new dispositions legislated by the metropolitan government to forbid it; as before they were not successful (Capela 1977: 43-44; 2002: *passim*).

Another good example is what happened in Mozambique with a Portuguese ruling that in 1854 prescribed that all slaves acquired in the interior should be registered as free men, as **libertos**, when brought to the coastal territories under the jurisdiction of the Crown. How this disposition was interpreted was that it specifically legalized the slave trade **within** the colony's hinterland. It was also read as being applicable only to non-Portuguese. Moreover it started to be used as meaning that labor was legitimate as a payment for the freedom which, according to the terms of the law, had to be conceded. Bonded labor supplied by the future **libertos** without payment and for a long but not determined period of time. That is to say, their condition as slaves did not change. The generalization of legal interpretations like these and their practice were, notably, among the evidence mentioned in a famous British official protest of 1862 about the continuation of slaving in the Portuguese East Africa. It led to the affirmation by Lisbon that the local reading of the law was wrong and that its objective was to free slaves from their situation not to make bonded laborers out of them (Hammond, 1966: 60). One must add here, however, that similar procedures, based on local interpretations of metropolitan decisions, were being followed all over Africa and in the Americas (Davis 1966; Omer-Cooper: *passim*).

What is important to emphasize here, however, are two different aspects of the same reality. The first is related with the fact that the 1836 official end of slavery in Mozambique and the regulation of labor that from the start accompanied it was the direct consequence of strong and permanent pressures related with diplomatic, interstate objectives. Among them, there was the need for the Portuguese state to create the appearance, in a European conjuncture of colonial expansion that slavery was effectively being abolished in the territory. As importantly, the measures being taken were designed to make believe that the territory was effectively occupied with their basic social relations officially regulated and legitimated by a “civilizing” metropolis. This was the reason why the permanent vigilance and frequent condemnation of the labor practices in the colony by the British and other European colonial powers was complemented by their ready justification and if possible change by the Portuguese state. The second concerns the fact that while the repression of the slave trade in the second half of 19th century proceeded, slowly and in a leisurely fashion, as Hammond points out (59), new forms of controlling, gathering, accessing and exploiting African labor were being tested, introduced or accepted as an alternative to slavery. The main objective was to satisfy the equally strong pressures, perhaps stronger because physically immediate, of the local slave traders and slave masters as well as of all those equally benefiting from slavery. This was as well a situation common to most of the European colonial possessions at the time (Davis, 1966: 269).

They were, indeed, just that: attempts to find alternatives to slavery. First in practice, and then in institutional, juridical terms they ended up culminating into different forms of forced labor. And it was forced labor that replaced slavery in the central role it had occupied in the previous

three hundred years as one of the dominant modes of control, access and exploitation of labor in the periphery of the capitalist world-economy.

The introduction of the first official deliberations of what was to become the institutional, juridical norms of labor control in Mozambique were meant to facilitate the compensation of slave traders, slave owners and, in particular, of metropolitan investors in the slave traffic, for the loss of profits represented by the slow end of slaving (Capela 1977: 20, 22 and *passim*). The new deliberations and its local implementation thus assumed the social and economic place of the norms previously regulating slavery and the slave trade, adapting or reforming most of them to what was supposed to be a new social reality. In the Zambezia, the end of the slaving vocation of the Prazos and their transformation was made through legislation that defined their future owners as “uniquely Europeans”. According to the same laws, their former inhabitants and ex-slaves were made into “indigenas” -- but they had to work to their new masters (Hedges ed. 1999: 10-11). At the same time, the first labor regulations were concerned with urban realities, in particular those of Lourenco Marques, Beira and Quelimane, where ex-slaves and rural migrants were seen as a threat for the settlers if not controlled and regulated. The result was the introduction in Lourenco Marques of the first pass laws of the region, in 1891, and the obligation for Africans to permanently use a metal tag around their necks with their respective pass numbers inscribed on it (Hedges ed, 1999: 11). This measure was soon followed by other urbanizing agglomerations. Later on, its correspondent issued to migrant workers became known as the Aluminium (sic) Tag.

On the other hand slave labor and slaving coexisted in Mozambique with forced labor for quite a long time. I interviewed in the early 1960's old residents of Lourenco Marques who still remembered vividly the presence as late as the second half of the 1920s and in the waters of southern Mozambique of one or other "slave ships" originating from the Middle East and the northern Indian Ocean. They were known to be secretly in search of potential slaves to buy or kidnap and take away forever. They would also speak about the continuation of the practice of keeping slaves by wealthy families in the colony, well into the 1940s (⁵³).

The introduction of the first regulation of labor in Mozambique was made to compensate not the slaves or those affected by slavery but, rather and as already pointed out, the slave masters and the slave-traders. Other important laws were published to coincide with the first phase of a long process of military "pacification" in Mozambique of local social formations. Leading uniformly to their submission by the force of arms the main objectives of those campaigns were to counteract and terminate their increasing resistance against occupation. It was also, primordially in some cases, to deprive them of their profitable control of local resources, among which the flows of migrant labor for the neighboring territories, in general, to South Africa, in particular. In fact the migration of workers from the whole territory of today's Mozambique not only to the Transvaal and Cape, but also to Natal, Kimberley, to the Rhodes dominated areas and to the regions north of the Rovuma were a regular practice as early as the 1850's. They responded to serious labor shortages affecting regularly mining operations and

⁵³ The interviews were destined to a news report written to the daily A Tribuna, in the then Lourenco Marques, in 1963. I was at the time a very young journalist and part-time student (or the other way around, I am not sure anymore). Once discovered a first informant able to have that story made public, it was easy to find three or four others. All of them confirmed it – but the story was never published because "cut", that is to say, forbidden by the official censorship of the Portuguese colonial regime. The main reason of the prohibition was the fact that my interviewees had pointed out as a probable date the second half of the 1920s and already in the period under what in the following decade became consolidated as the corporative or fascist regime of Salazar and his followers.

the expanding plantations of sisal, sugar and other products all over the region. They were possible because no such investments and expansion existed in the Portuguese territory. This was how in 1870 migrant laborers had already given origin to the regularity of what Jeanne Marie Panvenne calls “well developed migration flows” (Panvenne, 1995: 16-7). They were as well one of the first fundamental components in the early formation of Southern Africa. And of what since then can be considered as a regional labor force.

With the first discoveries of gold in the Witwatersrand in 1886 the control of those flows of migrant workers from Mozambique to South Africa, soon in a phase of exponential increase, became imperative for the Portuguese. The construction of a secure and efficient access from the hinterland to the sea through the Limpopo Valley and Delagoa Bay became equally vital. They were, to start with, common objectives for British and South African interests. But it was also an opportunity that the Portuguese were not going to miss. They did not and both objectives became related in a long list of treaties and agreements. This was how migrant labor in its interrelation with transitory railways and seaport services started to be the dominant colonial resources in southern Mozambique. In 1910 a network capable of delivering more than 200,000 unskilled black workers every year to the mines of the Witwatersrand had already been organized (Jeeves, 1985: 3). In that network, which involved the whole southern region of southern Africa as its recruitment ground, the role of southern Mozambique quickly made Portuguese East Africa, as Jeeves tell us, “an unrivalled source of black labor for the gold mines” (1985: 187).

This was not, however, neither a pacific nor a linear process. To understand it and its development we will have to go back on time. With the many differences that it is possible to find out in a more close approach to their specificities, the processes or modes of colonial domination assumed by the Portuguese in Mozambique can be characterized by their similitude and territorial continuity. Until the late 19th century, they consisted in the coexistence and gradual interpenetration through a more or less accepted relationship between foreign settlers or traders and the local ruling elites. Those relationships were mutually considered as being balanced and equal. Uniformly, this was established and consolidated without deeply affecting or touching the organization and livelihood of the local social bases.

This started to change in Mozambique in the second half of the 19th century when the Portuguese started to gradually impose new forms of occupation and administration. The previous relationship among equals soon was destroyed to become, at least in theoretical terms, the expression of an effective colonial occupation. Later on, the generalization of the principle of effective occupation as the main reference for the recognition of colonial possessions by the interstate system resulted in further developments. It was then that, to counter not only the exercise of power and autonomy of the African social formations but also the escalation of anti-colonial resistance and armed confrontation, the Portuguese started their long process of military intervention. This is what became known in the colonial parlance as the “pacification wars”. Because the supply of labor to the gold mines of South Africa had become a priority in the southern part of the colony, it was there that the Portuguese launched their first successful military campaigns. They led, notably, to the submission of the Gaza Empire and its allies. In the following years they continued, at least until the early 1920’s, in the rest of the colony. In

territorial terms, the main difference was that while the Portuguese administrative occupation was the object of a more passive than active resistance in the center of the territory, in particular in the region of the Zambezi, in the north like in the south of the colony it generated very violent means of anti-colonial resistance and, consequently, of colonial repression.

This generalized military intervention of the Portuguese in Mozambique established a deep rupture with the type of relationships the local peoples had developed with them in the previous centuries as a body of more or less mutually accepted norms and procedures. In what concerns the relationship of the Portuguese with the local structures of power, the situation as it developed in the second half of the 19th century assumed two radically opposed forms. In the cases where the African resistance, often no more than a desperate expression of self-defense, was armed and based on military confrontations the usual result was the systematic killing or exiling of their respective leading elites. This was what happened, for instance, with the Gaza Empire. In other cases, characterized by more pacific forms of resistance, the Portuguese would accept and recognize the local leaders as allies. In both cases they would follow their local domination with the reestablishment of the old structures of power or, in many cases, by substituting them by others, eventually more sympathetic to them. To be sure, those African structures would be, from then on, submitted to the close direction and manipulation of the Portuguese. In other words, they would be placed under the direct control of the colonial administrators and in a subaltern role. Locally, however, within their respective communities they would appear as having recovered some of the influence and authority of the past. This enabled them to be extensively used by the Portuguese in what respected tax collection, labor

recruitment, security and information. In other words, this is how they became instrumental to the regular fulfillment of the main objectives of the colonial administration.

The imposition of taxes was, to be sure, the central instrument used by the colonial administration to achieve those objectives. But colonial taxes represented more than that. They were, first of all, the main evidence that slavery was being abolished. Only free or freed men are able to pay taxes. They also had to be the financial support for the installation, functioning and expansion of the colonial administration. Simultaneously, and because taxes had to be collected, they required an extensive organization with that objective. Moreover, in the political environment of the 19th century world-system, they had as well to be somehow legitimized by the force of law.

Colonial occupation and its legitimization within the core was the result of the regular fulfillment of those conditions. This was true in Mozambique as it was true in southern Africa or, for that matter, in all the other European colonies in Africa. In fact, modern colonialism existed politically in the junction of those three dominant features: a political administration capable of co-opting local, African, middle-range structures of power; an extensive tax collection; and the legislation legitimizing all that. These are also the features that made of forced labor the central element of the colonial model as it existed in the continent, in general, in southern Africa, in particular. This is the reason why its historical formation in the case of Mozambique, as a case-study for the whole region, will be the main theme of the next chapter.

2: PORTUGUESE COLONIALISM AS FORCED LABOR

Resource extraction under the form of taxes or tributes was being practiced in the Portuguese African possessions at least since the sixteenth century both by officers of the Crown and by the Church (Felner 1933: 173; Capela 1977: 32). This was done in what was known by them as “nobody's land”, areas able to be occupied in this first phase of the Portuguese presence in Africa. In their perspective they were not considered as being part or as belonging to any of the local social and political African territorial units. To these units or their kings it was often the case that the local Portuguese, on the contrary, had themselves to pay tribute. In particular in Angola, where Lisbon was interested to increase their influence and occupation in the 17th century by installing settlers or colons and their families, that type of tribute guaranteed the access to land and labor. It became as well a kind of symbolic evidence of the legitimacy of the colonial occupation. The Mozambican Prazos, although with a very different history and different actors, offered a similar situation. The lords of the Prazos, the **Prazeiros** as they were known in Portuguese, also taxed the populations living within the usually vast limits of the land they considered as theirs. These taxes were the correspondent to the tribute paid by their subjects to the **Mambos** of the region. Through them a new form of occupation of the land with new social relations of production was recreated. These new forms of occupation, based on the right to collect taxes, were similar to those that the concessionary companies were given by the Portuguese Crown and extensively applied two centuries afterwards. This was also the main foundations on which the Portuguese colonial administration was installed in Mozambique. It was also from the income made with taxes that it expanded to the whole territory and consolidated itself.

The basic principle about taxes and their collection is that the government receives them as revenue in return for protection and for the guarantee and administration of social justice. These revenues are consequently traded for the respect of property rights, security, and social justice. They constitute a relationship between the state, its objectives and fiscal policy, and those who constitute its social base. Taxes materialize the rights guaranteed by the state. Historically, states are in better conditions to guarantee these rights of defense and protection than, for instance, private security groups. This is so only because the costs incurred by states for the same type of service are usually lower than those of private groups. On the other hand, this has a direct relation with economic development because economic growth requires not only resources to be invested but, as well, as one of its main conditions, that social rights and duties are as a rule somehow recognized and respected.

In Mozambique, the new colonial tax system started to be implemented immediately after the pacification campaigns of 1895. Simultaneously, it became not only an important source of income but also a political factor of submission of the “enemy”. It had, obviously, very different justifications than those on which the collection of taxes is based. Writing about this between 1896 and 1898, the Portuguese Governor in the colony explained the legitimacy of extracting the hut tax as a right inherent to the Portuguese sovereignty and its effective occupation of the colony. “This is why”, he adds, “it has such a great political importance” (Albuquerque, 1899: 318). As late as 1912 and almost in the same terms, a report published by the Sociedade de Geographia, a scientific association transformed into an important colonial lobby in Lisbon, stated that “the native tax (designation then attributed to the hut tax, ML) should not solely be looked at under a fiscal perspective but, **very principally** (sic) under its

political perspective, as a precise indicator of the state of submission of the natives”. In another chapter, the same idea is repeated and equally highlighted: “The hut tax or other similar taxes are simultaneously an indirect way to compel the natives to work and an undisputable demonstration of the exercise of our effective sovereignty (Sociedade de Geographia, 1912: 14-5 and 73; Capela, 1977: 85; emphasis in the original). In the following year, the then General Governor of Angola issued a number of recommendations for his administration and, among them, the following one related with the collection of the hut tax: “It has a more political than financial objective, it must be considered as the culmination of our occupation, pacification, and administration of the regions of the interior and, consequently, its collection must be attempted only in the areas where those conditions have been fulfilled” (Matos, 1953: 167).

On the other hand, the hut tax system was seen, probably in an even more clear way as “a very profitable arrangement”. Another Portuguese Governor-General of Mozambique in the early 20th century wrote very candidly, that the 1895-1896 expedition against the Gaza Empire “was one of the best financial operations ever made in the Province. It cost approximately 200 contos but that capital has yielded every year about 40 and 50 percent through the imposition of the hut tax made possible by that expedition” (Andrade 1950: 349; Capela 1977: 66-7). In particular in the first years, but not only, the idea of a relationship between tax extraction and state public services like security or justice to those paying the taxes was consequently absent from the financial rationalization of the Portuguese colonial administrators. This is the reason why the emphasis was instead on the tributary nature of the taxes being paid by those who had been militarily defeated.

Another aspect related with the imposition of a tax system in Mozambique concerns what I would call its moral legitimacy. Underlying ideologically that process there was the principle proper of the European enlightenment according to which only through work can the human being be civilized and measured as such. In its application by colonialism this meant that what was considered as unused labor time, vagrancy and laziness or seen as such had to be severely punished. Much before the principle “Work Shall Make You Free” was cast in iron and placed at the entrance of the Nazi concentration camps in Europe, Portuguese colonialism had already inscribed it as one of the basic features of its occupation and exploitation of Africa. It became, since the early 1880’s, a fundamental justification for the ways and means assumed by Portugal in its colonies. It was the founding block of the colonial exploitation of Mozambique.

The generalized affirmation of an intrinsic relationship between the colonial administration right to collect taxes and the equally assumed moral legitimacy to force reluctant peasants to work by all means necessary to pay them was an expression of the local application of that principle. It became a kind of *leit motif* for the explanation of Portuguese colonialism as a public discourse since the late 1920s. Taxes and forced labor were, in often repeated words, “the price of civilization”; and, to be sure, a price that “they” had to pay. This ideological reasoning of forced labor was also used to publicly justify the use of African customary chiefs and other authorities with that objective. As representatives of their own peoples, they should want the best for them – and the best was what was offered by colonialism. Consequently those who did not understand such evidence and refused or resisted to implement it had to be eliminated and replaced.

To be sure, the real motivation behind all this was rather, simply put, the fact that the underdeveloped and highly indebted Portuguese state had no other means to exploit its colonies. A motivation energized by the fact that already in the 19th century, and in particular after the so called Boer War, the material conditions for the profitable exploitation of labor to fulfill the needs of neighboring territories started to be in place and functioning. In their expansion to the whole territory, the military campaigns of “pacification” were creating those conditions. The institution and the gradual extension to the “pacified” areas of a modern tax system was the instrument necessary to make them come true.

Made compulsory by law, taxes had to be paid in cash. They implied consequently the need to work in sectors outside the local communities. On the other hand, the punishment for the non-payment of taxes was labor, the obligation to work for a certain time in return for a payment in money. Moreover, all the petty and medium transgressions against colonial laws and regulations were as well punished with forced labor. Among those transgressions those that local administrative servants at all levels of the colonial hierarchy would consider as **vagrancy** occupied the central place, the main criminal reference.

What happens when tax revenues are extracted not only without the correspondent return by the state of social justice and protection but also in such an unrestricted way? In the short run, this is little more than expropriation. In the medium and long run it becomes impossible without permanent repression by the arms. The question must probably be rephrased: who, in a situation like that of colonial Mozambique provided justice and security in return to a

generalized and often discretionary tax collection? Besides, how and by whom were taxes collected?

The answer is that all over the territory and as soon as the various situations of unrest were settled, usually by military force, that role was assumed by old or new African chiefs, locally recognized or imposed as such by the Portuguese. These chiefs became known as **regulos** in the colonial terminology. They were extensively used by the Portuguese with those and other functions. Among them the most important in the colonialist perspective was that of tax collection with the correspondent channeling of its product to the colonial administration. Equally central among their functions was the obligation to present regularly to the administration a certain number, previously established, of workers – chosen or conscripted usually, but not always or only, to include those who had not paid tax or denied compliance to what had been ordered.

To a great extent, the colonial administration as it was implemented in Mozambique became possible because of the work of those customary or imposed regulos. This was not, to be sure, a pacific process. In the mid 1920's, however, the Portuguese had already at their service an extensive and consolidated network covering the whole territory. It was, as well, in its objectives, a quite efficient network.

More than that: because it was the Portuguese administration that established its links and centralized them, that network had not, for the African chiefs who formed its base, a horizontal existence. That is to say, it did not establish or allowed any kind of communication among

them. It was, rather, a network designed to guarantee the more or less permanent relationship between each one of the regulos and the Portuguese administrative officers at the local level. These relationships were extensive to the whole territory of the colony and centralized at the top of its colonial hierarchy. This was so because the Portuguese colonial officers were extensively linked amongst themselves and their hierarchic superiors at the level of the whole territory. But there were no similar linkages or interrelationships among the regulos themselves. To a great extent they only existed, as such and with their communities, at the local level. Thus they existed like isolated, secluded social atoms without other forms of effective outside relationships besides those they were compelled to maintain with their respective colonial administrators.

To a great extent, it must be added, this system of colonial networked relations based on isolated regulos and their communities pushed to its ultimate limits the historical mode of imperial domination based on the well-known principle of **divide and rule**. As it is well known, this principle was often applied historically as part of the dominant structures of political domination and according to different races, different linguistic or ethnic groups, different religious persuasions or different social formations. Its objective was, as often it continues to be today, to keep them apart. Because by keeping them apart, they were kept at a weaker level of potential or effective oppositional response. This made more possible the exercise of power over similarly oppressed but isolated social units which, if conjoined or united, could represent a serious threat to the continuation of that same exercise of power. In the case of Mozambique, the colonial administration used extensively, manipulated and often directly exacerbated social and political divisionism according to race, to regions, to ethnic and

linguistic origins, to past conflicts and to religions. However, all these forms of generated division only started to become systematically applied in Mozambique after the beginnings of the anti-colonialist armed struggle of national liberation. Before that, during the long colonial night that preceded it, the Portuguese were able to establish and institutionalize **on the very foundations of all those potential or effective divisions** a form of division based on the separated existence of the many hundreds of African chiefs and their communities which they utilized to organize and control the territory. This was made even more efficient due to the low demographic rate within the colony. Perhaps nowhere else was a process of divide and rule applied in such an extreme and efficient way as in colonial Mozambique. To be sure, neither the colony in the full extension of its territory nor its future as an independent state was part of this equation of extreme social and political division.

Turning now to those isolated local chiefs, the evidence is that, from their side, they very soon assumed a kind of pragmatic **modus vivendi** with the Portuguese colonial administration (⁵⁴). As long as they were recognized by its local representatives as being the legitimate leaders of the local communities and were left more or less free to exercise that authority as they wished. In exchange they acted as the mediators between the colonial administration and the resources of those communities. In doing that, they complemented, and made possible, the administrative functions of what always was in the colony a much reduced body of administrative officers.

⁵⁴ The assertions and other analytical considerations in this portion of my work are also the result of field research, mostly based on interviews with regulos and their direct assistants, with local families and with Portuguese colonial officers at different levels of the administrative hierarchy. They are mentioned in the Bibliography as *Investigacao de Campo, Notes: Gaza Province, 1964 (Matalane e Calanga); Gaza and Inhambane, 1966; Zambesia and Niassa, 1968*. I am also using results from a similar work done in Manica and Sofala, 1983 and 1984 (Mossurize). In the last case there was also the access and extensive consultation of the colonial archive of the administration of Machaze, including that containing more than thirty years of Confidential Correspondence (*Livro de Registo de Entradas e Saldas de Correspondencia Confidencial, Volumes 1 e 2*). The most important of the references to these confidential documents are included in my “*O Colonialismo Secreto, 1944/1974*”, manuscrito. Maputo: 1984.

The mutual advantages of such an arrangement are obvious. It soon became the main social support of the Portuguese colonial power and its exercise in Mozambique.

This was consequently the origin of the strange alliance that, for more than one hundred years, constituted the base and made possible the Portuguese colonial occupation of Mozambique. Through it, the Portuguese managed in a single operation, to consolidate the “pacification” of the territory and extend their administrative and political presence. To the large masses of peasants, as well, this regime appears to have been if not the best possible solution at least a tolerable one. The main reason seems to be that through the local authorities they were able to avoid the direct, daily contact with the occupier, their arrogance and often violent, racist disdain (Mota Lopes, 1988: “How Traditional are the Traditional Authorities?”, field research, Machaze: unpublished manuscript and transcripts of interviews) (⁵⁵). If it was not for the regulos, the direct contact they had to confront when forced to work outside their communities would then become a permanent feature of their lives. In other words, the use of local authorities by the colonial administration appears, in this perspective, as being, simultaneously, an instrument of control for the Portuguese and a way to avoid some of its more crude and cruel aspects by the majority of the population. Simultaneously, it became a way for the colonialist to penetrate the social reality of the colonized and a way for the latter to establish some kind of in-between divide or barricade in relation to the former.

⁵⁵ In my on-the-field research in Machaze, 1988, this was the most usual response to a series of questions about the need for, advantages and use of African chiefs by the Portuguese in the perspective of the local population (97.8% of 186 individual interviews). Machaze was particularly interesting in this context because during colonialism it was “ruled” by an African authority that, although from the area, had been imposed by the Portuguese. The former Regulo, from an old local family of traditional rulers, had been compulsively substituted in the early 1960’s and sent to exile to S. Tome where he died. This happened when the Portuguese discovered that the forced culture of cotton in the region was not resulting because the seeds given by them to the Regulo to be distributed to the local peasant families were regularly toasted by him, during the night and secretly, before being distributed...

This was, I believe, the general model that Portugal was able to establish, use and consolidate in Mozambique. An important point must however be added here. Contrary to what was at the same time happening in the British and French colonies, the main objective of the Portuguese colonial administration was not to co-opt or assimilate those local African chiefs into their administrative hierarchy. On the contrary: for the system to function as described and be efficient those chiefs and their communities had to be made to believe that, to a great extent, nothing had changed and that it was possible to keep on living as before the arrival and imposition of colonialism. The main difference was that the leaderships at the top of the old hierarchies had been decapitated and substituted by the Portuguese themselves. The rest had to appear as if it had been more or less respected. Moreover, by not collapsing the two systems of order, that of the Portuguese colonial administration and that of the local chiefs, into a single system of domination the former could consider the latter as being separated, different, parallel structures of power. And, as long as tax collecting, the supply of laborers and a certain degree of stability was guaranteed by the old and new African chiefs, their adjuncts and their auxiliaries, then the system in place was working as expected.

This type of arrangement was able to provide for its own self-reproduction. This explains its strength and longevity. But the general atomization at its base was not and could not be a dynamic factor of change or economic growth. It was able to provide a certain degree of stability and order in the vast rural regions of the colony. But it could not change them. The relative local power and influence of the regulos combined with their generalized absence of a national or nationalist perspective, explain also two other important things that we will discuss

in one of the following chapters. The first was the historical mistake made by the state of the newly independent country by considering those local chiefs as being an integral part of the colonial system. They were not. The other, its consequence, was the fact that a great degree of the success obtained in many of the counter insurgency operations led by Rhodesian and South African agents against independent Mozambique was based in the systematic use and co-option of those local chiefs – by then demoted and marginalized to the more or less generalized position of those who had betrayed the struggle for national independence and its objectives. I must add that, in some cases, this was a fair description. But this was not, by any means, a just and correct political generalization.

These elements and features are usually pointed out as constituting the beginnings of the Portuguese administrative establishment in Mozambique. This is, of course, partially true but, as I date it, the real commencement of modern colonialism and its administration in Mozambique was rather an event with a highly symbolic and organizational meaning. That was the import from Lisbon and local installation of the first printing press of the colony. The objective was the regular publication of what became known as the **Boletim Oficial**, a government legislative gazette, which started to be available in 1868. Two years afterwards, the administrative control and regulation of labor relations, generally known after the late 1920's as Indigenato, started to come into being. It gave a first legal expression to what increasingly, all over the colony, had started to substitute slavery: the generalized practice of forced labor.

The legislation and regulations that in 1870 began to legalize forced labor in Mozambique were published in the **Boletim Oficial**. This was, to be sure, its main objective, to make known in the colony the body of the correspondent legislation approved in Lisbon. It is the coincidence of these common beginnings of colonialism as state-sanctioned forced labor with the publication of the correspondent legislation legitimizing it that makes the new publication so symbolically important. As I asserted somewhere else (Mota Lopes, 1982), the **Boletim Oficial** was from its beginnings much more than a government gazette solely destined to local colonial officers. In the first place because following a generalized practice of the time it included news both local and metropolitan. It published, as well, articles of opinion and speeches made in Lisbon or locally by public individualities. Secondly because it had its first page occupied by what we would describe today as publicity, by advertisements of local traders, of shipping arrivals and departures and other businesses. Thirdly, and more important, because this combination of legislation, sometimes locally adjusted, with news, opinion, official discourses and publicity made of the **Boletim Oficial** an important instrument to organize, motivate and give social cohesion to the local settlers, to their administration and to their links with Portugal. Through it, they were constructed as being part of “the first race of the world”, as belonging to the dominant social elite, civilized and “superior”. In terms of modern colonialism, they could not live, anymore, in the disperse way they had always lived, usually along the coast, “as crabs do”. They had to be politically organized and cohesive. This was a necessity derived not only from the systemic definition of colonialism and effective occupation as they were understood within the core of the world-economy but also from the complexity that the organization of the colony represented in administrative terms. A complexity that was due not only to its territorial extension but also to the very scarce and

territorially dispersed number of Portuguese administrators and colons in the territory. It was also part of the Portuguese attempts to oppose and counteract in Mozambique the increasing influence, expansionist greed and effective or potential threats from other colonial powers. The *Boletim Oficial* was, consequently, an instrument of effective colonial occupation and political organization of the territory.

In what concerns what I have been calling the colonial administration, it was in this phase, formed by a still a very weak, reduced and dispersed body of public officers. Because one of their main functions was to collect taxes, the solution, followed for some years, was to loan that task to private individuals who would also be responsible to recruit the necessary labor for the South African mines. Notably, this is what happened in the southern part of Mozambique where the leadership of the Gaza Empire assumed that role until being decapitated. A similar procedure was followed with the *Prazos* and their masters until their effective dismantling.

On the other hand and as already discussed above, concessionary, majestic companies had been set up in most of the colony. According to their charters, they exercised administrative duties and privileges within their respective territories. Among them, they had the right to collect taxes and impose other requirements on the African communities whose land they had occupied. Actually, tax collecting originated revenues so elevated that most of those companies ended up having it as its main, dominant activity. In other words, they subordinated to tax collecting what the Portuguese state had expected from them in the first place: the investment of the capital and know-how necessary to the agricultural development of the colony. Because taxes and other revenues, like those received from the supply of labor to the neighboring

territories, represented high profits without risk, those companies registered in general very high quotations in the European stock markets. To be sure, this and the benefit and enrichment of their shareholders and their directing boards continued to be their main objective until their charters were terminated, already in the 20th century.

In the above discussion about the gradual implementation in Mozambique of a colonial administration it is possible, consequently, to detect three or four new features of import. The first one is the evidence of the direct influence that core decisions had in its organization and in the set up of its structures of colonial authority. It was to accommodate or implement those decisions, proper of a developing capitalist world-economy that the Portuguese decided to give up their secular lethargy and initiate the process of colonial occupation. Secondly, it was also the need of the Portuguese to comply with the new political practices and conceptualization about colonialism that determined their involvement with the long and extensive process of military “pacification” of the territory. It resulted, as well, in the gradual extinction of the local African structures of power previously recognized as legitimate and in a base of relative equality. Similar processes tending to end the exercise of power within the Prazos and by the concessionary companies were as well accelerated. They resulted in the extinction of both institutions. A third new feature was the fact that in the three instances, that of the African social and political formations, that of the Prazos and in that of the companies the result was not only the expansion of the colonial space but, also, the extension of the exercise of colonial power to the whole territory. It was this expansion that created the possibility for the metropolitan state and its local administration to re-organize the colony according to new objectives. Among them, the direct control and access to labor and other resources became

possible. Moreover, maybe principally in a first phase, the administration had finally the possibility of collecting taxes all over the colony. And it was through it that forced labor was established the central element of its model of exploitation.

Forced labor is an intrinsic characteristic of colonialism. It was not exclusive of the Portuguese colonies. Without exception, all the other colonial powers implemented and used, sometimes even more extensively than the Portuguese, forced or conscripted labor in their African colonies. An important distinction must however be made. In the case of the other metropolitan states economic colonialism would start usually with the local investment of capital to develop, as extensively as possible, the type of agriculture considered necessary to satisfy local and metropolitan necessities and demand. The same happened when mining was the object of direct colonial exploitation. Forced labor would be instituted as a consequence of non-fulfilled demand for labor, in the sequence of those investments and to make them even more profitable. Afterwards it would be part of the gestation of what was becoming a usually regional labor market. In the case of Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique, this sequence appears as having been inverted. The objective of the colonial administration was, rather, to block and impede the formation of a labor market. Forced labor was there the avatar of slavery, its structural substitute. To benefit from it as extensively as possible was, to start with, the general objective of the pacification wars and the reason why they started against the Gaza Empire. Primarily instituted to serve the economies of the neighboring territories and to profit from it, forced labor in Mozambique was also generated afterwards to be used within the colony, both in public works and in settler agriculture in all its different forms. Later on, it started as well to be used under the form of obligatory cultivation imposed on rural households of certain crops

necessary as inputs to the metropolitan industry, like cotton, on their own land and their labor. I will return back to this distinction when discussing the processes of formation of flows of migrant labor to South Africa and Rhodesia in other territories and colonies of southern Africa.

The transformation of Mozambique into a labor reserve for the rest of the region was so extensive that it affected all the other economic sectors of the colony. As I have already pointed out, concessionary companies formed with foreign capital with the primary objective of developing agriculture in the colony with all kinds of extensive cultivation or exploitation of the soil ended up dealing in forced labor as their main source of profits. In the 1920's Portuguese settlers often had to protest and organize themselves with retaliatory measures against their own administration accused by them of provoking expensive and prejudicial shortages of labor with the priority given to the neighboring territories.

On the other hand, because forced labor was the main resource of exploitation in Mozambique the need to develop infrastructures and construct roads, bridges or railways determined by other economic or social requirements was always considered as secondary and dispensable. Moreover, and because forced labor was unskilled labor there was a generalized interest in keeping it as such. Primary education and its schools were a function of the catholic missions and, usually, inexistent. The same thing happened with health care. This was the general norm of life for the great majority of the colonized Mozambicans. The introduction of changes had to wait until the second half of the 1960s. The armed struggle against the colonial rule and for national liberation was, by then, quickly expanding to the whole territory. Those changes, and others that followed them, were its first substantial results.

It is important to repeat, here, that forced labor was a practice followed by all the other European colonial states in Africa. The main difference was that in the Portuguese case forced labor became gradually the center, the beating heart of their mode of exploitation of their colonies. With the exception of the so called Belgian Congo where a similar system of labor exploitation was created, in the great majority of the other colonial possessions in the continent, forced labor appeared rather as a function of the investment of capital. In the case of Mozambique, as we have seen, it was the other way around.

I have already pointed out that the moral justification for forced labor, in the perspective of European colonialism, was that it constitutes an instrument for modernization because capable of freeing the individual from “tradition”. This was one of the dominant conceptualizations of liberalism in the last century. According to it, free individuals must be created. And it is the duty of the most advanced countries not only to assume the value of models to be achieved in the future but, as well, to impose control to liberate, to create free individuals. Contemporary social sciences are still deeply affected by such a rationalization.

It is interesting here, consequently, to point out the adequacies assumed by liberalism in Portugal within the context of Europe or, maybe better, in relation to what was by then the dominant structures of knowledge within the core of the world-economy.

The Portuguese liberalism of the 19th century was, to start with, an oppositional political conceptualization for the government of the country. With small variations, this is what

happened or was happening in other European countries. In Portugal, however, their supporters were not only weak and without a strong social influence but also restricted to the cities and, even there, dispersed and divided into conflicting factions. They received, however, an important contribution when in its return from Brazil the Crown appeared as a defender of liberal ideas to be implemented in the kingdom. It had been influenced by the political environment lived in Brazil, by the general justification for its independence and by some of the liberal principles that there had become part of a dominant political ideology. This was how, as we have seen, a Constitutional Monarchy was implemented in Portugal. But it was also, and obviously, one must add, not only an implementation that had little to do with what the Portuguese liberals were demanding but also destined to change little if anything. On the other hand, what was being demanded by the more enlightened of the liberal supporters had, against it, a still very strong and active nobility as well as the equally powerful hierarchy of the Catholic Church. To a great extent it ended up having to confront as well the opposition of the Crown, satisfied with the measures that had been introduced in the country in order for everything to stay the same. The result was a quite long period of instability and civil conflict in Portugal. It ended up pushing into power the liberalizing sector of the dominant elite but in a process of political rotativism with other conservative sectors. This continued after the Republic proclamation of 1910 and only started to disappear with the strong, dictatorial measures adopted after the 1926 military coup.

The main ideas of modern economic liberalism became however the trend that, both in Portugal and in its colonies, its dominant elites tried to implement from the second half of the 19th century onwards. Those were however elites without capital. Theirs was also a liberalism

deeply transformed by a long process of accommodation and concessions. To be sure, this ideological plasticity, the ability of shaping itself to the most different situations and changing accordingly while continuing to affirm its basic principles, is a general characteristic of modern liberalism. In Portugal, however, it became as well a set of principles and objectives without relation to the economic, social and, even, cultural reality of the country and its colonies. Portuguese liberalism in the passage of the 19th to the 20th century assumed an expression that, to say the least and more than anywhere else, was both imprecise and distorted. This had two different orders of consequences: the Portuguese bourgeoisie was not able to fulfill in the Portuguese colonies in general, in Mozambique in particular, the vacuum left by the extinction of slavery (Capela, 1977: 6). Secondly, it had to find out among the most pressing demands of the world-economy those more adequate and possible of being used for a quick accumulation of capital. In Mozambique, as a response to the growing demand from the neighboring territories and as discussed, the solution was obviously the access and control of labor. However, and as Capela correctly states, labor in Mozambique “refused to the liberal demand the counterpart of its offer” (1977:7). In these circumstances, labor control and its regular access meant, first of all, forced labor. And it was forced labor that became, in less than one decade, the dominant economic activity in the colony.

Finally, and because structurally related to the construction and reality of the colonial model in Mozambique and its theoretical explanation two other questions have as well to be asked here. The first one is related with a common but only in part correct explanation for what historically appears as a permanent lack of correspondence between intention and realities of the Portuguese elites in their colonial exploitation. The same explanation is used to account for the

apparent disjunction between the backward Portuguese economic behavior in their colonies and the very efficient repressive and extractive apparatus they were able to set up there.

A commonly used explanation to both realities is that they were a direct consequence of the predominance within the colony of “feudal relations of production” imported from Portugal throughout more than three hundred years of domination. Still according to it, Portuguese liberalism was never able to completely eliminate those feudal relations of production, their remnants, or their weight in all serious attempts of socio-economic transition. The result was that without the incentives represented by economic growth or its possibilities, colonialism in Mozambique as in the other colonies of Portugal was not and could not be an element of modernization and change, that is to say, of incorporation in an evolving capitalist world-economy. Even if this explanation is corrected with the historical fact that many of the social characteristics lived in Mozambique in the second half of the 19th century were mostly originated from the so-called Portuguese India, for more than a century the administrative capital of Mocambique, and not usually from Portugal, this is a faulty explanation.

It seems to me, rather, that the truth of the matter is quite different. And that we have now, in the present work, all the elements to define it more precisely. Three main characteristics have so far, I believe, been made obvious. The first was, to be sure, the Portuguese underdevelopment, its dependency from Great Britain and its lack of capital both to modernize its economy, to invest in its colonies and to link both into a coherent process of economic growth. It can be said that, to a great extent, Portugal was not only a colonialist power – it was also, at the same time, a colonized country. The second was the high degree of attraction or

influence dominantly represented by South Africa and its exploding economy, its mines, its agriculture and, in particular, its chronic demand for cheap labor. This demand for labor was common and in permanent competition with those from Rhodesia, from Tanganyika and, last but not least, from the Portuguese settlers in Mozambique. The third characteristic is a result of the other two. It was the double if not **triple subordination** of the colony in relation to Lisbon and through it, directly or through South Africa, to London. That is to say that Mozambique became incorporated in the world-economy in the late 19th century or early 20th century in a situation of direct subordination to two semi-peripheral states, a new one, South Africa, and an old one, Portugal. This conditioned and affected all the possible choices about its development. It was also this type of dependence that ended up characterizing the relative position of Mozambique in the southern Africa region and, through it, within the periphery of a developing capitalist world-economy.

A double or triple systemic subordination, the absence of means of development and the demanding attraction of the rest of the region were consequently the defining characteristics of the social, economic and political reality of Mozambique in the late 19th century under Portuguese colonialism. By themselves, they do not constitute a model of exploitation capable of lasting as long as Portuguese colonialism lasted in Mozambique. To be sure, it was forced labor, its institution and generalization that became the main connection among the different sides of such a complex, tri-sided social reality. It was forced labor that structured, consolidated and made it possible. I will try in the following chapter to test this conclusion by analyzing the ways and means followed by Portugal with that objective.

3. THE COLONIAL MODEL

The Portuguese colonial system of administrative control and regulation of labor relations, generally known after the late 1920's as **Indigenato**, started to come into being, as we have seen, around 1870. Formed by a complex body of cumulative laws, structures of power, accepted behaviors, institutions and state-sanctioned relationships (56), it occupied for more than one hundred years the central organizing role of the Portuguese colonial regime of exploitation in Mozambique. Its main objective was to give legislative expression and consequently to legitimize forced labor, the main element of integration of the colony in the Southern Africa region and, through it, in the evolving capitalist world-economy.

As the central, basic, overarching principle of social organization the Indigenato regulated that all adults with ages between 15 and 65 years had to work at least to be able to pay in cash for their taxes. If not they would be guilty of vagrancy. Moreover, all forms of deviance from the legislated or not colonial impositions could and should in general be punished with labor. In reality, this corresponded to its contrary: to get a discretionary control and an unrestricted access to cheap labor in the colony, the Portuguese state set up a vast body of laws and obligations covering most aspects of the daily life and which, often, were physically impossible to be fulfilled. But not only: a vast and growing range of other obligations and rules

⁵⁶ The main documents on which the Indigenato was based are, besides the foundational Acto Colonial and the Carta Organica do Imperio Colonial Portugues, an extensive number of Estatutos, Treaties, Regulations, Decrees, Portarias, e Despachos approved and published both in Portugal and in its colonies. Besides the very useful collection of related documents concerning the relations with South Africa and other neighboring territories and covering legislation since 1850 to 1964 (Covane: 1989) I'll be using here some of specific legislation that was grouped under the term Indigenato and, in particular, the following: Republica Portuguesa, 1930 (1947): Regulamento do Trabalho dos Indigenas na Colonia de Mocambique, Lourenco Marques: Imprensa Nacional; Colonia de Mocambique, 1942-43 (1944): Regulamento da Contribuicao Bracal Indigena, Lourenco Marques: Imprensa Nacional; Republica Portuguesa, 1954: Estatuto dos Indigenas Portugueses, Lourenco Marques: Imprensa Nacional. More important for the present approach, I'll be using here descriptions and conclusions from my research and field work in Machaze, Manica Province, in 1989.

were or became as well punishable by the written law or by local impositions in the meantime made into customary law by the Portuguese colonial administration. When violated, the infractions had to be compensated or were punishable with labor for periods of time and in conditions which were either discretionary or according to the terms of the Indigenato. Labor which was paid with wages much below their lowest social value if not, very often, simply considered as unpaid work.

Such a murky origin denounces the reasons behind the general designation of Indigenato given to the labor laws that started to be imposed in Mozambique in the second half of the 19th century. It emphasizes, as well, one of its basic characteristics: it was a type of legislation solely applied to black Mozambicans, the *indigenas* or indigenous population. Those laws were concerned, however, not only with labor but as well with all aspects of life and death of the individuals and their communities. In particular, it was through these regulations that the rural households were recreated. As such, this overarching regulation of daily life incorporated conditions that went from those under which Mozambicans could get married to those allowing their access to social and economic rights when officially approved, also in terms of the Indigenato, as culturally assimilated or *assimilados*. With its basic, racial-based and discriminatory principles already established in the 1890's, this legislation was sanctioned with the so called Administrative Reform of Mozambique in 1907 and consolidated after 1926. It was by then that it started to be known as Indigenato. A new Portuguese fascist government had in the meantime installed itself in power in Lisbon through a military coup d'état. Some changes were then introduced but they were mainly of a rhetoric nature. Consequently, and to an extent which has not yet been recognized as such in colonial studies, the Indigenato

continued to establish the modern Portuguese law the same kind of divide determined by racial differentiation and discrimination usually only recognized as such in the coetaneous elaboration of the apartheid based legislation of South Africa. Imposed by force or by the permanent threat of its use the Indigenato system was only totally abolished in the mid-1970s, with the end of colonialism and the political independence of Mozambique.

As an institution of colonial domination, the legislation and other regulations that constituted the Indigenato were not, up to a point, substantially different from similar bodies of laws imposed on other African colonies by other European colonial powers. They all had similar objectives, with similar instruments of legal coercion and, often, offered similar solutions for the same problems. To be sure, they all reflected an objective of control and exploitation of resources which, not taking into account local necessities, defined as an absolute priority the well being and progress of their respective metropolitan centers, of the “motherland”. Secondly, they would contemplate as well the needs and demands of settlers. I have already pointed out, however, what I believe is a main distinction between the Portuguese colonial policies on which the Indigenato system was based and those of other colonial powers: the fact that while the labor laws of the latter were usually conceived and used in function of the exploitation of other economic resources and to regulate labor relations, the laws and regulations of the Portuguese Indigenato were conceived and generally applied in Mozambique without necessarily taking into account that complementarily. That is to say, they could be and were extensively used by the colonial state as self-serving instruments because allowing the direct extraction of wealth from its assumed role of intermediary or broker in the commodification of labor and not primordially from its productive utilization. They were laws

designed to directly extract wealth in a process of intermediation between peasants who had to be forced to work for others and the different sectors where their labor were required. By assuming the role and functions of an inexistent labor market, this intermediation blocked its development and, at the same time, profited from it (⁵⁷).

To be sure, its objective was not the formation of a labor market, where supply and demand of workers could be directly negotiated both by them and their employers. It was, rather, to force peasants with ages between 15 and 65 years to work for others when they had neither the obligation nor the social necessity to sell their labor force. Because the coercion, supply and distribution of reluctant workers was its main objective, the Indigenato regulated in particular the ways and means through which the colonial administration had to control, manipulate and extract surplus value from them. It can be said, consequently, that as labor legislation the Indigenato was not primordially concerned with processes of production or the relations between employers and workers. It regulated, by the permanent use of a vast network of local regulos and with the threat of the use of force as its background, the regular supply and distribution of workers, at a regional level, by those different processes of production. Its main objective was, consequently, to force or coerce into work.

Until the mid-1920's, the colonial administration in Mozambique shared their role of labor recruiters and brokers with the majestic companies. I have already discussed above the

⁵⁷ Marvin Harris (1966: 17-8) has also made the point that familiar terms of labor market analysis do not correspond to this type of situation. This is however only partially true as the numbers of workers requested both by settlers and by the South African mining, agriculture and industrial interests changed with fluctuations of prices and other conditions of the regional and world markets. What does not correspond to familiar terms of labor markets or, for that matter, of European labor history is the way peasants are able to keep their means of production while at the same time being coerced to work for others. I will try below to respond to this question.

immense differences between what had been expected from them and the reality of their presence in the colony. It is perhaps worth to synthesize the main points here. Created, in the meantime, with private investments from Great Britain, Germany and Portugal their managements soon discovered that the indirect exploitation of labor through the imposition of taxes and the control of their migration to neighboring territories was more profitable than plantation agriculture. As important, it did not required the use of further investments. For those companies, consequently and with very small, localized exceptions, the direct commodification and sale of labor became, until their more or less forced shutting down by Lisbon, their main activity and source of wealth in Mozambique. This can be seen as the major reason why a plantation economy was historically much less developed in colonial Mozambique, even when its exploitation was attributed to non -Portuguese companies, than in other similar colonies of West or East Africa.

Under a large number of forms of control, coercion and organization the regular supply of African workers had to respond to increasing demands by settlers, public works, missions, and, later on, in the mid 1960s, even by the military. Simultaneously, it had as well to guarantee a regular and efficient supply of labor for the agricultural, industrial and mining complexes of neighboring territories, in particular those in South Africa and, to a lesser extent, in the then Southern Rhodesia, today's Zimbabwe, and in Tanganyika.

The application of the laws and other regulations of the Indigenato system in Mozambique had, consequently, to take into account and coordinate the Portuguese metropolitan and settler interests and needs within the colony with those of its neighboring territories. Such

coordination required means and instruments that the Portuguese lacked. We have already seen how this problem was solved.

The reality was, however, that the available number of workers that the local African authorities were able to draw together was frequently insufficient to satisfy the Portuguese requests. Usually, this was related both with local needs and with the peasants' necessity to cultivate their own land and guarantee the cyclical fulfillment of their self-subsistence. This problem had usually and in general similar consequences all over the colony. In the first place, to be sure, it led to the culpability of the African chiefs by the Portuguese and, often, to their public punishment. The repetition of the "inefficiency" would have more complicated consequences. Secondly, such a latent threat, increasing punishments and permanent pressures would lead the chiefs to increase their recruitment efforts to fulfill the requests. Often, this would result into the lack of the local work force required to produce the necessary to feed the various households of the region. It would lead to the contraction of cultivated areas and to the substantial reduction of production. The culmination of such a process of deprivation was obvious. Years of hunger and generalized misery started to be frequent, with their correspondent parade of misery and disease. Finally, the distribution of the scarce workers would follow a very definite scale of priorities. The quotas destined to the neighboring territories and, in particular, to South Africa had to be satisfied, they were a priority. This meant that if a supply problem occurred it was usually solved to the detriment of the Portuguese settlers. The result was the frequent repetition of public protests, in particular until the mid 1920's, against not only the colonial state but, as well, the metropolitan government.

For more than one hundred years that organization of labor flows within the colony or from it to the region was the dominant activity of the colonial administration. Construed during the last two decades of the 19th century, it had already its main characteristics in place in the beginnings of the twentieth. The extent to which it evolved in the following years to be consolidated with the rise of the fascist New State in 1926 was a direct result of those ideological and material characteristics. In many cases, in particular in what concerns South Africa, they were the object of interstate agreements and treaties. It was through those agreements that the regular supply of workers to the South African mines became linked to the development and use of the harbors and railways in the meantime constructed in Mozambique. Moreover, they laid down the other advantages opened up to the Portuguese through that supply.

Among them, the so called gold clause according to which the Portuguese state would receive in gold, at a fixed price, 60 percent of all the wages received by the Mozambican workers in South Africa. Moreover, part of the miners' wages would be directly deposited in gold and paid in escudos at the return back home of the miners. To it were linked, at least till the escalation of the liberation war in the mid 1960's, all other economic activities in the colony. It was, as well, the main resource possible to be offered by the Portuguese as an exchange to capital investment in Mozambique. The construction and utilization of infrastructures like roads, railways and harbors in the colony was dominantly made through European or South African investments benefiting from those conditions. Equally, the development of a proto-industrial sector and of agriculture became to a great extent dependent and was based on the back of Mozambicans who were forced to work for others. The entire settler economy and the

possibilities of their profitable reproduction became, thus, dependent on the efficient control and organization of labor flows to South Africa and Rhodesia.

Simultaneously, the Indigenato system of labor supply and distribution soon became another major instrument in the transformation of southern Africa into Southern Africa, that is to say, into an incorporated region of the capitalist world-economy. The main factor determining it was the gradual ascension of South Africa in the first decades of the 20th century to the semi-periphery of the capitalist world-economy. At the same time, and as the organizing structure of domination of Portuguese colonialism in the region, it specifically became as well the main instrument through which its settlers were able to participate and benefit from the on-going and quite rapid process of systemic incorporation of the region in the capitalist world-economy.

More than in any other European colony in Africa it was the development of that conjuncture that changed labor into forced labor in Mozambique. At the same time, that transformation made of labor relations in the colony little more than an avatar for the gradually extinct slavery. It changed the former designation of slave for that of *indigena*. It transformed the role of the slave trader into that of the state. But it tended to keep everything else as it was before. Besides new forms of administrative centralization and regulation, usually through a so called “contract”, and the participation of agencies like the WNLA, little else was changed. The remnants of the past, which included the active collaboration of legitimate or imposed African authorities and the activity of independent recruiters, soon became obvious even to Portuguese colonial officers. Writing in 1926 about the Portuguese labor policy in Mozambique, both within the colony and to satisfy the demands from South Africa, Rhodesia and other territories,

including the Atlantic islands of Sao Tome, one of those colonial officers pointed out that “only because it assumes the juridical form of contracts is not called slaving” (Brito Camacho, 1926: *Politica Colonial*, Lisboa: Editorial Cosmos, p. 17). Initially implemented by the majestic companies within their territories and by the administration in the rest of the colony, he adds, forced labor had been continued, increasingly expanded and centralized as the central task of the colonial administration in the whole territory (Camacho 1926).

More than any other Portuguese colonial institution, the Indigenato regulation reflects and expresses the unequal, racist and socially oppressive type of relationship that was developed and imposed on the vast majority of the colony’s population by the administration and a very small minority of settlers. To an extent that, with the Portuguese impossibility of accessing other sources of accumulation, it soon became the central feature, the dominant factor of the Portuguese colonial policy in Mozambique. This is also what Panvenne tell us: “African labor was recognized”, she writes, “as the colony’s principal resource, the key to Portugal’s ability to realize wealth from her holdings” (1995: 3).

For a better understanding of the Portuguese labor policies in Mozambique and in other colonies this must be related with one of the main points of the Portuguese colonial ideology, often expressed in documents and other writings: the African territories had to be kept by all means necessary and against all pretensions of other European colonial states, including those of Great Britain, in order to be able to contribute for the future modernization, progress and the economic and social growth of Portugal. The only difference between this principle and what was being followed by other colonial powers is, of course, its projection into the future. A

cultural characteristic that continue very much alive in the twentieth century as politicians, in the words of a contemporary observer “prefer to whet appetites with promises of an improved future than demanding abstinence and sacrifice today” (George Grayson, 1977: Portugal’s Crisis, *Current History* 73: 169-77. See, also, Grant S. McClellan, ed., 1978: Portugal and Spain: Democratic Beginnings, New York: H. W. Wilson Company, p. 158).

This was also reflected in a kind of historically assumed regularity that must be pointed out in its bizarre succession. Having lost their first empire, in Asia, the Portuguese received from history the possibility of a second act with the exploitation of a second empire, that of Brazil. When Brazil was lost, the imperial dream was projected into Africa and into the certitude of a third empire. More complex than a simple dream exploited by successive Portuguese administrations with very definite political and ideological objectives, the reality was that the Portuguese had not the level of economic development or the capital necessary to invest with profit in their extensive colonies and, in particular, in Mozambique. To a certain extent they were themselves the citizens of a colonized country colonizing other countries. Notwithstanding what became a highly arrogant public discourse, they seem however to have been very much aware of their own economic dependence and underdevelopment. And these became the true reasons why they assumed the position of explaining the extreme backwardness of their colonies by the absence of better conditions to develop them, what was true; but also as being a temporary absence, awaiting better days -- which was not.

This means that, within its limits, the Indigenato-based exploitation and occupation of the Portuguese colonies, in general, of Mozambique in particular, was perhaps the only instrument

that an underdeveloped colonial country like Portugal could efficiently access and use for colonial wealth creation. With the passing of time, its uniform application and its resilience became a very capable, competent and highly profitable type of colonial exploitation; a very violent and unjust exploitation, as well.

Simultaneously, that form of labor commodification by the state became a very resilient regime of colonial exploitation. Because it was highly profitable and relatively easy to organize and control, at the same time guaranteeing a certain degree of political importance for the Portuguese in the region, it became with time, as well, an obstacle for all kinds of innovations, reforms or changes in its practice. Duffy, among others, saw it already in the 1920's. Discussing the failure of the reformist aspirations of successive Portuguese governments contained in legislation and decrees, he wrote that "Most [of them] failed in their purpose and, where they succeeded they led to the perverted continuation of traditional practices" (Duffy: 5; Panvenne, 3). To a great extent, this is also what happened with the two foundational documents of the colonial policies of the fascist New State originated by the 1926 military coup in Portugal. The administrative policies in place in Mozambique were endorsed by them as well as the extreme forms of surplus extraction on which they are based.

A field research done by me in Machaze, an important administrative settlement during colonialism in Manica, central Mozambique, made evident the degree to which the Portuguese system of forced labor in the colony was deeply rooted in its economic and social reality. It showed as well the hypocrisy of many of the measures announced to the world, after the early 1960's, by an increasingly blockaded regime by the interstate system. More than that, however,

it points out the difficulties in ending it without de-structuring the whole colonial regime. This became clear to me through the analytical consultation of a complete collection of correspondence marked as “confidential” and “secret” in what remained of the archives of the administrative offices of Machaze, in 1989. This was a collection of notes, covering the years from 1948 to 1974. It constitutes an extremely rare collection of historical documents because most of them, in the great majority of the colonial administrations of the country, were destroyed when the end of Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique became obvious, after the 25th of April, 1974. By order of the central government in Lisbon and Lourenco Marques, those collections were uniformly destroyed by fire. For reasons I was not able to clarify, a complete collection had survived not only the social upheaval of the transition period but also more than fourteen years of independence and, since at least the late 1970’s, of Rhodesian and South African aggression slowly evolving into civil war. What the analysis of those notes started by making clear was the colonial reluctance in changing the labor regime in place, even in what it had of more extreme. Some of these aspects, in effect, were the object of attenuating measures in the early 1960’s. In the correspondence transmitting them to Machaze they were designated as constituting “the end of forced labor”, published into law and, in October of 1961 distributed with a confidential note to all administration posts in the colony with the determination that they should, from then on, end all practices of labor “recruitment” (Mota Lopes: Machaze Research: Administrative Confidential Notes, 1961, passim). Equally from then on, all African labor had to be legitimated as “contract labor” and the more extreme measures of its previous practice, including the collaboration with forced recruitment objectives between Portuguese officers and local subordinate authorities, had to be abolished. Further deliberations equally transmitted through confidential correspondence mention the need to change the designation of

the **Imposto de Palhota** (or Hut Tax) into Domiciliary Tax (Confidential Note, January 7th, 1962), stating that the latter would be the only designation to be used from then on. Another institution of the Indigenato that of **Contribuicao Bracal** (Portuguese for Contribution in Work), allowing the administration to use labor without payment to the local construction and maintenance of public works, including roads, bridges, warehouses, and other administrative buildings, was as well considered officially abolished (Confidential Note, January 12th, 1962). To be sure, I must add, these measures were mainly due to two main reasons. The first was the growing international pressure with that objective, in particular at the level of the United Nations. The second, although at the time not considered as important as the first, was the beginnings of the expansion of the armed liberation struggle in the Portuguese colonies. Nevertheless, the critical reading of the confidential notes received in Machaze soon made obvious that the objective of the new measures was not the abolition of forced labor. It was, rather, a way to hide some of its more infamous and deleterious aspects, a way to change things in order for everything to stay the same. In fact, in February 5th of 1962, probably in response to a vast wave of protests from the administrators themselves, a communication from the central government reminded them that the “end” of forced labor did not imply the end of “measures against vagrancy”. Rather, it adds in the following paragraph, it is determined that the “repression of vagrancy must be intensified”; repression which, uniformly, meant the obligation to work without payment for indeterminate periods of time. Another interesting aspect of the archive research of the Portuguese colonial administration confidential correspondence from 1944 to 1974 is that from 1961-62 onwards those notes not only started to be more frequent but to focus almost exclusively on the advancement of the anti-colonial armed struggle. On the other hand, many of the practices previously intrinsic to forced labor,

like local pressures at the level of traditional authorities, were simply transferred to the practice of “contract labor”. At the same time, the references to “forced labor”, dominant in the correspondence till 1961, started by then to diminish to completely disappear after the recommendation, above mentioned, to increase the repression of “vagrancy”. To be sure, this was a term that since the beginning of Indigenato, was used as a main, foundational reference to the processes leading to the implementation of forced labor as a form of control and exploitation. Finally, if it is true that the official recruitment more or less declined from then on, the reality was that the administrative authorities continued to be as deeply involved as before in the same type of recruitment. The difference was that from then on it became a concealed activity of the majority of administrative officers and to their own direct benefit. Notes from the central government reminding them that such a behavior was not legal appear also with increasing regularity in the collection of documents I had access to in Machaze. This can be interpreted in two ways: first, that the “recruitment” by the colonial officers did not cease; secondly, that it was more or less tolerated by the central authorities. The main difference was that from the end of 1961 onwards the profits from it started to be channeled in even greater amounts than before to the pockets of a great majority of its colonial servants.

The changes introduced in 1962 did not affect, equally, the established way through which the Portuguese colonial regime benefited from its labor exploitation in Mozambique. It continued to be, till the full abolition of Indigenato in the mid-seventies, one of the dominant ways justifying, in its perspective, the continued domination of the colony. It was in this context that the liberation war of Mozambique led by the Mozambican Liberation Front was declared. It was also in this context that the colonial regime responded to it not only by military means but

by completely excluding all the possibilities of dialogue and common understanding. What were the reasons for such a decision? This is a question still being formulated today. I will discuss, here, some of the reasons that I believe transformed the war in Mozambique, maybe more than in any other of its colonies, into an effective, inescapable necessity to Portugal. In the next chapter a second, complementary approach will be as well presented.

The debate about the Portuguese motivations behind the colonial war has furnished many responses. We can perhaps reduce them to two different groups. A first one defends that colonial war was fought with the sole objective of saving the regime. This is notably the conclusion reached by Clarence-Smith. The war, he tells us, was assumed as a self-defense by the Portuguese regime because it was “set to fall from power in the late 1950’s” (1985: 193). There were, he adds, no economic reasons involved. The propositions “that Portugal was unable to decolonize because of fundamental economic dependence on the colonies, need to be stood on their head”, he writes. “The war was fought to preserve the regime rather than to save the economy. Salazarism had relied so heavily on the ideology of imperial greatness that it was difficult to the regime to survive without it” (1985: 192-193).

Even if we do not accept the assertion about the weakness of the Portuguese state in the late 1950’s, it is however true that both the Angolan uprisings and the liberation of Goa by the Indian Union were, paradoxically, used by the regime to consolidate its basis of power and the support for the war. This was made through the generation of a collective wave of hurt nationalism and its manipulation with that objective. Among the settler populations of the

colonies, this was also complemented by the general feelings of fear and insecurity provoked by the beginnings of the war.

A second group of answers denies Clarence-Smith's approach and replaces it with a different combination of reasons. Birmingham, for instance, defends that the colonial war was declared by Portugal because of a combination of patriotic reasons with "sound economic reasons" (169). Among them, they underline the strong input represented by the colonial economies and the supply of raw materials to the metropolitan economy. Because those raw materials were sold at prices much below those practiced by the world market, they had become essential for the Portuguese industry. On the other hand, the colonies were preferential markets to the metropolitan manufactures. These were usually of a lower quality and, consequently, unacceptable by any other external markets.

In the wide range of explanations for the colonial war, there are also those defending that they have to be located at the top of the corporative regime and its leader, Antonio de Oliveira Salazar. His "stubbornness" was the result of the policies of a single man. Nevertheless, he was able to impose them over all the other members of the regime. The argument used was that Portugal had to continue its "civilizing mission" in Africa.

In what concerns the Portuguese state itself, it followed usually, in its public discourse, an argument common to other colonial regimens. According to it, the colonies constituted a heavy responsibility without correspondent economic advantages. This argument was often

repeated, not only at the time and at the level of political justifications but, as we have seen, also by academic rationalizations.

Although the reasons pointed out by the different authors and the different arguments can be accepted as part of a more general explanation, the reality seems to me to be rather different from the various approaches that led to them. I contend that a starting point to understand the reasons that made Portugal get involved in a long and highly destructive colonial war is the fact that in the early 1960s, precisely when the liberation wars started, Portugal would not be possible without its colonies. Their loss, their “abandonment” as it was said in the parlance of the time, would represent new forms of dependent incorporation in the periphery of the world-economy that would make impossible all attempts of economic growth. It would as well be the evidence that the politics of the regime and its very weak achievements of the previous thirty years had failed. In the perspective of the Portuguese colonial-fascist state and its elites the colonial war was, thus, not only a way to gain time but also the only way to survive. To understand this I will have to discuss here what I will call the forms of extraction of surplus from the colonies in general, from Mozambique in particular to the reserve fund of Portugal. In particular, I believe, we will have to focus on the way they were structured and functioned.

These forms of extraction were significantly modified in the early Sixties and, then again, in the early Seventies. Their main objective was however the same throughout this long period. This continuity constitutes one of the main reasons why the possible talks with the liberation movements and any other possible alternative to the colonial war could not be considered as

an alternative to war by the Portuguese regime. This continuity is also obvious in another feature of the reforms introduced in the early 1960s. While, in political terms, the relationship of Portugal with the colonies assumed the form of an economic integrative zone of free trade, the so called Escudo zone, in economic terms this not only consolidated but expanded as well the main objectives of the Colonial Act and its main objectives in place since the early 1930s. In other words the 1960s reforms consolidated the necessary conditions for the development of a highly efficient process of surplus extraction. In the case of Mozambique, this happened at least at two different levels of colonial appropriation.

In the first place, a system of payments was specifically devised in 1961 to guarantee the regular channeling to the Bank of Portugal, in Lisbon, of the totality of revenues in foreign exchange realized by the colony. This included the gold received from the sale of migrant labor for South Africa and the foreign exchange received from the use of railways and ports. In addition, all the gold and foreign exchange still kept in the coffers of the Mozambican branch of the National Overseas Bank (the Banco Nacional Ultramarino or BNU, the Portuguese central bank for the colonies) was also transferred to Portugal. Due to these revenues, and contrary to what persistently happened with the balance of payments with the so-called Economic Zone of the Escudo, that is to say, between Portugal and its colonies, the totals achieved in the balance of payments of Mozambique with the rest of the world were consistently positive. In the terms instituted in 1961, the gold and foreign exchange earnings of the colony within the region and the rest of the world compensated for the negative deficit of the payments between Portugal and Mozambique. This process of metropolitan

appropriation of colonial resources was complemented, increasingly since 1964, through the reselling of that gold in the international market.

According to the article 26 of the Labor Convention signed with South Africa in 1928, it was in gold that all taxes, expenses, and wages related with the recruitment and employment of Mozambican workers to and by the South African mines had to be paid. This was related with another disposition in the same Convention allowing the transfer to Mozambique of what amounted to a monthly average of sixty percent of the deferred wages of the Mozambican workers in the South African mines. A transfer made, as well, in gold. When those workers returned to their families that percentage of their salaries was locally paid to them in “Mozambican” escudos. As the amount of the gold used in this transaction was calculated at a fixed, symbolic price of about US\$ 34.00 per ounce it was possible for the colonial state to resell it in the free market at prices that throughout the sixties and seventies usually achieved an average of more than US\$ 42.22 per ounce. This resale constituted consequently another considerable source of foreign exchange to the sole benefit of the colonial power. More often, however, this gold was kept in the coffers of the Bank of Portugal as a way to strengthen and increase the Portuguese gold reserves and, consequently, to keep the Escudo a stable and strong currency in the international market. As pointed out by Pintado in 1964, this was the reason why “Portugal’s foreign reserves, in fact, have been rising almost without interruption and have reached a level which is high by any standard” (234). Simultaneously, this procedure gave the Portuguese colonial state the possibility, if necessary, to increase the availability of escudos in circulation by printing more money, and, namely, to finance the loans to the Escudo monetary zone in particular after 1971. To be

sure, this was how the increasing costs with the colonial war were financed. It was also one of the various ways through which South Africa contributed to the continuation of Portuguese colonialism. According to assessments made after the independence of Mozambique by its Planning Ministry, this mechanism permitted the Portuguese colonial state to accumulate more than 145 tons of gold between 1964 and 1970. According to data supplied by the South African Reserve Bank only between 1970 and 1973 about two million ounces of gold, equivalent to more than 59.5 tons, were received by the colonial administration in Mozambique and exported to Lisbon (Ministerio do Plano, 1980: 21-22). The gold received in Mozambique in 1974, the last year of the colonial war, was not allowed to follow to Lisbon immediately after April 25 as a vast popular manifestation impeded its transport to a waiting flight in the Maputo airport.

A second process of colonial surplus extraction and its appropriation by the Portuguese consisted in keeping artificially low the terms of trade between colonial raw materials and manufactured goods produced in Portugal. To be sure, this is similar to the general practice followed in international trade between the core and the periphery. In the context of the Portuguese colonial system, however, and even more pronounced after the implementation of the measures leading to the formation of the Escudo Monetary Zone, the disparity of the terms of trade between Portugal and its colonies became wider and more negative to the latter than that of the world market. In the case of Mozambique, this procedure contributed even more to the negative deficits of the colony's balance of payments. Put otherwise, Portugal placed its products in Mozambique at prices increasingly higher while buying those of the colony, mainly raw materials like cotton, sugar, copra or sisal, at prices increasingly

lower. For instance, to buy wine, a traditional export from Portugal to its colonies, Mozambique would exchange in 1969 2.3 tons of sugar for one ton of wine. In 1973, this relation increased to 3.7 tons of sugar for each ton of wine. The wine exported from Portugal to Mozambique represented more than 270.000 contos in 1969. In what concerns cotton, in 1969 Mozambique would exchange one ton of cotton fabric for 4.9 tons of raw cotton. In 1974 this relation increased to between 1 ton of fabric to 6.13 tons of cotton, that is to say, a deterioration of more than sixty percent in four years (Ministerio do Plano, 1977: 16). These terms of trade were significantly higher than the correspondent ones at the level of the world-economy. In short, the Portuguese colonial strategy of exploitation in Mozambique became essentially based, with the advance of the colonial war, in the artificial forging of a growing debt to be paid both through the export of raw materials and through the gold and foreign exchange realized in the colony. Contrary to what is often repeated, this constituted an important source of wealth to the Portuguese state its leading elites.

This was, consequently, the main reason why Portugal became involved in a long, expensive, and very unpopular colonial war. An involvement made even more complex due to its condemnation by the whole world.

4. THE PATH TO WAR

Thus, Southern Africa started to be constructed as an integrated region of the capitalist world-economy in the late 1890s. When diamond and gold were discovered in South Africa followed by other mineral resources not only there but also in what today is known as Zimbabwe, Zambia and Namibia it became obvious that an efficient exploitation including

their extraction, treatment and export, required both labor power and an easy access to the sea often located in other neighboring territories. These were colonial territories with Portuguese, British, and German settlers and their administrations. A second phase in the scramble for the region became then necessary. In the Transvaal and Orange, where the most important gold reserves were located, Afrikaner farmers had proclaimed autonomous, republican states in a more or less open confrontation with Britain. They were soon defeated and made part of the Union of South Africa. A different kind of annexation with similar results happened later on with South-West Africa, after the expulsion of the Germans. The Portuguese were able to keep both Angola and Mozambique. The price they had to pay for that was the high level of dependence and subordination of the latter in relation to South Africa and, to a lesser degree, to the Federation.

Political and territorial definitions are essential but, as we have seen, it was the combination of three other factors, in their permanent interrelationship, which formed the base for that regional construction. I have already discussed them extensively but it is perhaps important to recall them here. Southern Africa was the result of the discovery and exploitation of very rich mineral deposits in combination with the existence of more or less permanent and ambitious settler communities, as Wallerstein calls them (1992: 4), and with an organization that divided its territories between suppliers and consumers of forced labor as migrant labor. Although I mentioned in a previous chapter the historical existence of influent pre-colonial social linkages potentially evolving in that some direction, the truth is that Southern Africa as a region was the creature of modern colonialism. The sequent development of mining in correlation with that of modern agriculture and industrial manufacturing consolidated what

since the beginning was a high level of socio-economic integration. Consequently, it was the exploitation of the regional resources, in particular due to the systemic importance of gold, which led to the very quick absorption of Southern Africa into the axial division of labor of the world-economy, that is to say, to its incorporation. We can thus conclude that the features that determined this systemic incorporation were the same that led to the economic, political and social aggregation of its different territories into a highly integrated region.

There were however unintended consequences on this regional formation. Its construction around the Union of South Africa was, to start with, an attempt by Great Britain to locally strengthen its power and political influence. It became as well another revealing factor of her on-going hegemonic decline. It was an expression of power because it consolidated British interests in the region. But it was a factor of decline because that consolidation had often to be made, in political terms but not only, around the objectives of the local settlers. The strengthening of the latter became possible because in function with the hegemonic decline of Great Britain. And it ended up usually affecting those same British interests.

As we have also seen, the consolidation of Southern Africa occurred in a phase of the world-economy that was characterized by growing competition among the core powers. This competition, a result of the end of British hegemony and of the attempts to establish a balance of power among core states, led increasingly to direct military confrontation. The two world wars of 1914 and 1938 were their outcome. It resulted into the defeat of Germany and Japan, the destruction of the European core and the consolidation of the United States as the new hegemonic power of the world-economy. It was in such a context that South Africa

started as well in the late 1920s its trajectory to the semi-periphery of the world-economy. In less than three decades, it became the established regional power guaranteeing the main linkages not only among the different territorial components of the region but also those between the region and the core of a developing world-economy. Although continuing to a great extent dependent from Great Britain, South African settlers were able as well to extend and consolidate their power and regional influence -- and, to be sure, to profit from it.

The focal point of the regional construction was consequently the mineral extraction and industrial growth in South Africa. Although to a lesser degree, mining became as well an important sector in Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, and Katanga. As mineral extraction and, sometimes, increasing industrial activity evolved, it was closely followed by the rapid development of agriculture both in South Africa, in particular with sugar, maize, and dairy products, and in the Federation, with tobacco, cattle and maize. It was the increasing requirements in labor determined by this triple development of mining, industry and agriculture that led to the definition of the neighboring colonies of Mozambique, Nyasaland, and South West Africa as the main territorial sources of manpower as migrant labor. Regular peaks in the curves of demand could extend the recruitment of workers as far as Tanganyika, Angola and even Rwanda-Urundi but those regions never became a regular or permanent part of the Southern African network of labor supply. It was the structural consolidation of this division between labor seeking territories and others capable of supplying it that constructed Southern Africa as a region. The intentions of the settler communities, of their local or colonial governments, their administrations or, for that matter, the struggle against them were part of equally complementary processes rooted in the social

reality of that division of labor. The formation of Southern Africa as a settler-dominated region must also be explained through the growing weakness of the core of world-system in general, of Great Britain in particular.

In discussing the systemic formation of Southern Africa, the different ways and means through which capital guaranteed an easy, regular and efficient access to cheap labor appear as a central feature. This is what is often called the process of “proletarianization” of the region. To a small extent, namely that depicting the formation of important labor accumulations around its main cities, the term can be seen as adequate. There are, to be sure, many characteristics that are common both to the process as it was lived in Europe, where the term originated, and those urban instances in the region. Notably where those concentration of potential workers were the direct result of the total or partial expropriation of their land and means of production. This was not, however, what dominantly happened in the rest of Southern Africa. On the contrary, what capital deliberately tried to avoid in the region was situations in which proletarianization, as it had been historically provoked in Western Europe, would be an outcome. The dominant process that we find both in South Africa and in the surrounding territories was rather based on a vast range of measures to access workers without separating them from their means of production, land and households. The process was rather a process of recreation of households, not of their complete destruction and expulsion as in Europe. For reasons I tried to make clear above, the access and control of labor in Southern Africa was generally based on the institutional obligation, often legitimized in legal terms or by military means, of forms of labor. This is what made it cheap and abundant. Moreover, this is the reason why they are better designated as forced labor.

To be sure, its imposition in Mozambique represented perhaps the more radical and ruthless case in the region. However, similar forms of colonial access to labor, forced labor because following analogous methods of implementation, were also used in South Africa, in the Federation, in South-West Africa and in all of the so-called enclave or landlocked territories, today's Swaziland, Lesotho and Botswana. They are also similar because based on similar structures of implementation.

The uniform, concerted and deliberate destruction or neutralization of African political structures was a central feature of that process of implementation. This was how the networks of access and control of labor resources and land were finally grabbed by colonial administrations and recruiters, a necessary condition for their control and expansion. In the Federation those objectives were materialized around 1892, in South Africa in 1902, in the whole territory of Mozambique about twenty years later. This means that in the late 1920's the region was totally "pacified". It was also by then that the history books used in the colonial schools started to include in their last chapters the chronicle of that "heroic" achievement. Contrary to what was then happening within the core of the world-economy, this was also the beginning of a phase of expansion and relative prosperity in Southern Africa.

Besides the direct control of labor and its flows, the military submission of the most active of the African political units allowed as well an increased occupation of land by European settlers. In South Africa and in the Federation, although not in Mozambique, that occupation followed processes that in a first phase tended to transform African peasantries into tenants

and sharecroppers. In certain conditions, they started to compete to an important extent in prices and potential profiting with the white producers. Besides the regular production of food destined for local consumption, this agricultural production was as well part of new or already existing commodity chains of systemic incorporation. In particular, products like sugar, dairy products and maize in South Africa, tobacco, maize, and cattle in Rhodesia.

The outcome of this situation was the tragic repetition of what had happened one hundred years before with the so-called legitimate commerce in both the West African coast and, to a lesser degree, in the south southern Africa coast. The land of those African producers ended up being occupied by white settlers as they were forcefully relegated to reserves. The instruments of control and expropriation were usually of a legislative nature. In South Africa, the Land Act and the Masters and Servants Act of 1913 were instrumental in such a process. They abolished African tenancy and considered tenants as contracted laborers. However, laws were not enough, for two main reasons. First, the new measures and their implementation led to the multiplication of acts of direct confrontation and resistance that had to be settled down through the frequent use of force. Secondly, the measures adopted by law often took longer to be implemented to its full compliance than the settlers were able to wait. To accelerate them, settlers used local effects of situations of international contraction of prices to limit, to condition or simply to disallow the African access to credit. They also used largely ecological situations like drought. After 1910, a close relationship between the mining houses and white farmers in the Transvaal gave the latter the monopoly of the markets of food supply. This bankrupted a great number of African farmers.

Also in South Africa, the use of the contraction of world prices as an instrument of land occupation was particularly acute after the heavy loss of human lives to the Spanish flu of 1918-19. This affected deeply both African and European producers. A fundamental distinction between them and their ability to overcome the crisis was however introduced. White settlers were able to benefit from state subsidies, bank loans, and protectionist tariffs, tax suspension and even from the free utilization of equipment and warehouses. African farmers were not. In other words, these were years in which, all over South Africa, the white control and exploitation of resources assumed new levels as African farmers became heavily burdened by an unfair, racially based competition. In the end, their land was occupied and they were relegated by force to the so-called native reserves, the future Bantustans. A great number of them were as well “proletarianized” and concentrated in the periphery of the great cities as an engrossing reserve army of cheap and accessible labor.

With the 1923 Nationalist-Labor Pact Government, a new set of laws was adopted to strengthen the effects of those measures. Among them, there was a renewed Urban Areas Act, the Industrial Conciliation Act, and the Wage Act. The latter legitimized the difference in wages between whites and black South Africans according to an average often superior to a five to one ratio. Finally, in 1933 the Pass laws culminated this legislative process as South Africa moved formally into what became known as apartheid or, later on, separate development. Against increasing waves of workers protest, the state tried and managed to isolate and divide them according to their race and ethnic origins. It also managed to politically co-opt white workers both in social and economic terms into a strong and long-lasting political compromise. Moreover, the apartheid regime supplied itself with the means

necessary, including effectives and armament, to confront all internal attempts to disrupt security and defy its increasing power of oppression and repression.

Although aiming at the same objectives, the process was slightly different in Southern Rhodesia. As we have already discussed, the British-South Africa Company (BSACO) assumed there the ownership of the land after the 1897 defeat of African resistance. The main objective of the Company continued to be, however, to repeat the South African gold strikes of the previous decade. In 1904, however, the evidence that there were no similar gold reserves in its territory became the reality. Accordingly, the BSACO started to change its main objectives. Among them, it used the vast areas it had been granted or had in the meantime occupied both to increase its profits and to increase and benefit the white settlers and attract new ones. Between 1907 and 1913, for instance, it claimed and sold to them more than 500,000 acres of the best land in the colony. In 1914-1915, following important losses in the tobacco market, another 1,000,000 acres were sold to whites. Besides being submitted to this process of expropriation, Africans were also subjected to heavy taxation. This happened in particular after 1914 and the heavy losses they suffered as war started to condition and make more difficult their access to world markets.

The end of a more or less affluent African agriculture in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia to the benefit of white settlers occurred consequently between the early 1920s and the 1930s. It led to the consolidation of the so-called native reserves, to the formation of considerable reserves of cheap labor around the cities and to the regional generalization of forced labor.

This coincided, largely, with 1920-1922 crises of the world-economy and the great depression that followed it. To be sure, the world crisis affected Southern Africa in similar ways to those that is possible to generalize to the rest of the world-economy. Trade and its profits declined. The same happened with foreign investments. It also led states and colonial administrations to take measures of increasing protectionism of its markets (Higginson, 123). In the industrialized poles of the region, however, the crisis led to what Higginson calls a new phase of industrialization that continued until the 1950s. This phase, common to Southern Rhodesia and Katanga, appeared as a way to overcome the effects of the systemic crisis. It was characterized by the partial integration of expanded mining operations with light manufacturing and a greater concentration of the industries processing farm produce and raw materials (123). This was also a phase guided by the main objectives of increasing not only mining and industrial production but its productivity as well.

Both objectives were in full fledge in the late 1930's both in the then Union of South Africa and in the Federation, to a lesser extent in Katanga. They were made possible by a large-scale adoption of new and more efficient technologies in mining whose production objectives and areas of exploitation were greatly expanded. At the same time, agro-industrial projects and light manufacturing using raw materials locally produced and mainly destined to local and regional consumption were multiplied in South Africa and the Federation.

This coincided with a quick expansion of the industrial and urban working classes. Notably in South Africa, the number of urban workers increased from 1,300,000 in 1936 to

2,240,000 in 1956. In the Federation, in the same period of time, the increase was, respectively, from 306 000 to 849 000 (John Higginson, 1983: *The Formation of an Industrial Proletariat in Southern Africa, The second phase, 1921-1949*, in Wallerstein, ed., 1983: *Labor in the World Social Structure*, Beverley Hills: Sage; 121-219, here, p. 122-23; also: Elliot Berg, 1966: *Recruitment of a Labor Force in Southern Africa*, PhD dissertation, Harvard, p. 234). In 1954, 46% of the totality of Africa's urban working class was located in South Africa and Rhodesia. The next comparable concentration was that of the then Belgian Congo, about 20%.

An expected result of this industrialization process was increasing shortages of labor that in particular affected the Union throughout the 1920s and great part of the 1930s. They led to measures destined to guarantee the required regularity of labor supply and the expansion of the respective areas of recruitment. Because Mozambique was not only one of those areas but also a privileged one for the efficiency with which its colonial administration was able to generate the number of workers necessary for recruitment, the situation was used by the Portuguese colonial regime to obtain new advantages in the relationship with South Africa. Among them, the effective linkage of labor supply with the regular and increasing use of the port and railways of the Limpopo corridor. More importantly, the Portuguese colonial government was able to obtain two main advantages that were going to characterize that supply of labor for the following fifty years. The first was the agreement by the South African government that about 60% of the totality of wages received by the Mozambican working in the Union could be deferred and transferred to the administration of the colony. The Portuguese government would then assume the responsibility for their payment to those

workers at the time of their return back to the colony. The second was that the payment by South Africa of those transferred wages as well as all the expenses in recruitment, taxes, duties, tariffs, fiscal charges and bureaucratic services would from then on not only be made directly to the Portuguese administrative authorities but as well in gold. I will discuss, below, the importance of these measures to the colonial exploitation of Mozambique.

Largely the 1920s increased shortages of labor in South Africa must also be related with conditions distinct from those directly determined by its increasing demand by the mining industry. Notably, the end of tenancy and resident sharecropping contributed to it as those affected and transferred to reserves often started there to extensively use local labor. To be sure, this means that potential workers in the reserves would rather work locally than migrate or work in the mines. It coincided as well with enlarged requirements of labor by increasing areas of capitalist agriculture, in particular of fixed crops, of sugar and dairy products. It was also a result of the European preparation for war that led to growing colonial demands in raw materials and consequently to decreased possibilities of labor recruitment for South Africa in the neighboring colonies. Contrary to what was then happening all over the world the economic growth in the region started to be deeply affected by labor shortages. This led to a stricter regulation of the large reserves of labor around the towns and in other areas, within native reserves or not, through the imposition of new laws and new forms of recruitment. It led, notably, to the consolidation and enlargement of the system of forced labor. Through it and its gradual institutionalization was recreated and consolidated in the passage of the 1920s to the 1930s, under a higher level of South African semi-peripheral control, what probably constitutes the most important characteristic or

specificity of Southern Africa: the structural interdependence of its territorial units into a highly integrated region of the capitalist world-economy (Legassick, Gold, Agriculture, and Secondary Industry, and CEA, Mozambican Miner).

The characterization of the processes leading to this regional formation would not be complete, however, without mentioning that they determined, as well, their own negation or, better, the increasing radicalization of their negation. To be sure, both the political boundaries and the main actors and forces of the region were in place in the 1920s: the various African peoples and the European settlers within their respective not always coincidental territorial units, the different colonial administrations and the capitalist entrepreneurs. It was around the latter that the colonial control and access to cheap labor was mainly organized. However, that control was also of land and other resources. Equally in place were well-defined and efficient structures of domination and exploitation. All this determined the correspondent formation and consolidation of structures of anti-colonial resistance that became stronger and increasingly more active as the 20th century proceeded. It also led to a triple process of confrontation: of both settlers and local peoples amongst themselves; between settlers and local peoples; and against an evolving world-economy or its effects as these impacted local interests and processes of accumulation.

This became particularly notable in what concerns the different forms assumed by the settlers' political regimes in particular in the second half of the century. This was the case with the Portuguese refusal to decolonize in Angola and Mozambique. That was also one of the political meanings of the proclamation by the white settlers of Rhodesia of their so-

called unilateral declaration of independence or UDI. Finally, a similar process of confrontational deviance in relation to pressures of the core can be detected in the consolidation and repressive radicalization of the South African apartheid regime. It is significant as well to point out that their rebellious behavior was often presented as resulting into a strong geo-strategic consolidation of the already high level of regional integration.

The measures taken by the different settlers' regimens in Southern Africa to confront the systemic crisis accelerated however the struggle against their domination and rule. This happened in the convergence of the increasing demands on labor, the expansion of the occupation of land leading to the destruction of an emergent African middle class and the multiplication and extension of the repressive measures thus made necessary. Moreover, the systemic crisis affected directly the rural households, in terms of prices and inflation, making them even more dependent from its oscillations. A consequence of this confluence of effects was the generalized increase of resistance. This will be the main object of the third part of the present work. Here however, some words about how the region became immersed into a long period of colonial war from the mid 1960s onwards. This was a war that involved the whole region only to end up when the last settler regime of the region, that of South Africa, was defeated in the late 1980s. Peace, a relative peace, became finally possible in Southern Africa.

In that long period of war, main common features more or less followed by the three settler regimens of Southern Africa can be detected. I will discuss them after a brief analysis of what happened in Mozambique between the early 1960s and the late 1980s. The case of

Mozambique appears as particularly interesting in this perspective for two main reasons. First, because it was there that the first liberation war of the region was fought and successfully won by the liberation movement. It was also there that within the region the responses, objectives, and conditions of struggle of the liberation movement were first tested, accepted or denied and applied. The same happened in what concerns the recreation of social utopias and, to be sure, their collapse. Secondly, Mozambique was the only territory in the region permanently affected by war during the whole period here under consideration, from the early 1960s to the late 1980s. Following the triumph of the national liberation struggle in 1974, the newly installed independent state became almost immediately the target of the Rhodesian Armed Forces until the final collapse of the white regime in 1979. From then on, Mozambique became the object not only of a consistent military aggression from the South African Armed Forces but also of its counter-insurgency and destabilization agencies. It was only with the end of apartheid in South Africa that peace was finally possible in Mozambique. In other words, it was there that the process of regional liberation started and ended. Both from the perspective of the liberation movements or from that of the colonial and settler regimes and their armed forces, the war in Mozambique became the central reference in Southern Africa. What happened in the rest of the region was often the tragic repetition or the strategic development of what had already happened or was happening there.

To try to characterize the liberation of Mozambique according to these parameters and as a main reference to the general liberation of Southern Africa from colonialism and settler occupation requires, however and to start with, looking once again at the roots of the conflict

that since the early 1960s started to affect the region. As already discussed above, in doing so, a first question becomes central: how to explain war as a choice rather than any other alternative, probably easier and cheaper solution? I tried to answer this question by analyzing the different forms of surplus extraction followed by the Portuguese in Mozambique. This was necessary to the characterization of the colonial model as it evolved in the Southern African region in the 1950s and early 1960s. We have now to adopt a different perspective, that of a developing world-economy.

In those same years, the role and position of Portugal in the capitalist world-economy was that of a semi-peripheral state. This was a consequence of the colonial exploitation and the type of closed economic policies followed by the regime. When in the late 1950s Portugal joined the United Nations that was seen as a first sign that the isolationist policy until then assumed by Lisbon had failed. Another perspective is here possible. More or less consolidated in the previous twenty years, a very weak Portuguese bourgeoisie found it necessary in the mid-fifties to start to open up to the world and expand its horizons of accumulation. However, it was not yet in a position of leaving behind the profits represented by colonialism. In other words, the opening up to the rest of the world started to be considered a necessity but that opening up would only be economically meaningful if the colonies were kept. The economist Xavier Pintado gives us what probably constitutes the only and more genuine reflection of the rationale that led the Portuguese dominant elites to war in the 1960s. Because he was not only a supporter but as well an insider of the fascist regime, his analysis of the state and perspectives of the Portuguese economy at the time and what is possible to extrapolate from it, is not only interesting for its logic in the perspective

of economics. It also reflects a dominant way of thinking in what was seen as a new phase, that of the economic opening up of the country and its colonies to the rest of an increasingly decolonized and anti-colonialist world. How to harmonize both?

According to him, in the late 1950s, Portugal is not only a highly underdeveloped country but, as well, “it must itself be ranked among the world’s poorer nations” (1954: 11). Its position within the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is one of dependence and subordination. Among other reasons used to explain such a condition, there was the scarcity and small productivity of investment, the inadequacy of labor and the backwardness both of industry and agriculture. However, he concludes, “the key factor is the smallness of Portugal’s market in terms of actual and potential demand” (Ibid: 13). In fact, Portugal had by then a population of nine million. In terms of average income per head it corresponded however “to less than two million average EFTA consumers”. While economies of scale seem to be achieved by relatively high-income nations of 50 million inhabitants or more, “it appears that nations of 10-15 million average European consumers “are probably too small to get all the technical economies available”” (Ibid: 16 ⁽⁵⁸⁾).

Still according to Pintado, Portugal is however “in a special position”. Its overseas territories have their economies linked with the metropolitan economy. They supply “a considerable proportion of the raw materials used by the Metropolis and buy almost one third of Metropolitan exports of manufactured goods”. Moreover, many new manufacturing

⁵⁸) Xavier Pintado is quoting, here, from an influential report of the then International Economic Association: Robinson, Austin 1960: *The Economic Consequences of the Size of Nations*, London: McMillan and Co. Page XVIII.

activities have there been started. This did not affect their relations with the Portugal, on the contrary. Their share in the total exports of the country has increased. Consequently, “the institution of a free trade area among all the parts which form the Portuguese territory” was an obvious advantage in the consolidation and expansion of those mutual links (Ibid: 206-7). It would as well constitute an important international advantage, in general, in the relationship with the OECD in particular. In other words, the perspective of the Portuguese leading elites and their regime in the early 1960s was that only the combination of their opening up to the world with the effective and potential importance of its overseas territories would give Portugal the size necessary to compete and grow “as a developing country associated with the most highly developed groups of countries in Europe” (Ibid: 13). Finally, this would only be possible if accepted by an increasingly anti-colonialist international community. The “transformation” of the Portuguese colonies into Portuguese Overseas Provinces, first, into Overseas States, afterwards, has here its roots.

However, when the country was trying to consolidate its adhesion to the European Economic Community (EEC), anti-colonialist wars were launched more or less simultaneously in four of its five African colonies. If, before, an international community in both sides of the Cold War divide was strongly against the continuation of colonialism as it was still being practiced within the Portuguese territories, the beginning of the colonial war made that opposition even more acute and active. In short, in the early 1960s when the colonial war in the African colonies was starting, the regime was trying to assume simultaneously two political directions which were, to say the least, antagonistic and seen as such within the inter-state system. On one hand, it wanted that opening up and that of its colonies to the

world to continue. On the other hand, it created conditions to impose a military solution to the wars of liberation by neutralizing their respective movements. The choice of the second option as a priority soon prevailed over the second. Increasingly more isolated, the Portuguese regime went to war. With it, the regime became even more authoritarian and repressive. Its internal opposition was destroyed or had to go underground. In what concerns the external pressures, the previous three decades of self-imposed isolationism had given the regime not only the arrogance of self-sufficiency but also, more importantly, the diplomatic experience required to ignore them. The question, however, continues to be: why war as a choice against all the other alternatives and, in particular, against those that existed within the regime itself in a country wishing to get out of its isolation within the world-economy?

On the other hand, and also in opposition to what is often maintained, I believe that the beginning of the various liberation wars in the 1960s did not come as a total surprise to the Portuguese.

The preparation to war had, rather, started in the late 1950's. It was then that the regime's political police, the infamous Policia Internacional de Defesa do Estado or PIDE was installed in the colonies. In Mozambique, one has to add, this was not very well received by settlers who did not see its immediate utility. In the same period, the colonial administration was consolidated and expanded. At the military level, the creation and preparation of the first counter-insurgency special forces was equally initiated. Many other measures were then taken, at different levels of government, which can indeed be seen as war preparation. This is an area about Portuguese colonialism not yet studied in depth. It becomes however

obvious in the succession of confidential notes with that objective exchanged within the Portuguese administration in Mozambique and other branches of the colonial state (Mota Lopes, 1989). These preparations went more or less unnoticed by the political opposition to the regime. They did not receive any kind of public divulgation or serious criticism, neither from the so-called democratic opposition nor from the Portuguese Communist Party.

To be sure, the Portuguese political opposition was in the late 1950s in a generalized state of disarray. After thirty years of systematic repression, including the overwhelming destruction or control of all forms of organization or activity, the adversaries of the regime in the early sixties had been in general disorganized, or were dormant, isolated, in exile, or in prison. The so called democratic opposition, the remnants of the old Republican Party and of what had been in the beginning of the century a very rich and active tradition of liberal struggle, had retreated into a routine of rhetorical speeches in special occasions and to the escapism of conspiracies hotly prepared and discussed in the cafes of Porto and Lisbon but never executed. In general, they did not consider the colonies as a theme of opposition unless to underline the fact that the regime had not developed them enough to dully serve the interests of Portugal. The Communist Party, increasingly dependent from Moscow not only in political or ideological terms but also financially, considered the need for an anti-colonial policy as secondary in relation to the main task, that of overthrowing the fascist regime. According to this approach, only with a democratic regime finally installed in Lisbon, the future of the colonies would be discussed. In other words, the end of colonialism and the daily repression of the peoples in the colonies of Portugal, usually referred to as “the colonial problem”, were subordinated to other interests and objectives. This was another one

of the ideological and tactical positions that had become common both to the clandestine and underground communists and to the disorganized or exiled democratic opposition to Salazar in the early sixties. If criticism was voiced it was usually about the regime incapability of developing the colonies. It was not against colonialism but rather about not enough colonialism.

The beginnings of the colonial wars in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique brought a small change to those general positions of the Portuguese anti-fascist and democratic opposition. It was expressed, after the early 1960s, through a public affirmation of support for and solidarity with the various liberation movements. Equally in the early 1960's different acts of anti-regime opposition and defiance occurred. A passenger plane and a transatlantic ship, the Santa Maria, were hijacked and transformed into forms of public, worldwide protest by the democratic opposition against Portuguese fascism and the colonial war. It reflected well the generalized Western opposition to war, to its reasons and to the politics of Lisbon. The evidence was, however, that the Portuguese political opposition continued to be a very weak and disorganized opposition. It had not a coherent and feasible political program. Besides that, it was not capable of assuming the colonial war as the fundamental problem of Portugal and, as such, requiring a quick and radical solution. A more coherent and active opposition to the war was however voiced in the student manifestations and unrest that characterized as well the early 1960s in Portugal.

By then, the regime was as well showing some signs of weariness. Among them, the evidence of the culmination of differences within what was being presented publicly as a

monolithic and united state. The main sources for the voicing of those differences were usually located within the military but also within progressive groups more or less linked to the Catholic Church. They appeared well aware that a military solution to the colonial wars was condemned to be defeated. In particular, among the military the situation in Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique was similar to the one that led to the defeat of the French army in Indochina, first, in Algeria, afterwards. They had also learned with the process of liberation of the so-called Portuguese India and of the impossible role that the army had ended up having to assume there.

With the initial signs of a generalized rebellion in Angola, the “loss” of India represented the first substantial action against the continuation of Portuguese colonialism. It happened when, in December 1961, a pacific invasion by *satyagrahas*, following Gandhi’s doctrine of non-violence but supported by the Indian army, entered and occupied Goa, Damao, and Diu. The only possible response from the Portuguese military garrison was to lower their guns refusing to use them against the “invaders”. Anyway, this was how in less than eight hours the secular presence of Portugal in the Malabar Coast was terminated.

Still in the early 1960s, the hard-core of the Portuguese fascist state had to confront the more or less open and moderate opposition of those who believed that the decolonization process was inevitable due to the support given to it by the United States, by other Western countries, and by the USSR. Consequently, they would argue, decolonization would be the only solution for the continuation of some kind of Portuguese presence in its former territories. To delay it would mean that Portugal would loose there everything.

This moderate opposition was also located at the highest levels of the regime itself. Largely it had an important source of support in the generalized interstate opposition to the Portuguese colonial wars. The main expression of these growing external pressures on Portugal was the United Nations, in particular at the level of its Committee for Decolonization. Another important reference was the attitude of the settler regimes both in South Africa and in Southern Rhodesia. This was not as clear-cut as sometimes is depicted. Because the position taken by them, although usually not made public, was that Portugal was a colonial power, this meant that it had to start a process of preparation of some kind of independence in Mozambique, as well as in all the other colonies. Portugal had to solve the problem by political means rather than continue with a war whose results were, to say the least, uncertain. They defended rather a process of preparation for some kind of self-determination or *auto-determinacao*. This was a concept also embraced by many of the Portuguese settlers both in Angola and in Mozambique. Playing with words they used to add that it would be “a self determination with a hyphen, that is to say, in which the two words would be linked as the self-determined colony would keep its links with Portugal” (Pombal, 1962). Largely, this was also the position assumed by the then President of the Portuguese republic, a very tame but different position from that of the majority of the hard core of the fascist regime. (Craveiro Lopes, Capela, Flowers, etc).

The direct result of all this was a concerted effort by the regime to put also an end to this type of oppositional voicing. Besides using the PIDE and other repressive mechanisms to intimidate, the regime decided as well to call general elections. Among its objectives they

would be an instrument of consolidation of the regime, a way to a better know of the different factions of the opposition and their leaderships, and, last but by no means least, an expedite way to substitute a reformist President with a more adequate one. However, when the prognostics of the election started to emphasize the degree to which the regime's opposition was still important, not only in some pockets of the main metropolitan cities but also in Angola and Mozambique, it was manipulated and, to a great extent, called off. It made clear however that the policies being defended by large sectors of the political opposition, toward some kind of decolonization, was largely accepted by a large majority of the population. This was also the general opinion in South Africa and the Federation. There were, consequently, two different positions within the regime in relation to the adequacy of war and the need to prepare conditions, in the long term, for some kind of sovereignty in the colonies.

That division between war and politics as a way out of the colonial situation became one of the main references behind the introduction in 1968 of important changes in the regime. Once again, however, the war option ended up being the dominant one after a brief interlude in which its opposition had appeared as having been considered. After having successfully destroyed its political opposition throughout the previous thirty years, the hard-core of the corporative, fascist regime tried to do the same in relation to its internal members not completely convinced about the colonial war and its outcome. This was done under the banner that those who were not with the regime were against it. The hope that the change would mean transformation was soon substituted by the political reality that what was happening was, rather, the attempt to internally consolidate the regime. Because mainly

determined by the “colonial problem”, it represented as well the deepening of the regime’s rhetoric about the colonies. Some opposition was however allowed in the beginning as well as a less strict although more efficient official censorship of the different media. At the same time, the designations of both the political base of the regime, the Uniao Nacional (the National Union) and the political police (Pide) were changed into, respectively, Accao Nacional Popular (ANP) and Direccao Geral de Seguranca (or DGS). However, besides the names, nothing else changed.

This cosmetic modification was however considered, correctly, as a symptom of the continuing decline of the regime. To be sure, that decline was also determined by the increasing costs of the war both in men and in material. A very incomplete assessment of the effective used in the three fronts of the colonial war shows that from a total of less than 46,000 men in the early 1960s it increased to about 150,000 in 1974 (EM do Exercito, 1988: 241). This number included locally drafted troops in the different colonies whose number increased as well from the early 1960s onwards. The metropolitan equally compulsive drafting reached an unprecedented number of almost 85,000 men in 1974 (EM 1988: 243). In Mozambique and Angola, the total number of troops drafted from 1961 to 1973 increased as well, respectively, from less than 11,500 to more than 51,000 and from around 33,000 to 65,500 (EM 1988: 259). Of the total number of men in the Portuguese armed forces in 1974, about 51,000 were permanently kept in Portugal (EM 1988: 251). The above statistics are, however, very incomplete and, as such, misleading. They do not include neither the number of troops being trained according to the twice a year compulsory drafting of all males between 18 and 21 years of age. They also do not include what was considered as auxiliary

troops and militias, the so called Special Troops, Special Groups and Para-Special Groups (GEPs or Grupos Especias Paraquedistas) which in many regions of the three theatres of operations usually occupied the frontlines of direct confrontation with the combatants of the liberation movements. Finally, those numbers do not include the effective at the same time being used by other branches of the vast security apparatus constructed by the Portuguese to fight the war. Among them, to be sure, the number involved direct or indirectly with the political police, the PIDE, both in Portugal and in the colonies. The same can be said about other crypto-military and information organizations often used in covert operations both at the metropolitan and colonial levels of activity. The number does not include as well organizations of psycho-social support both to the colonial troops and to co-opt African populations against the actions and recruitment by the liberation movements which were active in all of the different frontlines.

The cost of the war for a very under-developed colonial Portugal was as well one of the reasons why the regime started to be deeply affected by it. As in what concerns the number of troops and other operatives in the three theatres of war, the numbers till now made public are very incomplete and deficient. They are mostly referred to the so called ordinary budget of the army. They consequently do not include the very considerable costs represented by all the other branches of the armed forces, other institutions openly or not involved in the war and the high costs with frequent covert operations. In other words, the costs with the type of war like the three colonial wars in which Portugal got involved after the early 1960s are all but ordinary. Nevertheless, the total of ordinary expenses with what is designated as “National Defense” went from around 1,9 billion of contos in 1962 to more than 9,2 billion

in 1975 (*Ibid*: 512). A more realistic approach for the expenses of the Portuguese state throughout the more than ten years of the colonial war will probably increase in about three times the amounts above.

Another statistic worth mentioning is that of the number of soldiers killed in action. Here, again, we have the official statistics and the reality of the war. According to the former, in the ten years of the colonial war in Mozambique there were about 3,000 deaths in the Portuguese armed forces of which 1,700 from the Metropolitan contingents and 1,200 from the local draft (EM 1988: 266). For the number of deaths in the three fronts, the same source gives a total of less than 8,200 (EM 1988: 264-266).

Although not yet reliably quantifiable, the reality of the colonial war in the first years of the 1970s was however that its cumulative effects, its dead, its costs and its intensification without solution started to be increasingly felt both in Portugal and among the settler communities within the different colonies. The expectation with the reform of the regime had changed into a general feeling of frustration both within the armed forces and among the settler communities of the colonies. The idea that the colonial war was being lost started to become widespread. Notably in Mozambique, it was reflected in what became since 1972 a steady abandonment of the colony by an increasing number of settlers. For the first time in almost a century, the balance between the number of those arriving from Portugal to live in Mozambique and those leaving the colony was negative. This trend continued in the following years to achieve its limits in the years following independence. Also in Mozambique, the situation started to be characterized by increasing public protests often

ending into violent confrontations by settlers against the colonial army (⁵⁹). Accusing it of not being able neither to protect them nor of limiting the advance of Frelimo, those public manifestations became particularly acute in Beira, the second city of the colony.

The eminence of defeat in the colonial war led as well, in the second half of 1973, to the development of a clandestine, underground organization within the Portuguese Armed Forces. It was this organization that later on resulted into the formation of the Movimento das Forças Armadas or MFA and its triple objective: to achieve an immediate peace with the liberation movements of the colonies; to end the fascist regime in Portugal; and to proclaim democracy as the base for a new state also capable of creating the necessary conditions to the development of Portugal within the European community. These objectives were attained with the revolutionary overthrow of the Portuguese regime in April of 1974.

In considering side by side the history, strategies, objectives and defeat of the Portuguese colonial regime in Mozambique with those of the other settler regimes of Southern Africa an important number of common aspects become obvious. Largely, this is the reason why we will find equally similar liberation responses, strategies and objectives when considering the various movements that confronted and defeated them. This is true at very different levels of importance. For instance, not only the Portuguese but also the Rhodesian and the South Africans adopted, against the advance of the liberation war, what do not deserve other

⁵⁹) It is perhaps interesting to mention here that in April 1974 the colonial army was evaluating the situation in Mozambique as being partially controlled although “critical” in Tete. In what concerns the settler opposition to the way the war was progressing the High Command of the Portuguese armed forces described it as being the result of “infiltrations” of Frelimo in Manica and Sofala. It was those “infiltrations” that caused in the white population of those provinces “vast psychological effects... due to the in depth of the (Frelimo’s) actions and despite the fact that they did not meant an effective expansion of subversion” (EM do Exército Portugues, Vol. 1, 1988: 116). A good variation to the World War II famous statement attributed to the British Army “**situation hopeless but not serious**”.

characterization that that of cosmetic modifications. This is how the Portuguese colonies became “states”; the Rhodesians proclaimed a “unilateral declaration of independence”; or the South African Bantustans were made into independent countries. This was also how political polices like the Portuguese Pide or the South African Boss (the Bureau of State Security) changed into DGS and DNS (the Department of National Intelligence), respectively. Southern Rhodesia became simply Rhodesia. At a more important level, however, we find other commonalities among the white regimes of Southern Africa which can be useful to the understanding of their histories.

The first was the way they were impacted and responded to the successive progression of the general process of liberation in the region. To a great extent, regional liberation can be described as having started with the independence of Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi and the enclave territories of Southern Africa. This allowed the beginning in the early 1960s of the armed struggle led by the Mozambican Liberation Front or Frelimo that resulted into the independence of Mozambique a decade later. To the remaining white regimes of Southern Africa this meant the same it had meant to the Portuguese ten years before. Those forces and movements tending to bring their leadership to an end had to be confronted militarily and neutralized.

It happened, however, that both forces and movements were located not only within their own territorial spaces but also out of them. That is to say, white power in Southern Africa was not only being confront by the opposition it had determined throughout the long colonial period. In repetition of what had already happened with the Portuguese colonial

regime, both Rhodesia and South Africa were being confronted from both sides of the Iron Curtain: the capitalist west, mainly through the United Nations; and the communist east, usually through its alliance of solidarity with the anti-colonialist and anti-apartheid movements. In other words, the white communities in Mozambique, in Rhodesia and in South Africa saw themselves, from the early 1960's onwards, as increasingly under siege by the interstate system while under fire from within. This ideology of siege and rejection will be present till the very last days of the settler domination in Southern Africa. It was also the main element linking the three settler regimes of Southern Africa in what increasingly became a desperate military alliance.

This alliance, however, revealed more differences and contradictions among them than commonalities. Notwithstanding the high degree of dependence it had developed in relation to South Africa, the Rhodesian settler regime looked with suspicion its apartheid neighbor and its effective or potential intentions. The same thing can be said of the general attitude in Mozambique towards South Africa and Rhodesia. At the same time, the Portuguese considered their settlers and their regimes as being not only a danger but, also, politically weak and intrinsically racist. Something the Rhodesians would return back by looking at the Portuguese in Mozambique as backward, underdeveloped, arrogant and lazy. They also considered the Portuguese armed forces and, in particular, their high command as the result of all that. From the very beginning they saw them as being condemned to be defeated. Moreover, for them the Portuguese had done nothing of substance in their colony. The misery lived there was the only result that could be shown of more than four hundred years of their local presence. Although not publicly, the Rhodesian regime also defended that

some kind of independence for the Portuguese colonies in general, for Mozambique and Angola in particular, had to be considered by Lisbon. That would be the only alternative out of a situation that if not directly confronted could end up endangering the whole region. The back room defense of this conception was often made both by Rhodesian and South Africans in their contact with the Portuguese. They were listened to with scorn and non-disguised contempt. To be sure, both South Africans and Rhodesians, the former more than the latter, wanted to make clear that neither of them could be considered as colonies. They saw themselves, rather, as governments legitimized both by their History and, principally, by the economic and social development, by the “progress” they had been able to generate in their respective countries. Finally in what concerns the apartheid regime, its main idea about both Mozambique and Rhodesia was that they constituted South African geo-strategic defense against the advance of the enemy. According to this approach, the Portuguese fighting in Mozambique were a first front of defense and military confrontation that made of the Rovuma River the northern limit in the general conception of the South African defense. The Portuguese were however considered as being too weak and backward to maintain a long, protracted defense of their territory. This meant two things. The first was that, in the eventuality of their possible defeat, a second peripheral limit of South African defense would be then coincident with the Zambezi River. This meant that its defense would then belong to the better prepared and equipped Rhodesian army. Secondly, and as a consequence, the South Africans had to join both the Portuguese armed forces and the Rhodesians with that objective. In the mid 1960s, the triple racist alliance of Southern Africa was becoming a strong regional reality. It was however and never ceased to be an alliance of convenience.

The victory of Frelimo in Mozambique and the independence of the country allowed the intensification of the war against the Rhodesian settler regime, which in the meantime had proclaimed a so called unilateral independence from Great Britain. It resulted in 1978 into the liberation of Zimbabwe. It resulted as well into a new geo-strategic conjuncture in the region that brought the process of liberation directly to the borders of South Africa and intensified it internally.

As in the cases of the Portuguese in relation to Mozambique (as well as in their other colonies) and as in that of the settler regime of Rhodesia, the response from the Pretoria regime was three pronged. Besides the direct military confrontation to try to limit in each one of the territories the advance of the liberation movements soon was expanded to include external operations. These constituted an attempt to decapitate the liberation movements and intimidate or close their sources of direct support. It also included internal attempts to create or to co-opt those African leaders who were considered as not belonging to the liberation movements or as being potentially reliable and moderate allies. Both in Mozambique and in Zimbabwe, in the years immediately before the defeat of their colonial regimes, this had been uniformly counterbalanced with the increase of internal measures of security and generalized repression. After the mid 1970s, this was also the blueprint for survival followed by Pretoria. Coinciding with the last phase of the Rhodesian regime, South Africa intensified a regional destabilization war against those regional states considered as being a direct menace to apartheid because of their support and offer of sanctuary to the South African liberation movement, the ANC in particular. Mozambique and Angola, but also Zambia, Tanzania and the newly independent

Zimbabwe, became main targets for a generalized and permanent military aggression. Part of what became known as Total Strategy, the military destabilization of the rest of the region in general, of Mozambique and Angola in particular, included the use of the South African Air Force, of intelligence services and of Special Forces with their instruments of so called counter insurgency. Secondly, the measures of repression within South Africa became also even more oppressive and wide-ranging. This coincided with a process of co-optation of influent African leaders and with the implementation of various reforms presented as destined to improve the livelihood of the African population. Between 1975 and 1989, it coincided as well with a ten fold growth of the South Africa's defense budget, from R1 billion to R9.4 billion. After the independence of Zimbabwe, this represented an expense of more than US\$3 billion a year from the early 1980's onwards (in 1988 US\$ dollars). It represented as well a spending averaging 16.4 percent of the government budgets in 1980-81. It increased to 22.7 percent in 1982 to decline to 13.7 percent in 1987. In 1989, the year of the defeat of the apartheid regime, the relation between its defense budget and the general budget of the country had once again increased to about 16 percent (All Refer, 2004).

Finally, and still as part of a Total Strategy, South Africa started in the early 1980s a concerted policy to consolidated the interrelationship and dependence with the states that, in the region and for various reasons, had assumed a lesser role against apartheid. These included Swaziland, Lesotho and Malawi but also Botswana. In the following years, various Bantustans were considered "independent" states, with their own flags, anthems, governments, radio stations and repressive forces – but without other diplomatic recognition than that of their own creator, Pretoria's apartheid regimen. The main objective was to bring

those states and the Bantustans together into an organization capable of confronting the institutions in the meantime created in the region. These included the Frontline States, grouping the states more directly involved in the struggle against apartheid, and an emerging SADCC or Southern Africa Development and Coordination Commission. Created as a suggestion of Great Britain, the latter was conceived as an instrument capable of promoting viable economic relations between the independent countries of Southern Africa and the core of the capitalist world-economy. Its objective was, to be sure, to try to moderate the positions of Southern Africa as a region in relation not only to South Africa but also to the Western countries more or less openly supporting the apartheid regime.

During the period from the early 1960s to the late 1980s, the three Southern African regimens were also internally divided according to lines of very similar and equally moderate political fractions. In what concerns the Portuguese I have already characterized that division as determined by the search of possible solutions to what was described as “the African problem”. A majority of supporters of the regimen defended the intransigent and strong use of military means. Others however, in particular in a first phase of the colonial war, claimed that the only way out of the situation would be through a political solution. Theirs was, however, a very moderate and reformist solution that refused an immediate dialogue with the “terrorists”, as the combatants and leaderships of the liberation movements were publicly designated, or a kind of independence without Portugal and the Portuguese. This was a division that within the regime separated the “ultras” from the “moderates”, as they became known. A similar division according to similar choices was also present within the South African regime. On one side there were those defending the strict implementation

of the principles of apartheid as well as their defense by all means necessary. They were known as the “verkramp”. On the other hand those defending the introduction of political, social and economic measures capable of attenuating the nefarious or more extreme consequences of apartheid. These were the “verligte” or “enlightened”. Finally in Rhodesia, the divisions were between those defending a local, settler proclamation of independence as a solution and those claiming that the only way to confront and solve the situation would be through the effective relationship, mediation and dialogue between Rhodesia and Great Britain – not with the “terrorists”. In the three cases, it was the Portuguese ultras, the South African verkramp and the Rhodesian rebellious settlers who started by dominating their respective regimens to lead them and define their political behavior, laws, measures and military strategies. Also in the three cases, it was the moderates, the verligte and the pro-British who ended up assuming the processes of negotiation and reconciliation with their former enemies, the “terrorists” who formed the different liberation movements.

Another common characteristic of the last white regimes of Southern Africa was consequently their decision, in the three cases, of choosing war against any kind of political solution for the advance of the liberation movements in their territories. In doing so, they directly confronted the dominant trends of the post-war capitalist world-economy under the hegemony of the United States. They also became pariahs in the context of the interstate system, isolated and the object of increasing condemnation. Why, then, the desperate assumption of war as a common solution? I already discussed this question in what concerns the case of Portugal in relation to Mozambique. To a great extent, we find a similar response in the other Southern African white regimes: the conviction that they would be able to

confront and easily terminate the action of the various movements against them. Moreover, two main ideological references had in the meantime rooted themselves in the settlers' political imagination to become dominant through their respective regimes. The first was the certitude that a majority rule would mean their expulsion from the three territories. The second was the generalized conviction that any form of power assumed by the majority would represent, as it did in the rest of the continent, the destruction of what they considered as the economic and civilizational foundations they had created in the three cases. The only solution was, consequently, to resist and destroy the enemy. As the three liberation processes advanced, this formulation became different because not so affirmative anymore. It became then, in the three cases, to resist till the very end, if necessary. They did not. After their long and bloody wars against the legitimate objectives of the various liberation movements of the region, their regimes were finally brought down. Not with a bang but with a whimper.

A last common feature to the different settler and colonial regimes of Southern Africa was the forms of political deviance in relation to central characteristics of the interstate system of the world-economy assumed by them in the three cases. This was evident in the Portuguese refusal to decolonize, choosing war over a political solution for its colonial problem. In the case of Rhodesia, that defiance assumed the form of a rebellious proclamation of UDI by a majority of its settlers. Finally in what concerns South Africa, in particular after the mid 1970s, it was tragically reflected not only in its tenacious attempt to continue the apartheid regime but, also, in the bloody war of destabilization with which it covered the region. This common defiance was often described within the core as forming the basis for a powerful military alliance. Consequently, this constituted one of the main reasons precluding a direct

or stronger intervention against them. To say the least, this was an erroneous appearance. In fact, that radicalization of the colonial regimes, their choices and their implementation led rather to the strengthening and polarization of the anti-colonialist and anti-apartheid resistance. Moreover, it was the long but successful process of armed liberation that it originated between the early 1960s and the late 1980s that ended up neutralizing and destroying those different regimes. With it, the colonial model imposed on the peoples of the region for more than 100 years started finally to be dismantled in Southern Africa.

VI

THE LIBERATION MODEL

1. DECOLONIZATION OR LIBERATION?

First of all, some precision is needed: Africa's **decolonization**, a word that implies the agency of colonialist states as the prime mover or main determinant leading to the end of colonialism, was lived inside the continent as an active process of **liberation** from colonial domination and its generalized exploitation. This was not only the result of the long-term practice of anti-colonial resistance both by the people and its elites. It was also and continues to be today a collectively assumed perception. Documents published by the various independence movements emphasize this distinction. It is as well a theme commonly asserted in many of the introductory preambles of the Constitutions of the independent states proclaimed by those movements (OAU, 1979; Kamto & al, 1990). This is however an often forgotten distinction. African liberation usually disappears under the dominant use of the concept of decolonization to describe it.

The bridge between decolonization and liberation, as such contradictory descriptions of the same political and social process, is sometimes found in the world of meanings embodied by another highly ambiguous expression, that of **African nationalism**. This becomes clear when the different acceptations of its possible historical significance are considered. Immediately after the Second World War and in the perspective of the colonial states, African nationalism and its movements were dealt with as instruments of an unacceptable, treacherous rebellion. At

the very same time, in the contemporary perspective of the United States, they were publicly defended as being positive, constructive factors of modernization. In fact, and according to a more hidden reality, African nationalism and its movements were considered by the United States as an important instrument for its own hegemonic consolidation in the world-economy, **against those colonial powers**. That is to say, they became one more geo-strategic element in the global institutionalization of the new, American world order (Wallerstein, 1977: 490; Chase-Dunn 1978: 163; Bush 1983: 1). Soon after, consequently, the common stand of the main colonial powers changed. African nationalism ceased to be seen by them as a mechanism of rupture to become, rather, an essential element of continuity. In other words, it became an acceptable part of the conditions for post-colonial, renewed forms of exploitation (Hargreaves, 1988: 56-64).

To correct and make more precise these distinctions by clarifying their meanings constitutes, I contend, a fundamental question for a better understanding of the contemporary history of Africa. This is also an often despised, ignored, or not discussed question. Decolonization, liberation and anti-colonial nationalism are usually conflated in a single meaning and that is all. I will discuss the inconvenience of such a usage by pointing out what I believe are effective distinctions to have present in the study of African decolonization and liberation and, notably, that these are processes that belong, respectively, to the core and to the periphery of the modern world-system. This reflection will imply brief discussions about the use of the concept of African nationalism, of the fundamental question of national unity, of the role and nature of decolonization in the world-economy and, last but not least, about the way all those processes and conceptualizations exist in relation to the formation and existence of the state in modern

Africa. As I will try to show below, the clarification of all these points both as historical experiences and as positive and negative references is also essential for the characterization of the liberation model as it was born, developed, started to be constructed and collapsed in Southern Africa between the late 1960s and the late 1980s.

African Nationalism as Anti-colonialism

For the colonized peoples nationalism meant neither more nor less than the possibility of freedom and liberation. It was the same as anti-colonialism. Little more than a new name for what had always been their resistance against foreign exploitation. It was eventually one more way out of colonial wretchedness towards the possibility of a general improvement in standards of living, self-reproduction, and collective security (Thomas, 1987: 10, 38) within a more just and human society.

As Wallerstein points out, “it is doubtful that there existed in 1945 a genuine African nationalist movement anywhere on the continent” (1972: 1107). What happened was that afterwards and increasingly, the demands for anti-colonial freedom became embedded with slogans of nationalism and nation-building. To be sure, and even if they did not accept it, this was a discourse that the colonialist states, their agencies and their local administrations could understand. African resistance and liberation was translated into their language. Basil Davidson has emphasize this aspect in similar terms: “it came about”, he wrote, “that Africans, more and more, found themselves impelled to demand their freedom within ideological boundaries which seemed right and natural for their European rulers”. Among these was the rule “**become nations** or you cannot become free” (Davidson, 1964: 58; emphasis in the original). It was in

this context that the strongly anti-colonialist demands for freedom become as well nationalist demands. This was also one of the reasons why nationalism and its correspondent discourse and practice was assumed by African elites in different colonies. It became the essential framework within which the anti-colonial struggle was publicly defined. The important, the decisive factor was however the common determination of the colonized peoples of Africa to bring the colonial oppression to its end. Decisive because it led to the growing popular cohesion that opened up the possibility of new and increasingly stronger forms of action within most of the various colonies of the continent.

Applied to the study of Africa, nationalism is also, consequently, a largely misleading concept. This is particularly true when it is applied as a generalized, non-qualified characterization of the anti-colonial struggle in its various forms and fronts. Contrary to what became dominant in the mainstream social science (Coleman, 1958: 425; Shepherd Jr., 1962: 3) or in many of its orthodox Marxist or as such inspired varieties (and more or less following the classic soviet definition of nation in Africa by I. Potekhin (1958, in Wallerstein ed., 1966: 559-571), it indeed designates very different, even contradictory interests and motivations within the same or among the various geographically demarcated territories. It means decolonization but it means also liberation. Nevertheless, the generalized use of the concept in its African application leaves us with little alternative space but to apply it to characterize some of the anti-colonialist motivations or forms of resistance, the movements originated by it and their action. I will use it as sporadically as possible. Nationalism is not only a core-centric concept but as well, for other reasons, a very awkward one. Consequently, its utilization in what concerns Africa must always be considered as problematic if not, more difficultly but as suggested by Bohannan and

Curtin, put aside entirely (1971: 349-350). This is essential guidance particularly in what concerns the study of the liberation of Southern Africa. There, and perhaps more than anywhere else in the continent, the ideology of liberation of the masses is slowly but inexorably being transformed into the nationalistic discourse and praxis of their leading, governing elites.

National Unity and the Lessons of History

The introduction of political and economic forms of colonial exploitation in Africa from the mid-nineteenth century onwards was a highly contradictory process. On one hand, and as correctly asserted by Walter Rodney, it was relatively easy because more or less unopposed by local elites. The reason was, he adds, that “several of its features were already rooted in Africa since the preceding period... [through] the presence of Africans serving as economic, political, and cultural agents of the Europeans” (Rodney, 1982: 142). On the other hand, this period saw also the beginning of a multiplication of a vast diversity of forms of passive and/or active anti-colonial resistance (Bohannan and Curtin, 1971: 352-357; Hargreaves, 1988: 13-21). All over the continent as in southern Africa, resistance was however isolated, localized, and uncoordinated. It was consequently more or less futile in face of the highly developed military superiority of colonialism. But it came to assume, gradually, an important, even decisive political function. Preserved by the collective memory it became the main reference for new struggles and their evolution (Crummey 1966; Roberts, 1986: 65-86). As an all-encompassing experience, it contained an important lesson for the future: without unity, divided as they were, often deliberately by the colonial regimes, Africans would continue to be easy targets for a common enemy. Unity became an imperative and, gradually, an objective: within ethnic, linguistic lines, to start with; according to the whole colonial territories, afterwards.

In the early 1920's the relative growth of elites in the context of the colonial expansion in Southern Africa since the turn of the century was starting to be a reality. This coincided, with the end of the colonial wars of "pacification", as they were known in Europe. And it was that imposed peace that made possible two very different, even contradictory, processes of colonial occupation.

The first of those processes consisted in the frequent expropriation of land, cheap labor, and social roles in favor of existing European settlers or to attract new ones. This is what happened in the 1920s and 1930s all over the region. It prolonged with force the force of "pacification". The objectives of the other process of occupation were similar. They were also destined to consolidate the military triumph of the colonial wars. They followed various, different directions. The dominant one consisted in using the local African leaders as subaltern instruments of administration and control. This co-optation was taken to its limits in Southern Africa. But it was an integral part of colonial occupation all over the continent.

With time, this initial process assumed a great variety of forms that were applied with more or less intensity by the different colonial powers. It became known as the British **indirect rule**, the French **politique d' assimilation**, the Belgian **centralized paternalism** (Hargreaves, 1988: 12), or as the Portuguese **assimilation** or **assimilacao**. In all cases, the objective was the co-optation or the formation, growth and manipulation of old and new African elites. As Hargreaves points out, this allowed "a more or less gentile supervision of African hierarchies" (1988: 12). At the same time, they became the political and social intermediaries between the

colonized masses and the colonial powers. Moreover, and in a near future, they would originate the middle classes of the continent as well as its leaders (CEA: 1980). They were, in short, a fundamental instrument of the colonial exercise of power. Without this co-optation and generalized manipulation, colonialism as we know it would not have been possible.

Both the policies of expropriation and those of co-optation in Southern Africa determined similar, unintended consequences. They led to the gradual consciousness by those elites of their colonial situation. It led also to the awareness that assimilation was not the same as a full integration in the colonial society. Through their discrimination and lack of opportunities they perceived the generalized inequality of colonialism, its social, economic and political racism. They also became conscious of the backwardness, underdevelopment, and misery of colonialism, of the lack of access to education and progress it represented. In a first phase, they saw it, however, as possible to be reformed. Consequently, they ended up claiming for more, not less, colonialism under the form of more schools, more access to jobs, more equality, more roads, more health care, and more complex administrative divisions. In other words, they were claiming for their own growth as elites.

The reality was, however, that the objective of colonialism was not, and contrary to the public discourse of its officers, to civilize, to modernize, to bring progress and development to Africa. Its objective was the expansion of the colonial appropriation of land, labor, and other resources. If accompanied by the implementation of the social reforms and benefits required by those elites its profitability would be affected. It soon became obvious for them that, to expand, they had to somehow remove first of all the obstacles represented by the predominance of

colonialism. Making even more pressing the backward and discriminatory nature of colonialism, the local impact of the great depression of the world-economy in the first half of the twentieth century became the trigger that activated them to assume increasingly stronger forms of anti-colonialist protest and confrontation. At the same time, the growing colonial exploitation, often as forced labor, combined with new, usually stricter and more oppressive forms of administration had increasingly brought the peasant masses into a closer contact with the colonial regimes. What happened at the level of the elites, happened as well at the level of the African multitudes. As Crowden points out, “the consequences without exception were an increased political consciousness rooted in anti-colonial sentiment” (1984: 393). For the first time in the history of the region, this was the beginning of a political confluence of interests between African elites and masses through their collective perception of colonialism as the common enemy.

This was also how the modern anti-colonialist social movements were first created in Africa. Essentially they were, to start with, small, urban-based organizations without formal links to the rural areas and their peasantries. In general, they were also formed according to a more or less precise ethnic characterization. Implicitly, however, they soon assumed as well a politically defined nature. Under the guise of cultural, mutual, or religious organizations they mushroomed from Algeria in the north, with the so-called “political clubs”, to Southern Africa -- with the foundation of the African National Congress in South Africa or the “Clarim Africano” in Mozambique. In particular when they were repressed by the colonial authorities, they originated the first independence movements of the continent (Hargreaves, 1988: 15-16; Crowden, 1984: 5; Clark, 1970: 9). What distinguished the latter from the previous types of

anti-colonial resistance (⁶⁰) was the nature of their leaderships, in social and educational terms, and their objectives. As before, they claimed for the recognition of all the political and social rights of the colonized. But that was only a beginning. Their main objective soon became national independence and self-determination.

It was then that two important characteristics were assumed by those movements. The first one, and the more important of the two, was the fact that anti-colonialist resistance and confrontation within the various territories started to be made in name of objectives of liberation that were depicted and assumed as common to all the different ethnic and linguistic groups inside the same colonial boundaries. They started to be made, consequently, in name of a “national” unity that often did not exist but had to be symbolically created within the borders of the colony. This happened in particular in the period that followed the end of the Second World War. The other, as a consequence and for the reasons and objectives that were discussed above, was the nationalistic shift assumed by the leaderships of those movements.

⁶⁰) Contrary to the well known theses of Ranger and Isaacman, I do not see historical ruptures or solutions of continuity between what they designate as traditional-tribal or primary resistance, that is to say the first anti-colonial forms of confrontation and resistance, and their development after the 1920s all over the continent into the independence movements they originated. They are all, simultaneously, a result and an integral part of the same trajectory of resistance and confrontation that started with colonialism itself. What becomes obvious when we look at their historical development is not that they went through different phases. It is, rather, their permanence and intrinsic confrontational interrelationship with the development of colonialism. They appear in the historical scene, grow, assume new characteristics, change their forms of struggle and define their objectives according to the expansion, transformations and objectives of colonialism. When in 1964 the peasants in the north of Mozambique replaced a more or less passive but permanent anti-colonial resistance with guns they were not entering into a historical rupture with those previous forms of struggle against Portuguese colonialism. On the contrary: they were fully assuming, strengthening and making them more effective. Likewise, present or future forms of resistance in Africa will have to take into account the rich history of resistance and struggle as it evolved in the continent for more than one hundred years. This will be necessary if they want to grow further. They will have to take into account and consideration what are the very rich roots of their theoretical and practical experiences. Most of all, they will have to learn from them, in order to push forward their triumphs and avoid their defeats and mistakes. This conception about the need to learn from past experiences of struggle was since their beginnings assumed by the major liberation movements of Southern Africa. With it the evidence that resistance had been easily defeated historically because divided, spontaneous, and uncoordinated.

The claims for independence and sovereignty that became unstoppable in the continent after the mid-1940s were first formulated through petitions and in direct contact with the colonial administrations. When the possibilities of dialogue were absent or became exhausted the calling for general insurrections or, even, the threat of armed struggle appeared as the only possible instruments of liberation (Hodgkin: 1956, 1961; Fanon, 1961 and 1971; Cabral, 1969; Mondlane, 1969; Mazrui and Tidy, 1984). This was what started to happen in the late 1950s in Algeria. This was also what happened, after the early 1960s, in the Portuguese colonies of Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. Also in Southern Africa, similar proclamations for the use of violence as a last resort for anti-colonial liberation were made both in South Africa and in Southern Rhodesia, the future Rhodesia and today's Zimbabwe.

The principle of the independence of the African colonies was not automatically or easily accepted by the majority of the colonial powers in the period that followed the end of the Second World War in Europe. Their first reaction was to neutralize the personalities and movements claiming for it, by force if necessary. As a general political principle, the idea of national independence was only accepted later on. By then, however, independence was generally conceded in peaceful terms. The most notorious exceptions were consequently those of Algeria, in the beginnings of the decolonization process, and in Southern Africa. In what concerns the latter, Portugal was still living there its stubborn dream of keeping its place in the semi-periphery of the world-economy through the growing exploitation of its colonies. Instead of decolonization it chose military action to continue it. In relation to the timetable of independence, there were also two other important omissions in Southern Africa. Rhodesia, where a settler regime had in the meantime proclaimed its separation from Great Britain to

avoid African independence and against the country's majority, was one of them. The other was, of course, South Africa and its apartheid regime. Between the 1950s and the late 1960s, a growing number of newly proclaimed African states in the rest of the continent were formally accepted as members of the United Nations. In the region, however, the struggle for independence, soon made into an armed struggle, continued. Started in the early 1960s it only came to an end thirty years after, in the late 1980s.

Decolonization as an Instrument of U. S. Hegemony

Contrary to what happened in Algeria and in Southern Africa, the general process of African decolonization was a very peaceful process. A question becomes thus imperative: what made it possible? To be sure, the reality lived in the continent by its peoples was a reality of colonial repression and extreme exploitation quickly changing into direct confrontation. In relation to the different colonial powers, the balance of power was obviously not in favor of the colonized elites claiming for their national independence (Hargreaves, 1988: 83) even if with the support of the masses. Other situations of colonial war, **other Algerias** or, better, **other Southern Africas** were consequently possible. But they did not occur. The political attitude of the colonial powers in relation to their colonies and its independence movements was in the meantime changed. This was the reason why, as Ohaegbulam puts it, African independence was in general peacefully "regained" (1990: 201). The question however still stands: why that sudden change in the attitude of the colonial powers? Why did they end up accepting forms of national sovereignty and independence in "their" colonies that, five or ten years before, were unthinkable?

The vast majority of the dominant literature about Africa's independence explains usually these questions by assuming the perspective of the Cold War. According to it, the concession of independence was a fundamental instrument against the growing influence of communism, that is to say, of the Soviet Union, in the continent. Two other approaches are also quite often used as explanatory constructs. One is based on the idea of decolonization as being the real objective of colonialism. To be sure, this is the perspective usually defended by the former colonial powers. In doing so, they assume some of the responsibility for the negative aspects of their colonial past. Dominantly, however, what they point out is, rather, what they consider to be the historical advantages of colonialism: the modern cities, the railways, the airports, the roads, the schools and hospitals. They present themselves, in short, as the purveyors of modernity and progress. Moreover, and to culminate it all, didn't they end up giving freedom back to Africa?

The other approach to decolonization describes it by inverting the sign of this explanation by the former colonialist powers. There was neither modernity nor progress in Africa, it says: only exploitation and repression. These were the objectives of colonialism. The modern cities, the roads, even the schools were built to make easier the achievement of those objectives, not the well-being of Africans. The end of colonialism was a direct result of its defeat by the generalized struggle of the African masses under the direction of their historical leaders -- the founding fathers of national independence. This is the perspective of the leading elites of the decolonized countries of Africa. Basically, it changes decolonization into liberation. Interesting works depicting this approach and assuming a national, usually nationalistic perspective have been published all over the continent. They are eagerly read and used in its schools. Their approach is also the one used in the public political discourse of its leaders.

Both perspectives, that of the former colonial powers and that of the national states of the continent reflect aspects of the historical reality of Africa. Alone by themselves, however, they are distorted and distorting perspectives. The same thing must be said of the Cold War perspective which, of course, is often collapsed with that of the colonial powers. Independently considered, none of these approaches explain much: on the contrary. They contribute, rather, to the generalized ignorance about the realities of the continent so prevalent in the world today. A different approach must then be attempted: an approach capable of including aspects proper of each one of those approaches by looking at their interrelationship within the long-term and large scale reality of an evolving world-economy. This is the approach I will attempt here. Essentially by considering the structural junction of those perspectives as a convergence of socio-political and economic variables whose interplay and mutual interrelationship, I contend, characterized African decolonization.

The first of those perspectives, the explanation of decolonization by the increasing collective strength of independence movements against colonial powers still deeply affected by the World War, has already been discussed. I called it the nationalist perspective and I have no doubt that it constituted an important factor of influence. It could have become the main independent variable in the liberation of Africa. But it did not because, to a great extent, its political development in most of the continent was blocked by the effective materialization of its main objective: decolonization itself (⁶¹). As I will try to show in the next chapter, this is what made

⁶¹) “When we started our struggle for independence, we all came to the streets of Dar yelling “Uhuru, Uhuru...”. The British looked at us and said: “You want Uhuru? You can have it...” This was how we became independent” -- Julius Nyerere (Mota Lopes, 1987: private conversation, Dar-Es Salaam). Mwalimu Nyerere was comparing the process of liberation in Mozambique, through a protracted armed

different the complete liberation of Southern Africa. It included decolonization, the peaceful granting of independences. But its extension to the rest of its territories was only possible through the use of armed struggle and the effective confrontation by liberation movements of the different positions assumed by Portugal, South Africa and the Rhodesian settlers in the region. To a great extent, the variety of modalities found in the processes of formation of the independent national states in Southern Africa (⁶²) illustrates, in a nutshell and dramatically, both the reality of decolonization and the range of its possible alternatives, of what could have happened to it in the rest of the continent.

In relation to the nationalistic approach, the need felt by the colonial powers and, to a smaller extent, by the United States to avoid the political radicalization of the independence movements can be considered as a second variable. This is also what usually is described as the Cold War perspective: independence as a deterrent for communism. Usually the more emphasized of all factors, the menace of communism is probably as well the lesser of the explanations. Simply because, and contrary to what was asserted by the propaganda of the time “the disruption of colonial rule never became one of Stalin’s priorities” (Hargreaves, 1988: 56). To be sure, this must be related with the fact that in the division of the world between the United States and the Soviet Union that followed the end of the Second World War

struggle, with the decolonization of Tanganyika. To be sure, he was making a caricature of the situation. But, following one of the basic characteristics of the art of caricature, he was not misrepresenting reality: rather exaggerating one of its traces to make his point more clearly. On the other hand, according to the leader of Frelimo and first President of Mozambique Samora Machel , “If independence had been given to us when we asked for it, by Portugal in the early Sixties, we would have been an independent country *without having been born*” (Mota Lopes, 1985: private conversation, Maputo).

⁶²) Bauer and Taylor (2005) use the following designations to characterize the different states of Southern Africa: 1. The First States – Malawi, Zambia, Botswana; 2. The Lusophone States – Angola and Mozambique; 3. The Post Settler States – Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa. It must be added that only “the first states”, which include as well Lesotho and Swaziland, resulted from decolonization. The Lusophone states were the result of protracted liberation wars. As, to a great extent, were the Post Settler states.

(Wallerstein 2003: 35-7; 39; 53; *passim*), Africa had been placed *off limits* to the direct influence of the U.S.S.R. Moreover, the African acceptance of the Soviet access to the continent and to its independence movements was always a very restricted and qualified one. As Samora Machel of Mozambique used to say, the reality was that “the winds of October never blew in Africa” (Mota Lopes, 1975).

The argument about a communist threat was however extensively used by the colonial powers. It was also equally used in two diametrically opposed contexts. When the pressures within the colonies for independence started to be extensively felt it was used as a “justification” for the need to intervene, militarily if necessary, against the anti-colonial movements. Later on, it continued to be equally used as a “justification” -- but then for the granting of independences as the only way to impede the further radicalization of those same movements. This was characteristically the position of the main colonial powers of Europe. From a position of open denial of African independences they ended up assuming the decolonizing process and leading it to its conclusion. This change means that the position of the colonial powers was, as well, a dependent variable. It was not and never became, in short, a fundamental or serious argument in the main debate about the reality of decolonization in Africa.

To be sure, those two variables only make sense if related to a third, independent variable. We find it in the role and interests assumed by the United States in relation to the decolonization of Africa. That relation was not based on the danger of communism. It was, rather, determined by the consolidation of the American state as the hegemonic power of a developing capitalist world-economy. It is here that we can find a more acceptable explanation for the accelerated

process that from the late 1950s onwards led to the proclamation of a growing number of independent states in Africa.

The best way to characterize the position of the United States is, consequently, to consider it as corresponding, specifically, to the policies of an emerging world hegemonic power. This must, however, be qualified. Only indirectly those policies addressed or favored the struggle of the African peoples. Their main objective was not that. It was, rather, to obliterate the last remnants of an old, decrepit world order and, in its place, to affirm and consolidate a new one. Particularly it was adamant to destroy the instruments or their remnants capable of restoring or strengthening the power of Great Britain, the former hegemon. Colonialism was and had always been considered by the United States as being one of those instruments of systemic power.

This had been clearly expressed in the objectives formulated and pursued at least since the first decade of last century by various American administrations. Notably, it had been a decisive, fundamental part of the famous 1918 statement by the then President of the United States about the need for “a free, open minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims”. Moreover, the statement added, in all discussions about questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned and those of the colonial governments would have an “equal weight” ⁽⁶³⁾.

⁶³) This was the point 5 of the Fourteen Points Document issued toward the end of the First World War to the request of the Central Empires (Germany and Austro-Hungary), indicating the possible basis for a general peace. Presented to the Congress, this document, although probably not yet concerned with Africa, makes very strong anti-colonialist statements and underlines the American support for nationalist claims. It suggests the formation of a General Association of Nations and underlines a set of principles that very clearly define the policy of an emergent world-hegemony: absolute freedom of navigation, the removal of all

In 1929, these principles had been accepted as reflecting the true intentions of the United States in relation to the colonial powers, in general, to that of the still surviving British Empire in particular. This had also become a generalized perception around the world. In his cell of the fascist prison of Turi, for instance, Antonio Gramsci synthesized in that same year in one of his notebooks an article that had been recently published about the relations of the United States with Great Britain. In particular, he underlined that the importance of the article was the emphasis it placed on “the following hypothesis: that the United States wants to become the hegemonic political force of the British Empire, that is, it wants to conquer the English empire from within and not from the outside by war” (Notebook 2 (1929-1933, in Gramsci 1992: 336).

Decolonization as a principle became part in 1941 of the Atlantic Charter signed between the United States and Great Britain (Crowden, ed. 1984: *passim*; 2003: ABC). Soon, however, important differences between the American and British understanding of its articles, and specifically those that were eventually applicable to Africa became a strong obstacle. Britain started then to state that the reference about “the right of all people to choose the form of government in which they live” did not apply to Africa. In particular this was defended by Winston Churchill in his contacts with the U. S. (Crowden, ed., 1984: 22). His published correspondence with Roosevelt (Kimball, ed., 1984: *passim*) shows the high degree of insistence, persuasion, and manipulation used by the United States to push Britain to finally

economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all nations. The adoption in the post-1945 period of the slogan Africa for the Africans in the official discourse of the USA has most probably its roots in this interesting document attributed to the President Woodrow Wilson.

agree to give up her colonies and decolonize. It implied, as well, a high degree of political and, principally, of economic pressure.

The reality of decolonization is consequently that the United States assumed it as an instrument capable of depriving the rival European powers, Britain in particular because the most powerful, from their closed influence in Africa. Notably, this meant depriving them of an important part of their former systemic strength and blocking its recuperation. To a great extent, this is also confirmed by the fact that neither South Africa nor Portugal received similar pressures in order to, respectively, end apartheid and decolonize. By themselves or even through their links with England, they were not considered by the United States as a serious threat to its hegemony. They were not strong enough⁽⁶⁴⁾. They were not seen, consequently, at the same level of strategic importance as the British and French colonial empires. On the other hand, the diminutive economic relationship between the United States and Africa in the following 30 years confirms that the geo-strategic consolidation of its hegemony was indeed the main objective of the American post-war policies. The recreation of the African periphery to make it at least potentially a source to maximize the extraction of surplus only accessorially was a component of those policies. The U.S. hegemonic interest was, in short, the main reason for its support of the principle of African independence and the public recognition of its movements.

⁶⁴) There were however some pressures, in particular during the Kennedy administration. In the case of Portugal the USAF use of the Azores military base soon led to their disappearance. In South Africa they were not taken seriously. In both cases, however, there never was an American condemnation of Frelimo or of the ANC as both Lisbon and Pretoria desired.

On the other hand, the European reluctance to decolonize is evident not only in the public discourse of their leading elites. It was also evident in at least two other important facts. One was the British popular vote against the conservative Prime Minister Churchill in the first post-war elections. He was seen as one of the heroes of the war and of the defeat of Nazi Germany. But he was also accused of having sold out the Empire by agreeing with American pressures to decolonize. This last perception became the stronger of the two.

More important evidence that decolonization was not a European objective and had to be imposed consisted in the reestablishment of links between the colonial states and their colonies in the immediate post-war. This was made to an extent that led the circumspect Cambridge History of Africa to consider it as a “second colonization” (1984: 28). Describing this same period, Wickins points out equally that in the 10 years that followed the return to peace in Europe, the French Government invested, mostly in public works in its West African colonies, two times as much as in the entire period between 1903 and 1945. This was a trend more or less common to all colonial powers. Commissions were set up proposing and in many cases starting ambitious projects of development. This situation was as well characterized by new waves of immigrants and by a certain degree of industrialization, for import substitution and semi-preparation of export goods, mostly by foreign trading firms, in countries like Nigeria and the Gold Coast; by Asian traders in East Africa (Wickins 1986: 200-230).

The “second decolonization” and the change of attitude towards decolonization in Great Britain and France due to U.S. pressures meant also that in the period preceding the decolonization of the great majority of the African colonies, they had to bet in colonial

continuity. With the American pressures and denial of aid with that objective combined with the increasing stress of the colonized peoples for their independence, those states found themselves, consequently, between the wall and a hard rock. The development of a more or less generalized conviction that decolonization could lead to new forms of exploitation was the way out. Gradually they became aware that most possibly the colonial in-built mechanisms in place since the last decade of the nineteenth century would be able to guarantee and even increase that possibility. In particular, the preferential economic relationships established throughout more than one century between the former metropolitan centers and the future independent states was a decisive factor of continuity. At the same time, the political elites who were going to govern the new states would be formed within the privileged groups created there by colonialism. In the perspective of the colonial powers, they would be interested in preserving, consolidate and even expand – not destroying, that relationship with the former metropolitan state. Moreover, they would as well be able to preserve the necessary law and order for the future.

As we have seen, the formation of those elites had been one of the political and social objectives of colonialism. Time had arrived to get back the benefits of their creation. Gunnar Myrdal uses this rationalization and the change in the European perspective it implied to explain the historical origins of “neo-colonialism”. He adds: “to support its reign, the colonial power would thus generally feel an interest in upholding or even strengthening the inegalitarian social and economic structure in a colony.... Often it even happened that new privileges and new privileged groups were created by the colonial power in order to stabilize its rule over a colony” (Myrdal, 1970: 72-73; Stavrianos, 1981).

The new independent states of Africa had here their starting point. A starting point located in the structural continuity of the different colonial administrations of the continent.

The State in Africa: Imported or Imposed?

This conclusion reminds us of a relatively widespread query in African Studies: is the modern state in Africa an “imported” socio-political structure? In at least two interesting and well known works about this question, Bertrand Badie seems to think so. He defends that “the Third World societies have approached the construction of the state basically by mimesis, by forcefully assuming the exogenous models that came out of eastern or western industrialized societies and by artificially placing them on top of economic, social, and cultural structures that probably required another type of organization”. Still according to him, the result was that “the state continues to be in Africa and in Asia a purely imported product, a pale copy from radically different European political and social systems, a foreign and heavy body which is inefficient and a source of violence” (Badie 1979: 178 and 181, translated by ML; Badie 2000).

To a certain extent, but only to a certain extent, he is right. On the overall however he is, of course, mistaken. He is right because it is not possible to explain neither the generalized underdevelopment of the continent nor the very deep and traumatic consequences it determined on the generality of its peoples (⁶⁵), without a reference to the political structures extended by

⁶⁵) “In your faces I see the profound marks of the Portuguese colonial oppression. In your eyes, in your gestures, in the way you dance, in the way your bodies move, I can see those deep remnants that colonialism has left behind in your minds...”, Samora Machel in a meeting with peasants previously confined to the “areas of the enemy”, that is to say, who had been under the direct control of the colonial army, in Mueda, north of Mozambique (Mota Lopes 1974).

Europe into it at least from the mid-1800s onwards. As already discussed above, this extension of political power is what is meant by colonialism (Arrighi 1978: 37): a tentacle growth of the European state and its instruments to access and control labor and other resources. But Badie is mistaken in at least two other different levels. In the first place because those structures, those tentacles of the European state were **imposed** on Africa and its peoples: they neither an import nor, to be sure, a state constituted. Instead, they were part of the colonial state, of its expansion to territories, far or near (Arrighi 1978: 37). But the colonial state was and continued to be the metropolitan state that is to say the state based on Europe. Historically, its colonial tentacles were the logical evolution of the European expeditions that, under religious, scientific, and finally military rationalizations, prepared the conditions for geographical, strategic and economic expansion. Expansion of the capitalist world-economy that implied the territorial demarcation and occupation made possible through so called “pacification wars”. From the north of the continent to Southern Africa, they resulted into the military defeat, the destruction or, at least, the effective marginalization of some of the pre-existent structures of power.

In other words, and if we accept the game of words proposed by Badie, the modern state in Africa was not imported by its peoples; it was forced on them, often by the strength of arms. It was the result of the expansion of the modern world-system and of the incorporation of different territories which were located in its external arena. Furthermore, what was imposed or transplanted to Africa with those political structures was neither the metropolitan state nor its liberal and proto-democratic nature.

First of all, and by definition, those colonial structures were occupying forces. According to the way they were uniformly constructed and for its officers, the world was always seen as divided into two different, antagonistic components: “us” and the “others”. The “others” were the colonized, the submitted and more or less submissive multitudes. They had to be kept as such for evermore and by all means necessary. The complex social mixture of colonial officers, local settlers and the metropolitan structures of power were, of course, “us”. Politically, culturally and financially it was as such that the colonial administration functioned and constructed its hierarchies, its daily routine and its ideology. Secondly, what was extended to Africa with colonialism and those structures was a political conception of absolute, unrestricted power that was not at the time, not anymore, an acceptable part of the legit instruments of authority of the great majority of the European states within the core ⁽⁶⁶⁾. It was this conception of power, with very specific intentions at the level of economic exploitation and settlers’ security that originated and deeply branded as such the different structures of colonial domination in Africa. This was what led Ake to describe them as “all-powerful” (2000: 35): in relation to the colonized multitudes their authority was, indeed, limitless.

If it existed at all, the relative evocation in Africa of the principles defining the European nation-state became a priority for the colonial administrations only when decolonization was made into an imperative of the world-economy. This is what makes Giddens conclude, to a certain extent following Badie, that the "European nation-state (as a) political form became generalized across the globe". But the historical reality of the last fifty years contradicts

⁶⁶) The colonial structures of power contradicted the modern state as it evolves after the so-called French Revolution at least in two, fundamental characteristics: social change towards a better society was not among their objectives and they could not, by definition, make “sovereign”, autonomous decisions. They “belonged”, in short, to the metropolitan state but functioned according to very different if not antagonistic principles.

frontally this conclusion. On the contrary, the evidence seems to be that the European nation-state was not able to survive in Africa, outside its Western environment. A possible explanation is that without its historical background and role, the attempt to transplant the model of the European nation-state to the African continent by those active colonial administrations preparing decolonization, became unfulfilled and hollow. Another explanation, a more acceptable one, is that after all such was not the objective of the decolonizing powers. Pressurized to decolonize by a hegemonic United States they developed a conception of independence that assumed it as a form of continuity: of increasing – not decreasing – political and economic dependence.

This was the main reason why decolonized Africa was reduced to what Samir Amin calls a world of **would-be nation-states** (1990). Although not always for the same reasons, other analysts use terms like **quasi-states** (Jackson 1990: passim) or “statelets” to describe them. In other words, they depict the nation-state in Africa as a complete failure.

This approach must however be taken with a large grain of salt. It has to be qualified. First of all, because it uses as a main reference a Eurocentric, ideal-typical model of nation-state that in reality corresponds to the core of the world-economy and part of Europe. Secondly, because it is a kind of approach explicit or implicitly based on equally Eurocentric modernizing theories like those made infamous by Rostow. It claims, in short, that the attempts to institute the nation-state in Africa failed because they do not recognize in the post-colonial states that European model. Consequently, it implies that the peoples of the continent were not able to assume what would be a new stage of economic and political development. Finally, because

that approach is based on the pre-established idea that the objective of the retiring colonial powers was to install functioning and active nation-states in Africa.

This last assertion is perhaps the key to all the others. Notwithstanding their public rhetoric, the objective of those colonial powers was not to install or help to install nation-states in Africa. It was, on the contrary, to establish and guarantee some kind of structural continuity between old and new structures of power. In this sense, they did not fail. The post-colonial state was able to preserve and, in many cases, to expand its dependency and submission to the former colonial powers. In other words, the post-colonial state was constructed to become a neo-colonial state. Its main difference was essentially that African elites replaced the European cadres of the former colonial administrations.

Decolonization was, consequently, a process of historical continuity based on elite-substitution. An important aspect must however be pinpointed here. The practice of absolute power was, as we have seen, an intrinsic characteristic of colonialism and its authoritarianism. In the case of the African elites who substituted the colonial administrators it was accepted and maintained as such, it was assumed as their own instrument of government. More than anything else, it was this assumption of forms of absolute political power by the African elites in a situation of increasing external dependence of their respective states that I consider to be uniformly the main factor in their sociological characterization. Moreover, it was through it that the decolonized African state assumed as its own the practice of unrestricted power inscribed in what continued to be a colonial matrix. A practice intrinsic to colonialism was thus assumed as a built-in characteristic of the modern exercise of power in Africa by its dominant elites.

It was through this process and its leading elites that the neo-colonial states were expected to assume as well the role that the core of the capitalist world-economy designed for them. They had to become what Wallerstein calls “optimal structures of power”. In the perspective of the core, those structures had to be sufficiently strong in relation to the internal forces of the new states to guarantee a stable and constant outflow of economic surplus. At the same time, they had to be weak enough to be incapable of becoming impediments for those outflows in the global context of an evolving capitalist world-economy (Wallerstein, 1984: 80-88). To a great extent, this is what they started to be: but not for long nor as completely as expected by the core.

The post-colonial state in Africa, the state that emerged from the decolonization process, was consequently a further evolution and expansion of the colonial administrations of the continent. It was not “imported”. It had ready-made its structures, forms of organization and the nature of its bureaucracies. Ruth First was already well aware of all this as far back as 1970. “The crisis of Africa’s independence governments”, she wrote, “cannot be discussed without a closer look at... the state structures built up during the colonial period... In the phase of decolonization power was transferred, through virtually unchanged institutions of government, to largely hand-picked heirs; these heirs are the new ruling groups of Africa” (First 1970: 27-73; 41-58).

This was the reason why the public denunciation of those “hand-picked heirs”, the new dominant elites in Africa, became an integral part of the struggle against the neo-colonial forms of exploitation in the continent. Cabaco, for instance, calls them “co-opted elites” (2000).

Underlining their role and linkages, Rodney had already described them and their work as that of “political, economic and cultural agents” (1982) of neo-colonialism. Using this designation but following Bourdieu I will rather designate those co-opted elites as “double agents”. In fact, those elites have always functioned as the structural link between the exploited masses of the continent and the core of the world-economy. But they did and do it as enablers of outside colonial interests, during colonialism, of those of the former colonial powers during the phase following the independence of their countries or today in relation to the objectives of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. But they see themselves as serving also their respective peoples. And, to a certain extent, that is what they also do. Today as in the past, however, the reality is that they serve primordialily the stronger and more profitable foreign interests and their control and exploitation than those of the peoples and resources of their own countries. Their relationship with their people is the required condition to serve and legitimate those foreign interests and their own. Anyway, it is such an ability of serving simultaneously two different and contradictory objectives that makes “double agents” out of them.

The analytical discussion of the genesis and role of those co-opted elites in their interrelation with the post-colonial state and the prevalence of neo-colonialism in the continent has been a pervasive object of African studies. Two other important instruments of the world-economy with that same objective and its consolidation have however been more or less ignored. The first, common to all the states of the world-economy is the inter-state system with its accepted rules and conditions. The second was the easy access to borrowed capital by the neo-colonial states of the continent, through international loans and other financial facilities. As it became evident in the early 1980s, these instruments are intrinsically interrelated. They constitute the

two sides of the same coin. To a great extent, it was their interplay that created the necessary conditions to strengthen even more the post-independence neo-colonial arrangements in the continent by substituting them by even more constricting, powerful conditions of exploitation and dependence. They were the necessary conditions, in short, that made possible the more or less peaceful imposition of the IMF/WB programs of structural adjustment all over the continent. We will discuss them more in-depth in the following chapter. To conclude this reflection about the decolonization of Africa, a question must however be asked here. Was not neo-colonialism the necessary and sufficient condition for the access and control by the core of the labor and resources of the continent? Why was it necessary, in the perspective of the core, to impose structural adjustment as further and stricter conditions for the economic exploitation of Africa? Why was neo-colonialism replaced by structural adjustment?

The Rise and Fall of Neo-Colonialism

In economic terms, the first years of African independence appeared as a confirmation of what the former colonial powers and their investors expected. Mining, agriculture, trade and manufacture already growing in the continent throughout the previous decade received a new boost in the 1960s.

Two factors can explain it. The first, of course, was the overwhelming enthusiasm translated into increased productivity determined by the succeeding independencies. The other was the fact that they occurred in what was still an expanding A-phase of the world-economy. This made possible higher export prices for African products like oil, coffee, tea, cocoa, ground

nuts, or phosphates and better terms of trade. It seemed to confirm a more or less generalized optimism. Although usually in name of “political prestige”, new economic projects were started with relatively important investments, particularly in industry and public works but also in infrastructures. At the same time, the new governing elites paid an expected attention to the social and educational improvement of their peoples by investing in education, health, and general welfare. This became a substantial form of redistribution of income. In the following years and at least till the mid- or late-1970s, the improvements registered in those sectors were relatively important. To be sure, they were sectors usually ignored by colonialism and any type of improvement was destined to make a difference. It is however a reality that the new governing elites started significant efforts to confront the general backwardness of their peoples.

Low interest rates, determined by an expanding world-economy, helped to pay for all this. Loans to the new independent countries of Africa were not only requested by and easily conceded to their states by the different financial institutions of the world. They were as well offered with increasing insistence. This became even more accentuated as high prices of oil, through successive “oil-shocks”, led to unprecedented levels of disposable capital in the banking institutions of the core. The result was that external borrowing became in the following years the dominant feature of Africa’s economy: loans made to the new governments by international banks and other organizations and facilitated by a favorable world financial situation, by the very low level of post-colonial debt, and by adequate foreign exchange reserves. In the economic and financial perspectives of the former colonial powers, often

directly profiting from the borrowing process, what was expected from the activation of the in-built mechanisms created during colonialism appeared to be working perfectly.

This relative harmony was however affected and gradually destroyed by three different developments. Two of them were functions of the end of the A-phase of the world-economy, in the late 1960s, and the beginnings of a new period of global economic contraction. From a continent left more or less for itself and the continued plundering of its former colonial states, Africa started then to be considered as part of the necessary conditions to soften the effects within the core and overcome the systemic crisis. This coincided with the beginning of the end of the hegemonic role of the United States in the world-economy and the American efforts to slow down its decline. These fundamental aspects will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. The third one resulted, both in positive and negative terms, from the dynamics of anti-colonial confrontation. Basically, it was determined by the conditions according to which the new independent states were created in Africa, by their imposed and neo-colonial nature. It was in the convergence of these three factors that neo-colonialism started to be affected to be substituted, from the early 1980s onwards, by the general imposition of the even harsher, more pressing conditions of neo-liberal structural adjustment.

The reality was that contrary to what started to happen in economic terms not all the post-colonial political structures and institutions fulfilled equally and in the same way the same neo-colonial objectives. This was reflected notably at the level of the larger social movements that in Africa made the demand for independence possible. I will designate them as national alliances. It was the slow but inevitable dissolution of these alliances, a dissolution that started

immediately after the proclamation of independences that all over the continent characterized the following ten or fifteen years. To a great extent however they are the reason why neo-colonialism ended up being considered as inadequate and inefficient, in the perspective of the core, for the exploitation of the continent. In fact, it was the direct or indirect pressure developed by those alliances that resulted in the need for increasing investments of capital in the social sectors of the different African countries. What often appeared as an exaggerated degree of social and political mobilization of their internal forces and movements had to be translated into national policies with the objective of fulfilling the great expectations raised by independence. At the same time, their relative weakness led to a multiplication of political coups and counter-coups, often but not always of a military nature, and other manifestations of instability all over Africa. In both cases the evidence was that the leading elites of the continent were increasingly becoming incapable of guaranteeing the internal order of the different states. The decolonized structures of power of the new African states were not, in other words, functioning in the optimal way expected from them. Notwithstanding the scarce exceptions to this rule, the so called African “exemplary models”, this became a general characteristic of the continent as it was seen from the core

Although difficult to explain solely by the political nature of the new states, this can perhaps be seen as the result of trends originated during the process of resistance and struggle against colonialism. Namely and as already emphasized, of the gradual creation of a common political will among what were very different social groups and collective interests within the various territorial units of the continent and their masses around those directly confronting colonialism and claiming for national independence and freedom. The importance and political weight of

these national alliances formed within the newly independent states are not usually taken into consideration in the literature about contemporary Africa. It was however, and in certain conditions continues to be within the continent, a fundamental reference of struggle. It is consequently important to discuss this point a bit further.

The concept of national alliances I am using here is meant to designate the informal and usually temporary but strong and active linkages between the African multitudes, their rural and urban masses, and their leading elites. As already discussed, the conditions allowing those alliances were created within many of the new states in the years preceding or immediately following their independence. The cement that brought them together into some kind of consistence and unity ⁽⁶⁷⁾ was the common life experience of a commonly suffered colonial oppression and exploitation. This was amalgamated with the hope and expectations for a different and better future of development and progress against the extreme misery, ignorance and fear instilled by colonialism ⁽⁶⁸⁾.

It was within the context of the creation and consolidation of these alliances, that a vague conception of **national unity** became the main instrument in the contention for sovereignty,

⁶⁷⁾ With important exceptions, as, for instance, that pointed out to the case of Uganda by Olorunsola (1972: 32): “As independence approached, cultural sub-nationalisms increased because minority ethnic groups feared their rights would be eroded when the British departed” (p. 32). This book is sub-titled “Africa and the problem of “One State, Many Nationalisms”. It is also interesting to point out that Olorunsola is expressing very militant Yoruba point of view in relation to the general or dominant “national” and nationalitarian policies in Africa.

⁶⁸⁾ Writing some years later, Amilcar Cabral classified this “creation of a broad front of unity and struggle... vital to the success of the national liberation movement” as the national phase in the struggle for independence (1969). He was referring specifically to the processes of armed struggle in Africa but this “phase” can be more or less clearly identified everywhere in the continent in the periods immediately before and after national independence.

and nation-building. And, all over Africa, the new independent states appeared as embodying much of what they were claiming to be (what does not mean necessarily that this was what they became): guarantors of a much expected and collectively desired social self-protection and as reliable instruments of development. The constitutions then approved underlined this role of the new states and of the national alliances. They recognized to each and every citizen, without any kind of social, racial, tribal or religious discrimination, the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual: the right to liberty, security, and freedom of expression. They guaranteed as well the right of political participation and freedom of association even in many of the situations where a single political party was more or less imposed as the main symbol of unity and nation-building (AALCC, 1972).

The recognition of the social and political importance of those national alliances constitutes a possible way to rethink and discuss in new terms the anti-colonial liberation of Africa. It can bring to the fore the reasons for many of the choices made by the newly independent states. It can as well define the degree of their political possibilities and limits in the context of an evolving world-economy. It allows as well, at least to a certain extent, the possibility of evaluating and measuring the legitimacy, power and capacity to act of most of those states. I would say that such a capability was directly proportional to the existence and cohesion of those same “national alliances”.

In post-colonial Africa, those alliances were the bases of power of a great number of its new states. On them was equally based their relative strength. The opening up or closing down of the bargaining possibilities of the new governments and their leaders, the “founding fathers and

heroes” of the new nations, were dependent on those alliances. They were the only source of power permitting the proclamation and the practice of policies which could interfere in different ways and degrees with the flows of commodities, capital and labor to and from the core of the world-economy. In the first phase of independence the exercise of power by the African governments was possible to the extent that there was “unity” between them, their leaders and their social bases. This was the national role of the strong national alliances of common interests and objectives formed in the struggle against colonialism.

The evidence seems to be, in other words, that both inside the continent and in relation to the relative position and role of Africa in the world-economy, the strength of those alliances, their permanence, and the degree of power assumed by them became the most essential element of national sovereignty. It is through them that it is often possible to explain many of the economic and political choices made at the time. To use here the terminology and framework found, for instance, in the work of Silviu Brucan they could, at least temporarily, hold back the self-regulating motion of the world-system leading the new independent states to adaptive decisions to its dynamic motion. This would not been possible if done only as a response to those “external” influences and systemic pressures (1978: 52).

That margin of essentially political power in relation to an evolving world-system is usually characterized as having been the ground on which an increasingly “powerful” position against the West, namely within the forums of the international organizations and at least until the mid-1980’s, were assumed by those states (Jackson, 1990: 21). This is also what Wallerstein describes as having been a “spectacular political reassertion of the extra-European world,

which changed less than everyone had supposed it would” (2003: 42 and *passim*). More concretely it found as well expression in at least three different levels of post-independence decision-making, political choices, and their respective policies. First of all, this explains why most of the new governments in Africa, whether or not controlled by former liberation movements, started projects of development aiming at a self-sustaining economic growth based in a more just and equitable distribution of the national income. Not only but dominantly, many of the development projects launched in Africa after independence, were designed to fulfill promises and expectations of economic prosperity and increased living standards of their social bases.

Secondly, and also related to those objectives, most if not all of the new states were constituted as highly centralized and interventionist structures of power and decision-making. This was true independently of the type of political economy or development programs adopted by them. In the great majority of cases, self-proclaimed capitalist, African socialist, or even Marxist-Leninist regimes in the continent were characterized by a high degree of state intervention and planning as essential to attain those objectives. As in other historical situations of state formation and consolidation, the new national states in Africa used a vast range of control devices to close their economies in trade, prices, capital and foreign exchange to what was seen as a direct and nefarious interference of the world-economy.

In the third place, the concept of unity was, also, widely stressed in the context of the new Africa: national unity within the national boundaries, among the people and with the party in power and the state—but, as well, African unity at the level of the continent. The new national

states in Africa were considered as a first step towards an ultimate unification of all the peoples of the continent (AALCC: 1978). This constitutes another important reason why the characterization of movements and new independent states of Africa as nationalistic is not only wrong but also misleading.

Equally based on a common experience of colonial exploitation, the unity of Africa was seen as the only possibility for the economic, sustainable development of the continent. It was also an instrument of confrontation against future attempts of re-colonization and exploitation. As notoriously proclaimed by Kwame Nkrumah, **Africa had to unite**. It had to transform itself in some kind of United States of Africa. In its nature and long-term objectives, this was a project defined against all kinds of “tribalism” and “nationalism”. It was also a deterrent for the materialization of localized threats to the various national units in the making. Moreover, it places in its historical context the narrow conception of the national state.

In its original conception, that of Nkrumah or of Julius Nyerere, for instance, African unity and pan-africanism considered the nation-state with its artificial, colonial borders, as a mere stage in a trajectory of increasing continental unity. As proclaimed, African unity was an essential instrument for economic development and against the mechanisms of external domination. In the words of Julius Nyerere, writing in 1963: “the boundaries which divide African states are nonsensical... only [a United States of Africa] can really give Africa the future her people deserve” (1963:6) ⁽⁶⁹⁾.

⁶⁹⁾ Almost twenty years after, in 1981, I heard Mwalimu Nyerere repeat this same idea, almost in the same terms, as the central theme of his speech of farewell to public life as chairman of the Tanzanian Chama-Cha Mapinduzi Party in Dar-Es Salaam (Mota Lopes, 1981: Tempo).

Centralization, social equality, militant pan-africanism: in the first phase of Africa's independence, most of its new states appear for the core countries as not totally reliable political structures. As such, most of them were classified as high-risk areas, i.e., as not showing conditions for a reliable process of capital accumulation and, consequently, for a process of substantial investment. In a situation of Cold War, they were in short seen as socialist states; and treated as such.

In their options, policies, and formation the newly independent countries of Africa were, of course, very different. In particular in what their respective historical backgrounds are concerned, it is relatively easy to point out distinctions about the types of colonialism to which they were subjected as main references to their respective histories of resistance and the forms of anti-colonial struggle generated by them. They presented, also, important differences in terms of their resources and of the possibilities to use them, of the degrees of dependence in relation to the former colonial powers, of the level of their internal conflicts, and of their economic and social choices. In the twenty years following the various independencies, in different moments and under different conditions, countries like Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, or Nigeria have been correctly described as being followers of a free enterprise type of economy. Others were rather characterized as socialist, like Algeria, Zambia, or Tanzania, or even as Marxist-Leninist, in cases like those of Angola, Mozambique, or Ethiopia. There were also countries defined as somehow falling into the interstices separating the various categories. This was the condition of countries like Ghana, Guinea, or Mali. The reality was, however, that

what was similar among all these countries was often more important and striking than what appeared as different.

The reasons for such a conclusion have already been discussed above. When they became independent, the African states were grounded on very similar bases of power and influence. They were historically formed through the same type of colonial exploitation. Molding all the rest, conditioning and determining it they all occupied a similar position and role within the periphery of the capitalist world-economy. They also had the same kind of equally weak, dependent, and frail structures of accumulation. This is the reason why, according to Olowu, most of those states ended up proclaiming some sort of socialist policies: **simply because there was not any other viable alternative**. The new African states, he writes, were lacking everything that characterize the economies of private enterprise and “make them possible”: adequate capital, a class of entrepreneurs, basic infrastructures. This was the reason why, he concludes, “virtually all African statesmen shortly after independence espoused socialism as the most appropriate ideology for development” (1990: 105). Besides, as Berg equally emphasizes, capitalism was generally identified within the new states with “exploitation” (Berg, 1972: 8, quoted in Olowu: 1990). Magubane adds a fundamental element to what he calls “a great deal of ambivalence” that characterizes the choices of the African ruling elites: “socialist solutions”, according to him, were a way for those elites to overcome the problems they faced in competing with or supplanting the foreign monopolies controlling the resources in their respective countries. Simultaneously, they were also a way “to satisfy the great wave of popular awakening and demand for a different and better life” (1976: 192). In an interview with Aquino de Braganca in 1966, Eduardo Mondlane, usually considered as a moderate leader

of Mozambican liberation, expressed a similar opinion. Colonialism, he added, was “a creature of capitalism, not of socialism” (Braganca, 1975).

Commenting this phase of the History of Africa some thirty years afterwards, a prominent member of the United States Administration wrote that “virtually every nation in Africa embarked [then] on a socialist course at independence, largely because capitalism was identified with colonialism...”. After the mid-1970s, however, this was to change radically. “Today”, he adds, “every African nation has adopted some kind of market-oriented reforms, with some turning around almost 180 degrees” (Bartlett, 1990: 327) ⁽⁷⁰⁾. He was right, of course.

What made possible such a radical transformation can be synthesized in three main points. In the first place, there was a general and generalized breakdown of the anti-colonial national alliances. Secondly, this collapse was related with the rise and consolidation of the increasing wealthy and powerful African elites. It was then that they became “double agents” in their own countries. By doing so, their link with the masses was broken, often to an irremediable degree. Thirdly, the world-economy entered into a systemic economic crisis that deeply affected the continent. Simultaneously, the state that had been constructed as a result of the decolonization process collapsed. This was a direct consequence of it trying to assume even more completely the characteristics of a neo-colonial state. The critical situation that since then affects the

⁷⁰⁾ Deputy Assistant Secretary of the US Treasury for Economic Policy, Bartlett also writes that “There is little prospect for a return to 1960’s style socialism. In time we may yet see Japans, Hong Kongs and Koreas emerge in Africa”. A kind of ideological optimism that, to say the least, is probably unique in recent evaluations of the present African crisis situation and its possibilities of evolution in the foreseeable future.

continent has here some of its more important roots. Is this as well what happened in Southern Africa? Is this the way to try to understand the crisis presently affecting the region? This is what we will have to discuss further in the next chapter. It will start with a brief analysis about the genesis of the liberation model in Southern Africa, with emphasis on the case of Mozambique as a way to better characterize it. To a great extent, its historical construction was made having as a permanent background of reference the process of decolonization of the continent which, as we have just discussed, was the necessary condition to its neo-colonization.

2. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF LIBERATION

To take into account the different, ambiguous, and sometimes conflicting meanings of words like nationalism, liberation, and decolonization in the study of Southern Africa constitutes an important starting point to better understand the long-term process that led to the independence of its peoples. It tells us that independence from colonialism was not the result of a linear, unidirectional procedure. It was, rather, the outcome of a dynamic and complex convergence of a great multiplicity of evolving social, political, and economic processes. They included the direct consequences of on-going changes in dominant patterns of accumulation, income distribution, global hegemony and dependency within the core of the capitalist world-economy. But they also included the responses given to them at different levels of social and political awareness. The obstinate denial to decolonize assumed by the colonial and settler regimes of the region was formed and affirmed in the confluence of those processes. But the same can be said of the growing collective determination of the African peoples of Southern Africa and their elites against the continuation of colonialism and apartheid. When we look at that convergence of processes and variables with this perspective, it becomes less ambiguous than it seems to be at the first sight.

On the other hand, the liberation of Southern Africa was, chronologically, the last stage of the general process of African independences. Only with the end of apartheid in the early 1990s was it accomplished. It was also a process that followed a very different trajectory from those followed by the great majority of countries in the rest of the continent. In Southern Africa, there was no decolonization of its largest territories. Liberation, through a long, bloody, and destructive armed struggle, was the only solution. It was, in short, a very different type of liberation. The reasons leading to it, to the refusal in granting independence by its colonial and settler regimes have already been discussed. They can be synthesized by saying that they feared for their survival in physical, social, and economic terms. They consequently became determined to fight till the end if needed be. This is however only a small although not unimportant area in a larger historical canvas. It is the full canvas, the whole wide-angle picture of the Southern African liberation process that interests me.

Anti-Colonial Resistance and Armed Struggle

In the early 1960s, two or three years before the beginning of the liberation war, Mozambique was a stagnant, closed colony, with a highly centralized bureaucracy and a growing and very active secret police. Its economy had reached a stand still. We have already discussed and analyzed such a conjuncture to conclude that its main source of income continued to be forced labor under all its forms, including migrant labor. The colony was also characterized by an extreme social and economic polarization between its colonized majority, deprived of everything, and a small number of very wealthy settlers. Between them, a reduced group of Africans had been able to relatively improve their social

and economic situation. They were the scarce results of the regime's policies of assimilation and its need for small cadres and low wage professionals in the colonial cities. This polarized social structure could be found as well in all the other territories of Southern Africa. What changed from one to the other were two factors. One was the relative importance, wealth and number of its settlers. The other was the importance, the size, and the influence of the African middle strata in relation to the colonized majority in each one of the territories of the region. To a great extent, it was in accordance with the level of that relationship that the structures of colonial control and exploitation were organized in order to function in an orderly, efficient way.

Territories like Northern Rhodesia (today's Zambia), Nyasaland (today's Malawi) and, later on, the so called BSL countries (Botswana, Swaziland, and Lesotho) received their independence from the former colonial power in the 1960s. A common feature to all of them was, precisely, the relatively small size of their settler communities. South Africa and Rhodesia, on the contrary, were both characterized by large and powerful white communities and, in both cases, expanding middle classes involved in agricultural production, husbandry and commerce or working for the administration. But Mozambique and Angola, as well as Southwest Africa, were blocked in the process leading to their respective independence by very different reasons. These could be reduced to a single one: Portugal and South Africa were against it for economic and geo-strategic reasons. And they were disposed to defend this decision by all means necessary.

In the majority of the colonies of the region, the growth in number of the African middle strata was also a result of migrant labor. To be sure, this is not a general rule. But, in those rare instances in which wages had allowed savings and those savings were invested in the improvement of households and a more profitable exploitation of the land, such a result could indeed be reflected in a certain degree of upward social mobility. In Mozambique this was particularly felt in the south and central regions of the colony (⁷¹). Sometimes, the two main origins of the formation of African middle strata, through the direct agency of the colonial administration and through migrant labor, would become intrinsically related: it was the sons, rarely the daughters, of former miners made into middle peasants who often could benefit from the education and the opening up of opportunities necessary for what was seen as their social improvement.

In the specific case of Mozambique, clandestine or institutionalized migrant labor became also the central foundation for organized resistance against colonialism. As the main source of income for the Portuguese state, migrant labor in the colony could not be regulated to the extent that migrant flows of Portuguese workers out of Portugal were by then regulated. To be sure, to the isolationist and isolated Portuguese regime migrant labor constituted a highly subversive process. It implied personal contact with political realities which were not only very different from those being lived within the country or its colonies but, as well and very

⁷¹) **The introduction of new technologies was an important consequence as well. Namely, those related with the use of animals in agriculture, new types of more adequate plows, the first tractors, the first herbicides and fertilizers were introduced into Mozambique from the neighboring territories through returning workers from South Africa and Rhodesia, in particular. It was also from the neighboring territories that the first symbols of local progress were locally introduced. Among them, there was the radio set, the gramophone, the Petromax lamp, the first mattresses, even the chairs and tables that distinguished the house of the returned magaiza from all the others. In many occasions, this lived experience in comparative colonialisms and their respective forms of oppression increased and gave new meanings to what was already to start with a general rejection of Portuguese colonialism.**

often, were banned or forbidden there. An important aspect of those realities learned by migrant Mozambicans was, notably, the fact that colonialism could be defeated and replaced by an independent African state. A basic condition was, however, the need to organize the people with that objective. From the Rand to Tanganyika, to Nyasaland, and as far as the Copperbelt, the complementary of Mozambican labor with mining and agriculture in those territories became increasingly immersed, from the late 1950s onwards, in the reality of a strong wave of claims for national independence in the continent in general, in the whole of Southern Africa in particular. This meant that in the deliberately closed social and political reality of Mozambique under the Portuguese, migrant labor became for many Mozambicans a basic reference and intellectual input to the creation of an ideology of liberation. Moreover, it opened up opportunities for the creation in those neighboring territories, in particular in Tanganyika, Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, of the first anti-colonialist political organizations which, to be sure, were strictly forbidden and repressed within Mozambique. The foundation of Frelimo in 1962 in Dar Es-Salaam through the junction of three of those organizations was a direct consequence of those opportunities and their use by Mozambican migrant workers in the regional diaspora.

Migrant work, in other words, was increasingly used from the late 1950s onwards to break up the type of closed political isolation imposed by the Portuguese colonial-fascist regime as one of its instruments of control. It originated a wider awareness of the situation then being lived in Africa, in general, but also the direct knowledge of what was happening in the rest of Southern Africa, in the newly independent countries and about its leaders. To be sure, we

can see here another decisive element in the systemic consolidation of Southern Africa as a region of the world-economy.

This must also be related with the fact that the late 1950s marked the beginning of a period of increasing popular unrest in Southern Africa. It coincided with, in the words of Higginson, the second period of the formation of an urban working class in the region. In South Africa it achieved its peak with strike waves for better wages and work conditions particularly in the mining and textile industries. The massacre of Sharpeville in 1961 was one of its many dramatic outcomes. In the same period in Northern Rhodesia, railway strikes occurred with high levels of adhesion and the corresponding repression. This was repeated in the Copperbelt from 1952 to 1956. Also in Mozambique, various forms of protest were registered. They included strikes, like those that affected the railways and harbors in the south and centre of the colony in the late 1950s, or collective protests against the Portuguese oppression in the north, like the one that resulted into the Mueda massacre. Both the Sharpeville and the Mueda massacres symbolize well the level of violence used in the settler and colonial responses to all forms of dissent. It was the need to avoid more casualties that led to a relative slowdown of protest in the following years and at least until the mid-1960s (Higginson 1989: 121).

On the other hand, this period of confrontation within Southern Africa coincided and was influenced by the decolonization process being prepared or already going on all over the continent. It preceded the formation of new liberation movements or the consolidation of older ones. Frelimo was founded by bringing together into a symbolic national unity three of

the movements that had been started by Mozambicans in Nyasaland and Tanganyika. In South Africa, the ANC restructured itself by making clearer and overarching its objectives of struggle. Similar changes were as well approved and introduced in both the Zimbabwe African National Union and the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union. In the meantime, the successive independences of Tanganyika, Malawi, Zambia, Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland in the 1960s changed considerably the balance of forces in the region. The colonial and settler regimes continued however to deny all the possibilities of further regional liberation.

As in other territories of Southern Africa, migrant labor to South Africa was a central element in the political economy of Mozambique of the early 1960s. Besides its social and political importance, it was also, directly and indirectly, the major resource of the colony. It was from the labor flows to South Africa that gold as “compensation” entered the colonial coffers before being transferred to Lisbon. It was also from them that the preferential use of railways and ports generated decisive contributions to the balance of payments. With the production and export of cash crops migrant labor was the major source of foreign exchange. It was also, at the time, the only growing economic indicator. The opposite was happening, however, with the labor flows to Tanganyika, by then mostly stopped, and to the Federation, with an accentuated decline of demand. The majestic companies had been closed down since the late 1930s leaving behind, both in the center and in the north, some instances of a rudimentary plantation economy under Portuguese management. But its production was even lower than before. It continued to be mostly based on copra, sisal, and tea. Later on, sugar was added to that list. The major agricultural exports were however cotton and cashew. Both

were produced by the same peasant households that guaranteed the regular flow of labor to South Africa. Destined to supply the needs in raw material of the metropolitan industries, cotton had been introduced as a forced cultivation. To supplement the food deficit it represented to the already overcharged peasant households, manioc was as well introduced as a basic production for self-subsistence (CEA: 1986; Mosca 2002: 26-28). Involved in the commercialization of the peasant production of cash crops, a vast network of small shops or “*cantinas*” had been expanding since the 1950s. They would buy the local production and channel it to the concessionary companies involved in their export. At the same time they would sell the basic products demanded by local peasantries. At least since the first decades of last century, they constituted the structural links of the dependent incorporation of the vast majority of the Mozambican rural households in relation to the markets of the world-economy. They complemented, in that function, the role assumed by the colonial administration in relation to labor as forced and migrant labor. Because their installation was strongly discouraged by Lisbon, in order to “defend” Portuguese, metropolitan development and its exports, there were no substantial industries in the colony. This meant that everything had to be imported -- from the luxury products destined to the upper layers of the settler community to the cheap goods necessary for the working of the network of *cantinas*.

The incorporation of Mozambique in the world-economy followed two interconnected vectors of dependent interrelationships. The first was what can be called the colonial vector, that is to say, in direct relation with Portuguese metropolitan interests and those of its settlers in Mozambique. The second vector of incorporation was regional, that is to say, in direct relation with the political economy of South Africa and its interests. Secondly it was also

linked to the Federation and the rest of the region. The production of raw materials and cash crops for the Portuguese metropolitan centers was the main outcome of the first set of relations. The forms and objectives of labor control and the construction of an efficient service economy was, on the other hand, the dominant aspect of the second, the relation with South Africa. The construction of South Africa as a semi-peripheral economy coincides, consequently, with the dominant factors of regional incorporation. They pushed to a secondary, less important role those of Portugal.

The differentiation of the colony into three different areas with specific conditions of production and incorporation was also a direct consequence of those processes. In what concerns labor, it was also affected by the demand from the mining complexes and agriculture of the former Rhodesia and Nyasaland and, to a certain degree, by those of Tanganyika. It was in this context that Portugal became in Mozambique mainly an administrator of its labor power. In particular, the direct action of its administration was felt to the south of the 22 degrees parallel, the official demarcation for South African recruitment of Mozambican labor. The fact that this was its main priority as an administration led to frequent conflicts with Portuguese settlers deprived of a regular access to labor and having to compete with higher mining wages. In the early 1960s, this general situation in Mozambique was deteriorating even further. It was then that the beginning of the liberation war against Portuguese colonialism began to change it substantially.

According to one of the most interesting analysts of this period, it was the war that in 1964 was started by Frelimo that led to the need for a quick transformation of the colonial

economy in Mozambique (Mosca 2002: 30-31). This implied the change of the official opposition to the local installation of industries, the reformation of the trading policies to guarantee the equilibrium of the balance of payments, and the need to construct infrastructures allowing a more efficient dislocation of the armed forces. It implied as well the forging of stronger alliances with the other white regimes of the region.

The main characteristic of the new colonial economic strategy became based on the need to replace imports by locally produced goods. In particular, it was focalized in the local manufacture of those goods used by the trading networks of the colony, to be sold in the *cantinas*. They included basic production tools for agriculture, clothes, construction materials, sugar, salt, and later on bicycles. Their local manufacture became the object of important incentives from the Portuguese colonial state.

This was accelerated and expanded by the growth of demand from the colonial army and its increasing needs. Portuguese and non-Portuguese investment, in particular from South Africa, was attracted with important fiscal incentives and other facilities offered by the colonial state. With very low interest rates, expansive monetary and budgetary policies and the easy access to credit lines for specific areas of production, the 1960s in Mozambique became characterized by a quick growth of its economy. Because most of the new ventures were located in or near the main cities in the south and centre of the colony (more than 40 percent in Lourenco Marques and 13 percent in Beira), they were not directly affected by an equally expanding liberation war -- at least until the first years of the 1970s.

An important element of economic growth was the fact that the new colonial policies were introduced without substantial changes in what concerned old policies of exploitation. In other words, they continued to be felt as before by the large majority of the peasant population of the country, about 98 percent of a total population of less than nine million people (Costa 1972: Tempo). Taxes changed their designation and their collection became less violent. But the punishment for those who did or could not pay them, as already discussed above, continued in many cases to be, direct or indirectly, the same as before -- forced labor. In 1970, five years before the triumph of the liberation struggle, the great majority of the Mozambicans, more than 80 percent, were peasants working less than 2 percent of the arable land of the colony (Ibid). Other types of agriculture used around 20 percent of the work force (⁷²). In other fields of waged labor, industry employed 13 percent and services 43 percent. Although increasingly limited to the south, migrant labor represented about one quarter of the totality of wage earners in the colony (MU 1964; Mosca 2002: 39-40). The life expectancy was around 42 years and there was an official rate of illiteracy of more than 90 percent. The main contributions for the colonial GDP were 58 percent from services, 23 percent from industry and 19 percent from agriculture (*Ibid*).

Two main features, still dominant at the time of the proclamation of independence, are underlined by these numbers. First, it was the high level of dependence of the colony both from the supply of migrant labor for South Africa and from services, the latter also guaranteed by that supply. We saw already that migrant labor was as well the source of

⁷²) **The new strategy of late-colonialism in Mozambique introduced as well changes in what settler agriculture was concerned. It was partially deregulated. This means that its prices started to be affected by world prices and competition. But various advantages were given to Portuguese producers and exporters. This was made, for instance, through the control of the prices of basic food staples as a way to keep labor and production costs cheaper than in other potentially competitive situations.**

important revenues in gold. Secondly, and in what concerns the colony's GDP, agriculture was the least important of the three sectors contributing to it. In statistical terms this was due to what can be described as the quick development of industrial production. From almost zero percent in the late 1950s, it reached almost as much as migrant labor ten years after. The changes introduced in the economic policies of the colony explain it. This growth, however, has to be qualified.

As already pointed out, the objectives of the industrial policies of the colonial government were mainly destined to replace part of the imports and, through it, alleviate the balance of payments of the colony. In 1973, the production of food and beverages and of textiles had already achieved, respectively, 41 and 13 percent of the totality of the industrial production (Mosca 2002: 41-42). More than half of the raw materials and other components of the industrial production were however imported. At the same time, a second industrial objective was to process the basic transformations required by agricultural products for export in order to increase their value and create jobs. This is what happened with cotton, cashew nuts, tea, copra and sisal. In 1973, these products represented more than 73 percent of the totality of exports. The same process of elementary processing was applied to oil, notably the oil destined to beat the sanctions imposed on the Rhodesian regime by the United Nations. The relative importance of industry in Mozambique after the early 1960s was, consequently, located at the very beginning and at the very end of the commodity chains of the imported and exported products. It implied no more than small transformations, often the mere assemblage of what was imported or the simple packaging of what was to be exported. As Mosca points out, "half of the industry [in Mozambique] processed the first

transformations of what was exported, while the other half processed the last transformations of what was consumed” (2002: 42). It was not, in short, an economically integrated productive sector and it resulted into a highly dependent, distorted and often artificial growth.

The relative expansion of the colonial economy in Mozambique, despite the war and the increasing influence of the international isolation of the Portuguese regime, benefited and was part of the expansion that, after the mid 1940s, characterized the world-economy. This expansion continued throughout the 1960s to start to decline at the end of the decade and beginnings of 1970. The evolution registered in Mozambique at the same time accompanied the curve followed by the A-phase of the Kondratieff cycle that started in the early 1940s to achieve its highest point in the late 1960's.

The world-economic contraction had important, positive and negative consequences for Mozambique. It depressed both prices and demand of primary products like those exported by the colony. Conversely, it made more expensive the acquisition of the raw materials and components required by its industry. At the same time, the first direct effects of the advance of the liberation war started to be felt not only in the cities of the center of the colony, in particular in Beira and Chimoio, but also in the south, in Lourenco Marques. The result was not only in the statistics I have mentioned above. It was also in the beginning of the abandonment of the colony by the white settlers. For the first time, the balance between the entrance and departure of Portuguese in Mozambique was negative. In the four years between 1970 and April of 1974 more than 40,000 Portuguese left Mozambique for good.

They represented something like one quarter of the totality of their community (Vieira et *alli* 1992: 12-3). This was a trend that continued and accelerated in the following years. Moreover, the inflow of investment capital started as well to decline. After almost one decade, the artificial, distorted growth of the colonial economy in Mozambique had ceased to be attractive to capital. It had become, rather, an appalling, unsafe, unprofitable deal.

But not, it must be added, totally unprofitable. On the contrary: new opportunities to capital, perhaps unexpected opportunities, were opened up by the beginning of the systemic depression of the world-economy. These were opportunities specific to the conjuncture lived in Southern Africa in the early 1970s.

This conjuncture was determined not only by the colonial war in Mozambique but also by the consolidation of apartheid in South Africa and, last but by no means least, by the proclamation of the unilateral declaration of independence by the Rhodesian settlers. To a great extent, the three white regimes of the region were differently affected by the beginnings of the world-economic depression. In the case of South Africa, the more affected of its sectors was industry, also highly dependent from external capital, know-how, technology and components. Agriculture, because it was more oriented to the internal market, was relatively less affected. The world contraction represented, however, an exponential increase in the international price of gold, South Africa's most important export. It brought with it important means to confront the depression. This can be extended to its effects in Mozambique. Increased exploitation of gold in South Africa, including in conditions that before were not profitable, led to substantial increases in the demand for

migrant labor in the early 1970s. Moreover, and besides the resources represented by that increase, the Mozambican economy was equally able to benefit from the increase in the world price of gold.

In Rhodesia, on the other hand, the depression brought with it new and very attractive opportunities in what had in the meantime become the central economic activity of the rebellious colony: sanction-busting. As the offer of banned products, from armament to food, increased exponentially, their prices tended to decline with obvious advantages to the settlers. In particular, this process benefited South Africa, where the headquarters of an important number of suppliers were located. One of the often forgotten consequences of this process was that Rhodesia, today's Zimbabwe, increased as well its political and economic dependence on South Africa. To a great extent it was then that the Rhodesian dream of replacing South Africa as the dominating power in the region came to an end. The unilateral independence of Rhodesia is one of the major factors of the present dependence and underdevelopment of Zimbabwe.

The Rhodesian schemes of sanction-busting had as well positive consequences in what the depressed colonial economy of Mozambique was concerned. In particular, it increased the demand for oil whose refining was mostly done in Maputo. Although blocked by the British navy, the Beira harbor and the Manica corridor saw its activity expanded as well. The preferential routes to Rhodesia had however to be diverted to the south when the anti-colonial armed struggle in Mozambique started to affect the two provinces of the centre, Sofala and, in particular, Manica. The port of Beira was as well replaced by that of Lourenco

Marques and the Manica corridor by that of Limpopo. The increasing revenues from services, sanctions-busting and migrant labor, including those represented by the sale of gold, allowed the colonial economy in Mozambique to confront the world economic depression. It was consequently the advance of the liberation war leading to the 25th of April coup that deposed the colonial-fascist regime in Portugal which put an end to it four or five years afterwards.

In the meantime and submitted to the Portuguese characteristically repressive policies the greater part of the Mozambican population continued to live and die as victims of the most backwards of all forms of colonialism. For them, there were no easily accessed schools or hospitals. Although the beginning of the liberation war had forced the colonial administration to introduce some hurried reforms, their rate of illiteracy continued to round the 95 percent. Trade unions and other forms of organization capable of giving rise, like in other parts of the continent, to the expression of so called nationalistic aspirations continued to be, as already pointed out, uniformly and strongly repressed. Notwithstanding its repressive machinery, the system was, however, incapable of avoiding the subversive influence of two important results of its oppressive exploitation of Mozambique. The first was the combined opposition not only against daily repression but, as well, against the generalized lack of opportunities and upward social mobility that had become defining characteristics of Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique. Disenfranchised, lacking formal representation and the means to denounce publicly their exploitation or publicly express their demands for change, an increasing number of Mozambicans looked for alternatives. Forms of struggle like demonstrations, strikes, and protests were however met with

ferocious repression by the colonial administration. Forms of passive resistance, at all levels, became consequently one of the principal ways to confront exploitation. This became present in songs and dances, in story-telling, in the double-entendre talk both in the cities and in the countryside. The other, as already discussed, was their organization in the neighboring territories in movements that came together to found Frelimo and create the conditions to the liberation war. It was also through the liberation struggle that the two levels of resistance came together, the first continually strengthening the second.

This was very different from what happened for instance with the creation of the African National Congress in South Africa. It was founded and was able to consolidate itself within the country. Equally, its political action and its first armed operations were decided, planned and launched from within the South African territory. The formation of an external wing of the ANC resulted from the increasing internal repression by the apartheid authorities. This was what led many of its cadres being directly persecuted to abandon the country and reorganize themselves outside its borders. To a great extent, however, the so called “external wing” of the ANC never had the importance and the charisma of its internal combatants. Moreover, the effective formation of an “external wing” was a late decision. Nelson Mandela, Ernst Fischer, and other ANC cadres directly involved in the so-called Rivonia operation of the early 1960s did not leave South Africa when they became objectives of an extensive persecution by the apartheid police all over the country. They rather became clandestine refugees within the South African borders and were able to avoid being captured for a quite long while. They were also able, even if for a short while, to direct the struggle from within South Africa. This would have been impossible in Mozambique. To achieve the

level of struggle in which the main operations were launched from within their occupied country, the Mozambicans had beforehand to create and consolidate what became known as the “liberated zones”. I will come back to a further discussion of this process and its importance below.

It was also in the early 1960s that the Mozambican liberation movement started its attempts to dialogue with the colonial government about the possible independence of the colony. Two years of attempts went by, in vain. Messages were exchanged between the two sides and deciphered. But the dominant attitude was the adamant position of the Portuguese fascist state against any kind of dialogue about the future of the colony. I have already listed some of the main motives behind such attitude. But this was also the reason why the beginning of the anti-colonial war became the only possible alternative left for the liberation movement. This was why in 1964 the armed struggle in Southern Africa was started by the Mozambican Liberation Front or Frelimo. In a long trajectory of liberation it led to the independence of Mozambique in 1975, to that of Zimbabwe five years later and to the collapse of apartheid in 1990.

The Liberation Model

I am here consequently considering the last, decisive phase of the liberation of Southern Africa as coinciding with the beginning of the armed struggle in Mozambique in September 1964. In a well planned guerrilla raid a small administrative post in the north of the country, in Cabo Delgado, was militarily occupied by Frelimo to be, two days later, abandoned. The colonial administration and its auxiliaries had deserted it as soon as the first shots were fired.

At least apparently, they did not have the time or the will to respond to the first shots of the Frelimo combatants. Afterwards, when the guerrilla left, the Portuguese did not return back to Chai.

In the perspective of the liberation movement and within the context of the existing balance of forces in the territory and its immense extension this was little more than a symbolic action. The post of Chai never had, then or in the ten years of confrontation that followed, any kind of strategic or economic importance. In September 1974 it was led by a lonely Portuguese administrative officer, the *chefe de posto*, at the bottom of his administrative career but probably looking to climb up. He had, under his direct orders, a small police force mainly composed by auxiliaries or *cipaios*. He had also the books where the *imposto* was registered, a safe to keep its payments, a typewriter, a radio and, next door, a prison. This was the administration office. In front of it a small dusty square with a pole in the middle where the red and green Portuguese flag was ceremoniously raised every day. There was also a small church, a trading post, and three or four houses. In other words, Chai was an administrative post similar to hundreds of other posts in Mozambique at the lowest rank of the hierarchy of the Portuguese colonial administration. But this was what made it an important symbolic target. More than that, the fact that it was successfully attacked by a small group of liberators and the very weak, somehow surprised and disorganized response of its Portuguese inhabitants became from then on to the liberation movement and its emerging guerrilla army the foundational symbol of a future and independent Mozambique. Not only it was the ultimate defying act of the colonized against the colonizer but it made very clear the vulnerability of the Portuguese. It was also the starting point for the armed

struggle that followed. From then on, Chai became a border post on the long frontier between colonialism and the future, that is to say, between colonial oppression and all its possible alternatives.

These are the reasons why the Frelimo attack against the post of Chai in September 25, 1964 is also considered, both in Frelimo's self description of its trajectory of struggle and in the contemporary historiography of Mozambique, as the founding act of the new national state. This is why it marked, as well, the end of a phase and the beginning of a new one. From then on the colonized multitudes would be able to actively fight for their rights to freedom, to humanity and the possibility of a decent life. For the Portuguese or, at least, for the small number in its colonial administration who were informed about it, the fall of Chai was basically a new kind of message. It said plainly that the time of a refused dialogue had ended and that of a military confrontation was starting.

The territorial progression of the liberation war in Mozambique can be seen as encompassing three different phases. The first one, from 1962 to 1964, was mainly a phase of preparation. The first military cadres of the movement started then to be trained, particularly in Algeria. Simultaneously, these were the years of the refused contact with the Portuguese about a peaceful independence for Mozambique. After the war was started in the Cabo Delgado Province and till the end of that same year Frelimo was able to expand it to two more fronts of direct confrontation with the Portuguese army in the provinces of Niassa and Tete (EMEP, I 1988: 113). In 1966, internal information distributed to the high command of the Portuguese Armed Forces stated that the "subversion" in Mozambique "had rooted itself and

had expanded during the years of 1964, 1965 and 1966, both to the South and to the West of the territory” (EMEP 1969).

This second phase of the war was a phase of growth for Frelimo whose ranks increased with new adhesions and with the constant arrival of war refugees from the interior of the colony. But this was also a phase of division and crisis within the leadership of the liberation movement. The war was intensified and new fronts, besides those of Cabo Delgado, Tete and Niassa, were opened in Nampula and Zambezia. This was too much, too soon. Difficulties of mobilization in Niassa (Mondlane 1969: 141) and supply problems there and in Nampula (Interviews 1974) led to the temporary suspension of guerrilla activities in both provinces. Besides Cabo Delgado, where the first liberation zones were created, Frelimo concentrated its efforts in Tete where the Portuguese, with considerable international support and investments, were building the Cahora Bassa dam, and in Zambezia. The sociologist Eduardo Mondlane, the first President of Frelimo, has registered in detail these developments in his “The Struggle for Mozambique” (1969). I will not repeat here what he describes. I will add, however, that the attempt to start a sixth front in the south, in the then Lourenco Marques, was equally frustrated when the small group of cadres sent there with that objective, was captured by the Portuguese. The Frelimo combatants were however able to defeat the main offensive launched against them by the colonial army, the so-called Gordian-Knot operation. Based on a concentration of men and military might without parallel in previous or future operations, Gordian-Knot was designed by the Portuguese to eradicate completely the Frelimo guerrilla forces from the five northern provinces of the colony. It failed. The reason given within the movement is that, classically, the struggle had

already reached by then a different stage of warfare: a stage in which the difference between combatants and their people was changed into a symbiotic relationship tending to efface that distinction. The result was a generalized defeat of the Portuguese armed forces and their retreat to more conventional patterns of colonial war. This military success attained by Frelimo on the ground was not however corresponded at the political level of its leadership. Important disagreements were leading to internal divisions and to the formation of different factions. Within the movement, these divisions are today considered as having been the result of the great number of adhesions registered since the beginning of the struggle. Adhesions, in short, can as well mean infiltrations by the enemy. The direct participation of the Portuguese secret services has also been documented.

Directly or indirectly influenced by the infiltrated action of the Portuguese, the divisions within Frelimo's leadership were defined according to different ways to continue and lead the war, its meaning and, in particular, about the definition of the enemy. Divisions based on ethnic, regional and linguistic distinctions soon followed those more or less based on ideological or strategic choices. It was against this background that Eduardo Mondlane, founder and first president of Frelimo was killed in 1969. Increasing confusion, disarray and mutual suspicion were some of the consequences. It was later on known that the assassination had been the result of a Portuguese covert action based in Lourenco Marques. The evidence points out, as well, that inside collaborators made it possible (Mota Lopes 1976). This seems to confirm the main explanatory line for the crisis as it was presented by Frelimo. The division and the weakening of its leadership was the result of an in-depth infiltration by the enemy.

On the other hand, the fact that the military struggle was continuing to advance successfully inside Mozambique was perhaps the most important element that allowed Frelimo to overcome its internal crisis. It was also the reason why after weakening the movement, the generalized crisis ended up making it stronger, more efficient and ideologically more clear about the conditions and the ultimate objectives of the struggle. It was since then, in a third phase of struggle that extended itself to the triumph of the liberation movement in 1974, that most of the points and characteristics of a Southern Africa liberation movement as they were presented above were formulated for the first time. Within the movement, these principles were defined as being the theoretical synthesis of the experience lived by the leadership of Frelimo in the process leading to the surpassing of its internal contradictions and, at the same time, through the daily practice of the people's war inside Mozambique in general, within the liberated zones in particular.

The steady advance of the war not only in the north and center of the colony but also towards the south and the main settler cities of Mozambique was possible due to the great popular support it received all over the colony. The organization of the guerrilla space was based on that increasing support. In particular, because it made possible the consolidation of the single most important factor for the advancement and triumph of the struggle: the effective relationship between the liberation movement and its social base. In June of 1974, when I had a first personal contact with its organization and wrote about it, the guerrilla space was formed by an extended network of villages, bases, militia camps, transit or training posts, and temporary shelters sometimes but not always linked among themselves and with the

posts and bases at the border with Zambia and Tanzania and in Dar Es-Salaam (Mota Lopes 1974). These networks were grouped in Sectors or Fronts, usually corresponding, in territorial terms, to the colonial administrative division in Provinces. Throughout ten years of war, both Frelimo combatants and the people developed highly sophisticated techniques of camouflage capable of making invisible from the air and the Portuguese reconnaissance helicopters those networks with their training and transit camps. This invisibility combined with the general absence of the colonial army defined them as liberated territories. When they were able to produce, in combination with the guerrilla army the necessary for their own self-subsistence they would start to be considered as liberated zones. From a situation, common to all guerrilla movements, in which food had to be supplied by the people, this development created a situation in which the movement increasingly tried to be self-sufficient in food and its production. This led as well, in certain situations, to the production of surpluses which were exported either to Zambia or to Tanzania. The guerrilla networks were used with that objective. The designation of liberation zones would principally be attributed and applied when minimal structures of administration as well as at least a school and a health center were equally started. In their beginnings they would be operated by Frelimo. Later on, the functions of administration, justice, security, and trade would start to be centralized or guaranteed by locally recruited and trained cadres.

The education in the schools created in the liberation zones was not reduced to basic reading and writing but included as well first rudiments of political theory as it had been developed by Frelimo. Three of its points were considered as fundamental. The first was, to be sure, the reasons for the struggle for an independent Mozambique and the need for national unity as

an instrument to achieve it. The second concerned the definition of the enemy as being the colonial system, not the white settlers or their collaborators. Finally, the third was aimed at presenting as a coherent and complementing whole the different tasks required by the war against colonialism: to combat, to produce and to educate oneself and the others about the conditions and objectives of the struggle. School teaching included as well the practice of discipline and team work. To a great extent, it was focused as well on the idea that one must deeply involve himself or herself in the study of the problems of Mozambique and its future as the only way to reconstruct its future and a better life.

In grand part considered as a basically political training, the preparation of local militias was based on the same teaching being followed in the schools. A basic principle was particularly insisted upon: to participate in the armed struggle the recruit had to be first ideologically aware not only of the objectives of the struggle but also of the definition of the enemy. This was complemented by military training with basic armament, often including old *Mauser* guns that had been captured in the assault to various Portuguese administrative posts. It included, as well, physical preparation. Militia training was also about the general principles of guerrilla warfare, camouflage and the organization of Frelimo. The predominance if not the priority given to education in the organization of the so called liberated zones is perhaps one of the most outstanding features of this period. Some of its objectives have been pointed out above: education was necessary to better make the war against the Portuguese army and to change the realities of colonialism for a better future in an independent country. It was consequently “a base for the conquest of power by the people” (Machel 1972). The popularization of the socio-political perspective of Frelimo had however and as well more

immediate objective. It was a practical and effective way to short-circuit the warlord syndrome (Cornwall, 1972: 161) and, at the same time, to avoid the formations of guerrilla elites in the liberated zones.

The basic characteristic of those liberated zones was not only, however, the possibility to start to organize them as models for the future. It was, rather, the impossibility for the Portuguese army to penetrate the regions where they had been formed. In particular with the second phase of the liberation war and the development of the armament of the guerrilla even the use of helicopters started to be more or less impossible. More often, the Portuguese would use aircraft bombings to try to affect the guerrilla and its people. Sometimes those bombings were made with napalm. In the later stages of the war, the Portuguese used as well chemical defoliants and pesticides to make further bombings easier.

Confining with the liberated zones, there was the so called semi-liberated zones. Contrary to the liberated zones, they were characterized by the presence of units of the Portuguese army. These units were usually confined to their barracks by the permanent presence of the guerrilla. In many cases this would make impossible to them to perform basic tasks like to patrol their respective surrounding areas. They had to be as well supplied by air.

For the guerrillas, the villages that slowly were organized around their camps would also represent an opportunity to develop some kind of family life. In the end of the 1960s the practice to cultivate nearby fields to supply food for the guerrillas and often cultivated by them, became an accepted practice. As discussed above, this was fundamental to take away

from the general population the burden of supporting the Frelimo combatants. This practice showed also to be of decisive importance in countering Portuguese military offensives and defeating them. This is what happened with the so called Gordian-Knot operation through which the colonial army intended to definitively eradicate the guerrilla from the north of the colony, at the same time stopping its advance to the south. It was the self-subsistence ability of both people and combatants that allowed them to resist under attack for long periods of time and, once again, defeat the colonial army. At the same time, the practice of production, defense and survival common to the guerrilla and to the people tended to increase as the war continued. It allowed, as well, the growing participation of the people in combat operations organized by Frelimo. With this objective the guerrilla would organize the population of the different villages, formed or not around their camps, in militia groups. Trained to use the available and usually very basic weaponry like machetes or arrows those militias became an important instrument of the armed struggle. They were also the main source in which new cadres for the movement were recruited among the young men and women who composed them. Militias were also responsible to keep watch throughout day and night. Around villages and bases they did it in what soon encompassed several miles of concentric circles of security and quick communication. Finally, both bases and liberated villages “in the interior” were structurally linked to more important training camps, hospitals, and schools usually situated, to offer a higher level of security and protection, on the non-Mozambican part of the border with Tanzania and Zambia. Directly administered and supplied by the leadership of the movement usually through farms started with that objective they were as well training camps. It was there that the information received from the different fronts of

struggle was coordinated. It was also from there that new contingents of combatants would leave to open up further fronts of the liberation war.

In the early 1970s, Frelimo was trying to bring together that practice of political, educational and productive relationship with its social base within Mozambique and during the armed struggle into a more coherent and organized conception of territorial organization. The concept of the liberation zones as the model to be expanded to the rest of the country has here some of its roots. However, when in September 1974 the Portuguese were forced to accept the Lusaka conversations leading to the independence of Mozambique, the liberation zones represented yet, by then, little more than a long process of mutual adaptation between the movement and its people. It was a very successful social and even economic process but, to be sure, no more than a work in progress.

A final point must as well be briefly discussed here: the costs of the liberation war and its financing. In the case of Frelimo and the Mozambican liberation struggle, about ninety percent of the operation was more or less financed by different countries, states, parties, and organizations. Emphasis is usually, and wrongly, given to Soviet support. According to different sources within the movement, however, the Soviet support was always much inferior to the levels usually asserted. They were also considered as inadequate and probably the least useful for the objectives of Frelimo. Moreover, according to the same sources, they were usually attached to very limiting conditions and exigencies of reciprocity that the movement was not often prepared to accept. Just as not all of the requests by Frelimo were

fulfilled also not all of the offers by the Soviets were accepted (⁷³). In this same context the help and support of some of the countries of Eastern Europe, particularly Bulgaria and the German Democratic Republic, sometimes against the Soviet decisions, were much more important. The dominant support seems however to have been given by China. Frelimo received as well decisive forms of support from the Front Line States of Zambia and, notably, from Tanzania. It was also financed by the Liberation Committee of the Organization of African Unity. From Europe the major contributors were the Nordic countries as well as an increasing number of support organizations also located in the United States and Asia, particularly in Japan (⁷⁴).

The question of international assistance to the Mozambican struggle was however more complex than these elements might lead to conclude. An important source was that of the United Nations, in particular to the refugee camps of Mozambicans both in Zambia and Tanzania. But this aid could not be extended to the “interior” of Mozambique where Frelimo had directly to solve with very scarce resources immense problems of refugees and their resettlement. For the liberation movement it would not be desirable that all the zones under

⁷³) Contrary to what is one of the many myths created during the Cold War, neither the political alliance with the Soviet Union nor the latter assistance to Mozambique were decisive to the liberation of the country or, for that matter, in the years following the independence of the country. This explains the pervasive lack of popularity of everything related with the USSR in Mozambique, including its usually incompetent, uninformed, and often racist, technical and military cadres. An excellent description of this generalized antipathy can be found in the work of the American journalist William Finnegan, (see 1992: *passim* but, in particular, pages 101-2). This is also one of those Eurocentric myths destined to explain why a guerrilla army was able to defeat the modern, well equipped, and relatively rich Portuguese army.

⁷⁴) In the late 1960s there was within Frelimo, at the level of its leadership and of Mondlane himself, a widespread sense of disappointment with the lack of support from western Europe and the US. To a great extent this policy could have had the result of transforming Frelimo into what the core was increasingly accusing it of being: a satellite of the Soviet Union. The non-alignment of the movement was however to prevail. In Africa and besides the Front Line States, Frelimo had exceptionally good relations with Algeria. It had however less good relations with Ghana and, for reasons already discussed above, with Cuba.

attack by the Portuguese would become deserted. People were needed in those zones to make possible the advancement of the guerrilla. Contrary to what happened during the post-independence military aggressions by Rhodesia and South Africa, Frelimo did not encourage the exodus of the population to refugee camps on the other side of the Mozambican border. Unless, as it sometimes happened, the movement was given the means and the possibility to assume, direct or indirectly, the leadership of those camps and their administration. This included, of course, not only an easy access to food and water but, as well, the guarantee of security. The fact that it was able to do it successfully was considered a great success in the development of the liberation process.

In the late 1960s, and according to estimates made in 1975 by Frelimo cadres who were then part of its leadership, the total cost of the Mozambican liberation war was in the order of US\$25 million a year (US\$ of 1960, corresponding to more than \$US150 million in dollars of 2003). That amount must be however considered as only part of the expenses. Another important part was met through aid. Moreover, part of the weapons and ammunition used by the guerrilla, different types of construction material, foodstuffs, and clothing, were also obtained, “in large amounts”, through attacks against the colonial army, its barracks and its military or supplying columns. Finally, the way the war was conducted, with an increasing reliance on the liberated zones and the priority given to production of food, became also an importance support to the liberation struggle from the late 1960s onwards. At the same time, Portugal was spending more than \$90 million a year (1960 US\$ dollars, corresponding today to more than \$US360 millions) with the war in Mozambique -- more than forty percent of its annual budget.

The advance of the armed struggle and the increasing inactivity of the Portuguese army limited to its barracks, led in the early 1970s to the impossibility of the increasingly defensive Portuguese armed forces to defeat their enemy in the field of operations. One of the direct consequences was the growing settlers' criticism of the strategies being followed by the military. These were increasingly considered as unable to protect them and their families because not able to confront and stop the "terrorists" in their advance towards the south of the colony and its capital. This resulted into open protests followed by direct confrontations between settler and the armed forces in particular in Beira but also in Lourenco Marques. To the liberation movement the rupture between the Portuguese armed forces and the rearguard they were supposed to protect and defend were interpreted as constituting the beginning of the end of the colonial war and, consequently, of colonialism in Mozambique (Machel, 1975). This was correct. As Gramsci was already pointing out in 1934 in his writings about military strategy: "One should point out that in order for the war to end, it is enough that the strategic goal be only potentially achieved: in other words, it is enough that there be no doubt that an army can no longer fight" (I, 218). This is precisely what happened with the Portuguese armed forces in Mozambique as well as, largely, in a second front of the colonial war that of Guinea-Bissau. They increasingly found themselves unable to respond efficiently to the advance of the guerrilla. The liberation war was, thus, starting to be won. To an important sector of the Portuguese military, the interpretation of this situation was similar to that of Frelimo. It was also the confirmation that the war could not be won militarily. Furthermore, its continuation would lead to the general defeat in the field of operations of the Portuguese Armed Forces. This had to be avoided. The Portuguese

Movement of the Armed Forces (Movimento das Forças Armadas, MFA) organization and accomplishment of the coup d'état of April 25, 1974 was the solution. The forced demotion of the Portuguese corporative regime after almost half a century of fascist rule was the result. The triumphant liberation movement took over power in the Mozambique capital, Lourenço Marques, soon to be known as Maputo, capital of the People's Republic of Mozambique. The principles set up throughout the long liberation war were the principles on which the new state was going to be founded. It is in this sense that the liberation war in Mozambique created the bases for a Southern Africa liberation model. Its materialization was however condemned. The conditions and reasons leading to it will be the main topic of the following chapter.

3. THE COLLAPSE

After less than one year of a transitory government formed by Mozambicans and Portuguese, Frelimo assumed the political power in Mozambique in 1975. In the perspective of the triumphant liberation movement and according to principles previously stated in its public or internal discourses and debates during the liberation war, national independence of Mozambique was no more than a new phase of struggle, the widening of the front against colonialism. Consequently, the extension to the whole country of what was designated as the organization of the liberated zones became a priority. This implied, to be sure, the further destruction of the political, social and economic structures left behind by the colonial administration. In its place but in radical opposition to it, the new state, the liberation state, started to be constructed. This was also done according to the experience accumulated in the liberated zones by Frelimo. To its leadership, preparing itself to assume the political roles

required by independence and to replace the Portuguese administration, there was neither a place to an “imported” state nor to an “imposed” one in the new Mozambique. The main objective was to establish a radical rupture with both and, in their place, to build up the sovereign (and as such “modern”) state of the Mozambican people. It was going to be, by definition, a socialist state. It was also going to be able to assume what was described as the historical experiences of other peoples in the construction of a better future and, among them but as a main reference, that of Marxism-Leninism. Essentially the new Mozambican state would be an original creation. It was going to be based on the organization and practice of struggle and survival in the liberated zones now applied to the specific characteristics of the post-colonial, independent Mozambique. It would also be a non-aligned state.

The New State

In 1975, all these objectives appeared to be far away. Soon, however, they started to appear as somehow feasible and not only in its logical, enthusiastic formulation. They required, to be sure, a high degree of centralization and direction of the economy by the new state. But the reality was that the economy of the former colony, by definition but also due to the policies of the Portuguese colonial state, had always been not only highly regulated but also directed by a rigorous exercise of centralized planning. Expressed every five years through the so called Planos de Fomento (or Development Plans) it was through them that the objectives, conditions, new projects, investments and, budgets of the colonial economy were pre-defined and implemented. In particular after the mid-1960s this exercise assumed a decisive importance for each one of the Portuguese colonies in their interrelationship with one another and within what was known as the “Portuguese Space”. Two other characteristics of the colonial economy

accentuated this centralization. The first was the direct participation of the colonial state, often in a dominant position, in many of the main investments of capital in the colony. This participation and the amount of what was officially invested in the situation of war constituted often, as it happened with the construction of the Cahora-Bassa dam, the main incentive to other potential investors. The second was the fact that not only the destructive effects of the colonial war but, also, the more or less illegal use of the opportunities opened up by its advancement, had resulted in a high level of debt of the private sector to the official, central bank of the colony, the Banco Nacional Ultramarino (Overseas National Bank or BNU). Reaching percentages that were then evaluated in between 50 and 60 percent of the total of the private firms in the colony, this meant that it was in reality the BNU and through it the Portuguese state that had the legal propriety and administration of those firms. In terms of the Lusaka Accord signed by Portugal, the BNU with all its assets, reserves, and proprieties was integrally transferred to Frelimo and, through it, to the Mozambican state.

Finally, the great majority of the social services of the colony, including the almost totality of those related with education and health, as well as the main instruments of rural commercialization and export of cash-crops were as well directly centralized and directed by the colonial administration and its state. A huge, disproportionate public sector existed consequently in the colony at the time of its independence. It was, as such and equally handed over to the new Mozambican state by the Portuguese. To a certain extent, it can be said that the highly centralized, planned, and state-owned economy in Mozambique was already a “socialist” economy. It predated, in short, its proclamation as such.

According to the wording of that proclamation, “The building of socialism demands that the economy be centrally planned and directed by the State.... It falls to the State to guarantee the full use of human and material resources... linking centers of production and consumption, and therefore developing the rural areas and the towns in a balanced way” (Frelimo 1978: 43-44). Among the priorities to achieve it, Frelimo defined as fundamental the extension of the liberation zones till then mostly located in the north to the rest of the country.

This meant, in particular, the rural areas both affected or not by the anti-colonial war. It was there that the great majority of the population lived. Although highly dispersed and using rudimentary means of production and inputs it was however that population who produced the great majority of the Mozambican exports. It was in the rural areas as well that more than two thousand medium size farms and plantations had been abandoned since the early 1970s by the Portuguese and other foreigners who owned them. For the new government and prospectively a project of economic growth had to include the supply of modern means of production to the rural population and, gradually, to attract them to centralizing villages where schools, hospitals, warehousing, industries of basic transformation of raw materials, trading centers and centers of rural organization could be located. In what concerned the abandoned farms, the solution would be, on the other hand, to transform them in the powerful embryo of a future organization of state farms. Immediately after independence, however, other and more urgent needs implied the postponement of any kind of direct intervention. They were more or less abandoned and, to be sure, this was soon reflected both at the level of the declining supply of vegetables and meat to the towns and in what exports were concerned. On the other hand, a particular attention was given to the former liberated zones, to their consolidation, and to what

was characterized as their expansion to the rest of the country. Specifically, the task of “liberating the peoples of the rural areas” (Frelimo 1978: 43-4) had been one of the major objectives of the struggle against Portuguese colonialism. Within the three main areas in which the country had been historically divided, the liberated zones were inexistent in the south, starting to be implemented in the center and almost exclusively located in the north. In the north, as well, the colonial army had started an ambitious project of protected villages or *aldeamentos* then being extended by the Portuguese to the center of the colony. Often easily infiltrated and manipulated by agents of the liberation movement, their objective was to concentrate populations to facilitate their control by organizing and subtracting them from the direct influence of the guerrilla. With independence, another priority of Frelimo was, consequently, the transformation of those protracted villages. They were made into so-called communal villages, the third essential element in the rural policies of Frelimo and their interrelation with the general development of the country. At the same time the formation of the liberation zones in the center had to be equally consolidated. Furthermore, their model had to be extended not only there but also towards the south. Still in what concerns the rural policies of Frelimo, the general strategy of development of the country was defined as “rest(ing) on agricultural production” (Frelimo 1978: 43).

Three other decisions of the new Mozambican state can also be related to the need to expand the model of the liberated zones. The first was the beginning of what had been defined as a gradual, long term, harmonious resettlement of the highly dispersed rural population into communal villages capable of justifying a more efficient and rational access to health, education, economic growth and other improvements. The second consisted in the opening up

of the basic social services in the country, including those not yet controlled by the state, to all the people. This included private schools, mostly belonging to the Catholic Church, private hospitals and health centers, as well as medical and legal services, among others. They were nationalized. The third decision consisted in the public declaration of support for the movements still fighting for the liberation of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia. This included the application of the United Nations mandated sanctions against Rhodesia, which had not been respected by the Portuguese. It included also the opening up of the first training bases for Zanu within Mozambican territory, and the strong condemnation of South African apartheid and its regime.

When the national independence was proclaimed, the economy of the new country was starting, once again, to enter into a highly critical phase. The crisis unfolded at two levels, precisely at those levels at which the dependency of the new country had been historically created: at the level of its relationships with South Africa and at the level of its relationships with Portugal. But both levels were highly affected by the general crisis that continued to affect the world-economy in 1974-1975, a circumstance that on the other hand made even more difficult to the new government out of the liberation struggle to introduce and materialize the measures tending to confront and overcome the crisis. A basic problem had however to be solved. The dynamizing factor of the economy was considered to be industry, in particular “heavy industry... the decisive factor for our total independence” (Frelimo: 1978: 43).

The centrality given to “heavy industry” in this formulation was a direct consequence of solemn promises formulated during the armed struggle by representatives of the Soviet Union.

According to them, the soviet aid to be dispensed to the future independent country would be based on the necessary support to make it a reality. Immediately after independence, consequently, contacts with those objectives were renewed with the USSR. The response was however completely different. That type of support based on the installation of heavy industry in Mozambique would not be possible to the URSS. The promises made would not be honored. The certitude that there would not be “heavy industry” in Mozambique in the short future had consequently to be assumed by a disappointed Frelimo leadership since the first years of independence.

The (Im)possible Recovery

For analytical purposes I will segment the first ten years following the proclamation of Mozambique’s independence in three different phases. The first one, till 1977, saw a generalized collapse of the economy in all its sectors and all over the country. To a great extent, it culminated four years of slow degradation of the colonial economy aggravated, after 1972, by the direct consequences of the liberation struggle. With the signature of the Lusaka Accord Portugal was finally obliged to recognize the right of the Mozambicans to independence and self-determination. This led to a quick acceleration of the negative trends of the previous years and to the economic disintegration of the transitional colony. Such was the situation when a triumphant Frelimo finally assumed power in Lourenco Marques in 1975. Its first objective was, thus, to sustain, overcome and reverse the economic collapse and its consequences.

The second phase, from 1977 to 1981, was characterized by the first results of the Frelimo-led economic recovery. It was also characterized by productive expansion, in some cases to levels higher than those previously reached during colonialism (Mosca 1999: 142-48; Isaacman & Isaacman 1983: 145-70). These five years were characterized by an understandable national enthusiasm during which everything seemed to be possible. The utopias of a socialist Mozambique able to overcome the deep levels of underdevelopment left behind by colonialism and recreate them in ten years as economic growth, equality, prosperity, and social justice for all have here their major roots.

Everything started to change, however from the end of 1981 onwards. A very quick contraction of the economy led once again to the fall of the major indices of production and productivity. In terms of a chronically negative balance of payments, the gap between the cost of imports and the value of exports, migrant labor and services started as well to increase. At the same time, farms, industries and services without the necessary inputs were brought to an almost standstill. Rural households, still responsible for the greatest part of the exports, were growingly deprived of what they needed to continue to produce regularly. Growing costs with defense, naturally the country's priority, started to affect other defined priorities like education and health. Briefly recovered from its colonial collapse, Mozambique was pushed once again into a new, perhaps even more complex economic disaster. The only possible solution was the reluctant recourse to international loans. On the other hand, it will be the accumulation of these loans and the impossibility to pay them that will result in the imposition by the IMF of structural adjustment. This type of imposition corresponds to the classic behavior of the IMF. In Mozambique, it was little more than the repetition of the standard procedure already used in

other countries of the region, in the continent and in the periphery of the world-economy. The liberation project as it had been defined during the armed struggle by Frelimo was one of its first causalities.

The structural convergence of three major features can be used to understand what happened. Those features were the result of on-going developments at different but interrelated levels: those of the new state, of the region, and of the world-economy. I will try to characterize them through their impact but also through their nature and the efforts generated or not to confront them. In this process Frelimo had to assume important changes in its ideological self-definition as proclaimed at the time of independence. I will also discuss them below. Here however will be important to point out that the first change was in its proclamation of Marxism-Leninism as a guiding light and fundamental direction for the construction of a liberated Mozambique. This happened in early 1982 and, I think, it was also the easiest of them all. More complicated was the decision to negotiate with South Africa and later on that leading to talks with Renamo. The recreation of peace had by then become a fundamental objective and, as such, it was attained. The most difficult of all the decisive changes accepted by Frelimo and the Mozambican state was however the decision to establish the first contacts with the IMF and agree with its pressure for structural adjustment. To a great extent, it is here that resides the end of the attempt to reconstruct Mozambique as a sovereign, prosperous, egalitarian, liberated state. It was here that the dream of overcoming the underdevelopment of colonialism became a nightmare. The story of the collapse of the liberation model in Southern Africa is thus the history of the imposition of structural adjustment. It will be that history that I will now attempt to reconstruct.

The first of the three periods we defined above was consequently characterized by the generalized collapse of the colonial economy. This culminated trends that had been evolving with the advancement of the war. Among them, there was the flight of settlers (around 82 percent of a total of 120,000) and the illegal appropriation of resources often followed by acts of sabotage in productive units, farms and services they had previously owned or directed.

The official transference of the National Overseas Bank (BNU) to the Mozambican state by the Portuguese and in terms of the Lusaka Agreement made even more obvious the degree to which the Mozambican colonial economy had been dilapidated in the last years of the war. Its foreign exchange sector had less than 130 million US\$ of which no more than 20 thousand US\$ were available in money. The rest was kept in gold coins and bars. The BNU had also titles of the Portuguese state. Its reserves in general were evaluated as corresponding to less than 1.8 per cent of its publicly stated capital and only 0.6 percent of the fiduciary. An estimate made at the time evaluated their outflow in about 70 million US dollars. This corresponded to more than 25 percent of the average of all the annual imports in 1973-74 and 1974-75 (Plano 40). The situation had become so serious that the amount of reserves in foreign exchange in 1974 was only able to pay for about 20 days of acquisitions in external markets. In 1975, the possibility of imports being paid for by exports had contracted to less than 50 percent ⁽⁷⁵⁾. In other words, in 1974-1975 Mocambique had become a virtual economic fiction. Its independence was declared in a situation in which the country had many of its infrastructures

⁷⁵⁾ In 1968 that relation was slightly more than 65 per cent or 34 days. It declined since then to the levels of 1974-75. The number of days of imports without correspondent exported resources considered “normal” in the world-economy is about 90 days or three months. This corresponds to countries with a per capita of around US\$ 500.00.

deeply affected by the direct and indirect consequences of a long decade of colonial war. Its economy was almost stagnant. The reserves of foreign exchange had disappeared. Inflation was rampant. An internal, confidential report of the colonial administration to the Portuguese state in Lisbon considered the situation in 1973 as being “unsustainable”. It claimed for serious and urgent measures to confront it. It concluded by saying: “The year of 1973 has been the worst ever, the year that has left behind more destruction of the economy. If help does not arrive in 1974... the moral and material help and support the Province requires, the final psychological collapse will be inevitable” (Inspeccao de Credito e Seguros, Confidential Report, June 1974; quoted in Plan: 43). To be sure, help did not arrive.

The economic situation of the country became even more complex and negative due to two other important factors. The first was the decision by the new Mozambican state to fulfill what it considered being its international duty and apply the United Nations mandated sanctions against the Rhodesian settler regime (UN/Security Council, Resolution 253, May 29 1968), which the Portuguese had not respected. This implied the close down of the extensive border with the rebel colony and the almost complete reduction of activity of the Beira corridor and its harbor in the second biggest city of the country. It led as well to the reduction of production of the Maputo oil refinery. Its capacity and main function was to supply Rhodesia, either directly or indirectly, through South Africa and Malawi. Both decisions led to important reductions in the inflow of foreign exchange (⁷⁶), thus aggravating the already complex situation of the balance of payments.

⁷⁶) According to numbers published by the United Nations, the losses for Mozambique due to the closing down of its border with Rhodesia were evaluated as being between US\$ 139 and 165 million in the first year; between US\$ 108 and 134 million in the following year; and yearly amounts of between US\$ 106 and 132 millions in the following two years (SC/E 5812, 1976-1979). This corresponds to a total of about US\$

The second consisted in the effects of what became known as “natural calamities”, in particular drought and, often simultaneously, in other areas of the country, floods. Their combined effects on lost cultivation and destroyed infrastructures and housing in the years 1976-1978 were appraised in more than US\$ 730 million or 4,4 percent of the 1975 GDP (Plano: 52-3).

The crisis was expected by Frelimo – although not the flight of settlers to the extent it assumed or the dimension of destruction of small and medium equipment and farms it implied. The bankrupted BNU was equally not among what Frelimo was expecting. Anyway, its leaders started a complex process destined to sustain the on-going collapse and, more important, to launch the first initiative leading to its possible recovery

At the political level, Frelimo decided to consolidate its presence all over the country; to contact social bases both in towns and rural areas; to make known the objectives of independence and of the end of the war with the defeat of colonialism; to assume the direct control of the Dynamizing Groups, often by changing them into the new structures of control at all levels of the society as “party cells” and, in firms and services, as “production committees”.

Among the main objectives of the new structures: to avoid and denounce attempts by departing settlers to destroy or sabotage equipment, farm animals, system of irrigation, as well as, the

500 million in this type of losses registered until the proclamation of Zimbabwe’s independence. This amount does not include the results of the direct military attacks by the Rhodesian military or the cost of the destruction realized by surrogate groups created by their Intelligence Services (Mota Lopes 1986: Interview with Ken Flowers) under the general designation of Mozambican Resistance. Numbers made public by the Mozambican government evaluated those losses (through the destruction of economic infrastructures, houses, food reserves, means of transport and railways, schools and health posts in about US\$ 50 billion for the years between 1976 and 1979 (Plano 46-47). It was also evaluated that Mozambique lost between US\$ 4,5 and US\$ 5.5 million in tourism as well as amounts between US\$ 22 and US\$ 25 million in migrant workers remittances from Rhodesia (Plano 1987: 61).

illegal transference of capital, etc. Main contradiction: between the need to maintain stability and the generalization of populism at the political, economic and social levels leading to instability;

At the level of the economy: two main objectives: a) to guarantee the functioning of the operative structures of the colonial economy, that is to say, in Mosca's words, to assure the normal working of the economic tissue of the country (108); this meant to keep working the firms, factories and services abandoned by their colonial owners, in particular those recognized as essential both in their production and in the number of workers they employed; to guarantee trade import and export flows; by financing firms and services which had slowed down or ceased production; and, finally, to guarantee the payment of wages; and b) to prepare conditions to the creation of a socialist economy; this included the nationalization of land and other natural resources. The main features of the project of national development became known: communal villages and cooperatives in the rural areas; the transformation of abandoned farms and plantations into state farms; the reactivation of manufacturing in the cities; to create the conditions for heavy industry through its international contacts, in particular with the Soviet Union. Main contradictions: between Frelimo's economic project and the national, regional and, in particular, world-systemic realities. That is to say: between the decision of keeping intact the economic and social infrastructures and the lack of resources to do it; between the increase of wages and the normal access to basic goods; between voluntarism and a more effective analysis of the situation. Moreover: between the need to maintain an active non-aligned position, including towards the serious divisions within the so called socialist countries, in particular the Soviet Union and China – and the expectations from

their support. This became obvious when, negating previous promises, the Soviet Politburo decided in 1976 not to help the Mozambicans to install heavy industry in the country.

At the social level: to extend to all the country the free utilization of basic services like education and health; to launch an extensive campaign against illiteracy; to guarantee the functioning and multiplication of primary schools. Main problems: the lack of financial resources but also of specialized workers (teachers, doctors, nurses, etc) to materialize the multiplication of schools, hospitals and health centers required by the open access to them or even, to guarantee the efficient functioning of the existing ones.

The recovery from the critical years that immediately anticipated and followed the proclamation of independence started to be felt before the end of 1976. Many of the negative effects already present in those years characterized as well the following period. But, to a great extent, they were made secondary by the first signs of general improvement. A confluence of factors can be pointed out to explain it. Mainly among them, there were in the first place the results brought about by the gradual effects of the measures taken by the new state. This included a slow but noticeable pick up of the economy both in what manufacturing and agriculture was concerned. It included as well a better organization of trade flows and, in general, of management. Moreover, it represented the first results of international aid, both in capital and equipment and in specialized workers. Secondly, the improvement of the general situation in the newly independent country was also a direct effect of the increasing revolutionary enthusiasm of the majority of the population all over the country around Frelimo and its dynamizing objectives. Last but by no means least, a third factor allowing economic

recovery was the result of unexpected positive consequences in Southern Africa, and consequently in Mozambique, of the on-going contraction of the world-economy.

The first and second factors have already been discussed above. It is for now enough to say that they made possible the beginning of the regularization of the processes of production and trade not only at the level of the rural households but also of the farms around the cities and some of the plantations and other so-called great projects. They allowed as well the more effective functioning of the economic structures and institutions. Moreover, they were translated by the increase of the number of schools and their functioning as well as the general improvement of the services offered by hospitals and health centers all over the country.

In considering these aspects, a further factor must as well be taken into account: this was as well a period that coincided with the beginnings of a new B-phase of contraction of the world-economy.

The first, direct effects of a contracting world-economy continued to be felt during this period. Also as discussed above, they were specifically felt at the level of the terms of trade. Mozambican exports continued to be paid by decreasing prices while imports were becoming increasingly more expensive. One of the obvious measures of the new state was to limit imports, in particular those that constituted the major burden on the colonial balance of payments: luxury goods destined to the colonial elites. Another was through the monopolization and direction by the state of the main circuits of import and export. This constituted a fundamental measure to block the illegal outflow of currency through the false

increase or decrease of prices and costs. One of the characteristics of the systemic contraction were, however, the so-called “oil shocks”, the sudden and cumulative increase of its prices in the world-economy. This was an unavoidable factor. It affected the economy of Mozambique not only in this period but, increasingly, in the following years as it in general affected the non-oil producers of the whole periphery and semi-periphery. The only solution both to supply the necessities of the country and to regularize the balance of payments was the first utilization of international loans, then and as already pointed out of a very easy access and with relatively low interest rates, as a way out.

In the specific case of Southern Africa, however, the contraction of the world-economy was also reflected in what were, in the perspective of capital but not only, very positive consequences. Notably it led to the quick rise of the international price of gold, South Africa’s main export. This resulted into a substantial increase of gold extraction that included the re-opening up of mines previously closed as unprofitable. It determined, as well, a growing demand for more migrant labor from all over the region. To be sure, this included Mozambican workers whose recruitment was still made according to the previous inter-state agreements signed with the Portuguese. This was soon reflected not only in the increase of gold remittances from South Africa, corresponding to part of the salary of the miners, but also by the possibility of its sale by the newly installed state in Mozambique in the world market and according to what were greatly inflated prices. It was also reflected on the activity of the Maputo harbor. Although the official position of the Mozambican government was that it started to be affected by South African non-declared sanctions against the newly-independent state (Plano 49-50), the reality was that the quantity of cargo imported through Maputo

increased not only in the period from 1973 to 1975 but was kept at very substantial levels (if compared with those during the last years of the colonial war in 1975-1976. There is however a small decrease in 1976-1977. On the other hand, the exported cargo did indeed register decline after reaching an unprecedented volume in 1974. It fell in the following year to increase once again in 1975-1976 (⁷⁷). At the same time, and notwithstanding the severe contraction registered in general terms by the economy, the production of cash crops for export by rural households was still substantial.

The economic and social growth of the previous years started then to be directly and increasingly affected by the aggression and destabilization by South Africa. In particular, it was deadly affected by the expanding use by the South African military of surrogate guerrilla groups formed by exiled Mozambicans in constant and expanding operations of sabotage and destruction. This led to the collapse of the economy and of the major part of the social services in the country. It was as well reflected in two other negative consequences. One was the slowly transformation of the South African use of those groups into conditions that were leading to a civil war among Mozambicans. The other was the degradation of the Mozambican state as it had been defined at the time of independence. Notably, important deviations in the type of relations established with its social bases started to become prevalent. In the mid 1980s, the crisis was obvious. It led to the first, reluctant contacts with the IMF as a possible way out and,

⁷⁷) South African imports and exports through the Maputo harbor (in 106 (n=6) tons):

1970-1971: 1,1/3,9

1971-1972: 1,2/24,1

1972-1973: 1,2/3,8

1973-1974: 1,5/4,0

1974-1975: 1,5/3,3

1975-1976: 1,2/3,8

1976-1977: 1,0/3,2

Sources: SAR&H; Plano 1982: 49;

towards the end of the decade, to the renewal of talks with South Africa. The main objectives of the process of destabilization were being attained. It was then, as well, that the possibility of conversations with Renamo started to be contemplated and, although timidly, initiated.

This time-table and what it implies is indispensable for the analysis of the regional situation. It shows that the type of liberation envisaged by Frelimo and adopted as an objective by most of the liberation movements of the region was not possible. It was considered as a threat to the system itself, as a bad example to the periphery of the world-economy and to the whole of Southern Africa. As such it had to fail. In the prevalent situation of the world-economy, in general, of that of the region, in particular, its implementation would always be confronted and blocked by all means necessary. The aggression by the South African military and the multiplication of atrocities perpetrated by its surrogate groups, usually known as Renamo, was simultaneously condemned and tolerated by the core. To be sure they were little more than instruments in that confrontation. They served objectives that, in fact, belonged to wider, global interests. On the other hand, the social, political, and economic costs of its effects within Mozambique were too elevated. Its direct and indirect consequences too destructive: they affected deeply not only the still very weak institutions of the newly independent country but also its economy, the effective functioning of its state, and the ability to consolidate the political and territorial unity of its people. The liberation project had been destroyed. Moreover, it would be worthless to try to resuscitate it. Would it have been possible without the severity of the war of aggression launched against it by the South African apartheid regime?

The destructive consequences of the destabilization war against Mozambique cannot be discarded when considering this question. They were too extensive and profound, too gruesome, almost surgical in the way they affected the weak economy of the newly independent country by targeting rural households, villages, agricultural and industrial production, transports and communications, education and health services. With that objective, all possible means were used from air strikes against suburban areas of the main cities to acts of terrorism against children, women and old people. Between the mid-1970s and the early 1990s the destabilization of Mozambique by the rebel leaders of the Rhodesian settlers, first, by the South African apartheid regime, after 1979 was able to bring the country to the brink of collapse. Almost one million people were killed or died as a consequence of the aggression. More than 870 health posts and half of the rural hospitals were destroyed. By mid-1989 about half a million children and more than 7,000 teachers had been directly affected by the destruction of more than 2,650 primary schools (Vieira et alii 1999: 242). An estimate made by a UNICEF expert group for the years 1980-1988, the years of direct South Africa involvement, placed in US\$ 13.5 billions the total loss represented by the aggression. It included not only houses, schools, hospitals and cantinas but, also, the accentuated decline of production, lost economic growth, additional defense and security expenditures, lost income in tourism, transports and export (UNICEF 1989: Annex A; Vieira et alii 1999: 242-3). The aggression targeted mainly two different types of objectives. The first included the civil population of the country, particularly in the rural areas. It was directed not only to the indiscriminate killing of people, a great majority of which were children and women, but also to the destruction of their schools, health services, and houses. Oftentimes, this destruction was also directed to cultivations, fruit trees, and barns. In the division of labor of the destabilization, this was the

main role of the surrogate groups organized, trained and financially pump-primed by Pretoria. Their objective was double: to create a generalized feeling of fear and insecurity in order to separate the people from its state, that is to say, to break the strong alliance that had been established during the armed struggle and with the proclamation of independence. As pointed out above, this was the way to indirectly weaken the new state. Both symbolically and in the reality of an increasing number of districts, this type of aggression projected the image of an inoperative state, incapable of controlling violence and guarantee security within the territorial limits of the country.

The second type of targets was rather formed by economic infrastructures, factories, and in certain cases even by urban areas. In particular, the objective was to bring to a halt the circulation of Southern African trade, even if affecting that from and to South Africa, in the three corridors linking the regional hinterland to the sea. The Maputo, Manica and Nacala corridors were consequently the object of a great number of destructive operations. Surrogate groups for ambushes and attacks were also used in those attacks. But this type of destabilization was directly realized by members of the South African Special Forces. It included the sabotage of the Beira harbor, as well as various frustrated attempts against those of Maputo and Nacala. After the mid-1980s the three corridors and their respective roads and railways were often partially or totally inoperative. To be sure, this was negatively reflected in the movement of their respective harbors. It had as well important consequences` in the rest of the region, particularly in those areas more dependent of the Mozambican access to the sea.

In fact, South African destabilization was directed against the whole region. It affected Zimbabwe, Zambia and Swaziland. The same document by UNICEF that evaluated the direct and indirect losses for the Mozambican economy in more than US\$ 13 billion calculated in US\$ 17 billion the amount of losses by the other SADC members. The costs supported by Angola rounded the US\$ 30 billion (UNICEF 1989: Annex A; Vieira *et al* 1999: Table 4-2).

From Destabilization to Civil War

The destruction of the economy of Mozambique began by making impossible the continuation of the efforts and attempts of recovery that had been started 1975. From 1981 onwards they became the main objective of the two types of South African military strategies on which destabilization was based. It is difficult to say which one of the two different forms of attack was the most harmful. But this is, perhaps, a wrong question. Even when operating alone, the surrogate groups never ceased to be directly dependent from South Africa. Their operational and strategic objectives were not only limited but precisely defined in their South African bases. Documentation in the meantime made public denounced, confirmed and made clear this basic characteristic of Renamo. This leads us to formulate once again a common question that today continues without answer: was the conflict in Mozambique only the result of the South African aggression or was it, as well, a civil war?

A great number of so called “independent” observers, from Robert Garsonny (1998), working for the US State Department, to Lance S. Young (1991), of the USAF, do not seem to have doubts that Renamo after being created by the Rhodesians became and was always, at least until legitimated as a political opposition in Mozambique, a surrogate group of the South

African military. Although using the term as a short word for it, in their writings, they consequently discard the definition of the Mozambican conflict as having been a characteristic civil war. Consequently, and according to them Renamo never was more than another tool in the military arsenal of South Africa. I think however that in the late 1980s, when the very first contacts with some of the leaders of Renamo were timidly initiated by Maputo, its action in certain areas of Mozambique was indeed starting to become differentiated in their nature and objectives from the nature and objectives of South African destabilization. In other words, the conditions for the transformation of those surrogate groups into a more or less legitimate Mozambican opposition were not only a result of the Peace Talks. They were as well being created in the field. This happened, principally, in certain areas of Manica, of Sofala and in Nampula. Isolated from the rest of the country, abandoned by a state unable to guarantee their safety, and needing security to reestablish the cultivation of their fields, a relatively important number of peasant households rallied around Renamo and started to assume its objectives of opposition against the government in Maputo and its ramification in the rest of the country. To a great extent, they guaranteed the existence of important sanctuaries from which new operations could be and were launched. They were also source of new recruits. In other words, the basic method of Renamo of forced recruitment and generalized acts of terrorism as forms of submission of the population was being changed, in those areas, into a different type of relationship. It was this transformation that were recreating the conditions of aggression and changing them into the basic conditions necessary to its development into a civil war. Consequently, it was the decision by Frelimo to initiate contacts with Renamo, later on transformed into formal conversations and the signature of a Peace Treaty, that blocked that possibility. There was no civil war in Mozambique but the necessary prerequisites to its

materialization were starting to be a reality in the late 1980s. The conflict was consequently assuming characteristics that were proper of a civil war. This could have been a trajectory of development to the near future. To a great extent, however, that process of change was aborted by the beginning of the negotiations that led to the Rome Peace Talks and the signature of a Peace Accord between the state of Mozambique and Renamo. It was through it that the movement created ten years before to serve the objectives of the Rhodesian rebel settlers and then at the direct service of the apartheid regime was “legitimized” and somehow accepted, more or less peacefully, within Mozambique. It has assumed since then the role of the main political opposition.

Who Lost the Liberation Project?

The main question is however if without a decade of destabilization and the consequent collapse of the Mozambican attempts to recover the country’s economy, the economic growth and development as defined by Frelimo and the new independent state could have been attained. In other words, was the liberation project of Southern Africa destroyed by the last desperate attempts of the apartheid regime to survive? Was its collapse a direct result of destabilization, the last victory of White power in the region?

The usual and somehow logical response to these questions is, of course, yes. This has become the official response in Southern Africa in general, of Frelimo in particular. With a different formulation, this is also the official response of Renamo. I do not think however that it is the right response or that it corresponds to the reality. It expresses, rather, a part of it, an important but not determinant part of that reality. It is true that the liberation model and the way it started

to be applied in independent Mozambique was fundamental both to the destruction of the Rhodesia settler regime and to that of apartheid. I also think that this was the reason why it was at the same time destroyed by it. It is also acceptable the argument that the weight of destruction and the social, political, and economic costs represented by it made impossible the continuation of economic recovery after 1981.

The main reasons why this generalized destruction led to the end of the liberation model must however be sought elsewhere. First of all, they are reasons mainly located at the level of the organization of the state in Mozambique and the way it assumed or blocked the need for transformation. To be sure, its organization started immediately after independence. It was also as an effective and efficient type of organization. It was able to confront and overcome many of the pressing problems left behind by colonialism. The recovery that followed was a direct consequence of all this. It was possible because from Maputo the new state was able to quickly become present all over the country through new schools, new health posts, the nomination of local public officials, and the establishment of a rudimentary but functional network of communication. It was able, in short, to make the country work once again. In the perspective of its cadres, the paralysis that had resulted from the end of the war and from the defeat of colonialism started consequently to be surpassed after 1976. As I pointed out above, everything appeared then as being possible.

The beginnings of the organization of the state as a national state and the accomplishment of five years of economic recovery were, to be sure, important achievements. They had however negative, unintended consequences that deeply affected, and distorted the continuation of that

organization of the state. Notably, they were reflected in a high degree of self-sufficiency, and certitude assumed by a growing number of cadres. Very soon, this started to publicly appear as political arrogance. It led to a growing distance between those cadres and their respective constituencies, to an increasing dissociation between them and the majority of the population. The urban bias, so well known from the colonial period and from the general behavior of post-decolonization in the rest of the continent, was slowly reestablished. From the north to the south, the rural households, responsible for the great part of exports in the country, were forgotten, left to themselves, ignored. After 1976, with the first successes of economic recovery, the Mozambican state became predominantly an urban state. Increasingly, the priorities were redefined, even if not formally or at the level of the public discourse. The so called great projects, as well as industry, the state farms, transports, and a distorted, distorting conception of modernization became the main areas of official interest, the real objectives of the revolution. The fact that this represented an effective marginalization of the great majority of the population of the country did not seem to have stopped what, some years after, was described by Frelimo as a serious deviation from what had been traced as the way to the future. It was, then, too late. And too little what could be done or was done to mend it.

It is important to emphasize this set of consequences as having constituted one of the main reasons for the collapse of the liberation project in Mozambique – and, consequently, in Southern Africa. It did happen neither in the period immediately following independence nor during the period of escalation of destabilization. It was not consequently a direct result of the South African aggression, of the terrorist activity of Renamo or of the generalized destruction they originated. The deviation of the state in Mozambique occurred between those two phases,

in the period that from 1976 to 1981 made its cadres and officials believe that they were indeed changing the world and that it was, for them, easier than expected. It was a five year period, in short, in which Frelimo was replaced by the new Mozambican state, a period during which politics and their command were replaced by a technical, technocratic direction of the economy. In the daily practice of their cadres this was also translated into rampant voluntarism and populism often reaching incongruous, empty, meaningless limits.

As I emphasized above, there was indeed a phase of economic recovery in the five years between 1976 and 1981. This was particularly so in technical, statistical terms. In the daily reality of the country, however, it was not able to sustain the generalized degradation of wellbeing. Rural production and urban manufacture registered important increases in their indices but the life of the Mozambicans did not change. It continued at the depressive levels that characterized it before the triumph of Frelimo. In many cases it even became worse. In other words, the expectations of independence were not being minimally fulfilled. Unemployment and poverty increased, particularly in the cities. At the level of the state, in technical terms, this reality was assumed as a transitory situation and, consequently, as being not important. In other words, and in what concerned most of its cadres located at the level of decision-making, quantitative recovery of the economy was assumed as a growing alienation from the social realities of the country. It resulted also in a bureaucratic, administrative analysis of the problems and in the consequent divorce from the people. It led, as well, to a generalized underestimation of the possibility of a different attitude by the South African military and, in particular, of the possibility of their use of surrogate groups like the ones then

already being used by the Rhodesians. For them, things could only get better. They were wrong: things were already getting worse, much worse.

One of the most insidious consequences of the South African destabilization of Mozambique as it started to be felt after 1981 was the fact that it led to the aggravation of the negative features by then being assumed by the Mozambican state. It led, in particular, to its incapability of defining an all-encompassing strategy capable of confronting the new aggression. Moreover, it destroyed the operational capability, the discipline, and the patriotism of the armed forces. Equally affected, all the other institutions of security became as well inoperative and reduced to their headquarters. The inability of the Mozambican state to respond to destabilization is less a result of its violence and escalation than of the intrinsic bureaucratization and deviation of its practice. The Rome Peace Talks was an evidence of the defeat of the objectives that in 1975 started to be sought by the Mozambican state and as they had been defined at the time of the proclamation of independence. Consequently, it was neither South African destabilization nor the indiscriminate terrorism of Renamo that destroyed the liberation project in Mozambique.

To that deviation in fundamental aspects of the political practice of the Mozambican state there must be added another important cause of collapse. That cause was, I contend, the way its model of economic development was defined. As we have seen it was defined as being based on industry, in particular heavy industry, with agriculture as a dynamizing factor. When the possibility of heavy industry disappeared, many of its features became as well deactivated. The need to redefine objectives and rethink the whole rationale behind the project became, consequently, a priority. This was not done. The basic idea continued to be that reliance on

industry was still the solution. Consequently, the emphasis became on the development and functionality of the manufacturing sector that the Portuguese had left behind. Even if that sector was functioning as it had functioned in the last years of Portuguese colonialism, its organization and nature was, as discussed above, based on the substitution of basic imports. It was, as well, directed to realize the first transformations of exported raw materials and the last assemblage of imported goods. It was, in short, not only a rudimentary, import-substitution sector but also a highly dependent sector. Moreover, a great number of similar experiences all over the world had made clear the inadequacy of that type of industrial organization in the context of viable, self-reliant projects of economic development. In the case of Mozambique, the problems were even more complex. Among them, the sector had been deeply affected from the destruction and sabotage of the Portuguese settlers while the remaining machinery was already technologically obsolete. The recuperation of the industrial sector in Mozambique required a very high level of investment – reducing it in the even more needed rural areas of the country. Besides, the newly-independent country had not the number of workers required to replace the specialized work force who, before leaving, had operated them. Even if counting with a different level of worker's engagement and the dedication of Frelimo cadres, the reality is that other similar projects attempted in some of the countries of decolonized Africa had already made obvious the derisory results of such a project.

Finally, a brief reference to Frelimo as the leading political movement of the country: its triumph against the powerful Portuguese armed forces, the definition of the enemy, the way the liberation war was led, the importance given to the establishment of the liberated zones, the lucidity of its leading cadres and the way it was able to define a future of liberation rooted on

the realities of war, makes of it one of the most important liberation movements of the second half of the twentieth century. Not only for its victory against colonialism but also, in short, for the politics and policies it was able to define and practice. However some negative practices and conceptualizations about the future have to be pointed out to complement this reference. In particular in what concern the way it was able or not to direct the state and correct its deviations from what had been defined. There were however other problems. Notably, the insistence that the organization of Mozambique after independence had to be based on what then was known as the model or example of the liberated zones. I already discussed the genesis and development of the liberated zones and I considered them as a fundamental factor in the characterization of a liberation project for Mozambique. However, I also described them as a work in progress, a solid and consequent social and economic experiment. That is to say, as a still incomplete reality. In his reflection about what he calls the Mozambican revolution, Cahen also points out this fact in his reference to the Mozambican liberated zones considering them, correctly, as “a mini-experience”. It was a mistake, consequently, “to extrapolate that mini-experience, incomplete, localized and in a war situation and make of it the theoretical model for the rural organization of the whole country -- in a completely different situation in which the dynamics of the war were no longer present” (1987: 50-1).

On the other hand, and at a more specific level of political practice there are certain choices assumed by the state in Mozambique that are very difficult to harmonize with the general image of Frelimo and its leadership during the armed struggle. For instance, the project for independent Mozambique as it was elaborated during the armed struggle was one of the most complete and convincing proposals of liberation in the history of Africa. However, that

objective of liberation was contradicted with the introduction at the level of the functioning of the state of forms of so called democratic centralism that belonged to a reality of authoritarianism and repression Frelimo did not want neither to assume nor follow. The principle that economic development is a function of the collective involvement of the people in its materialization was correctly theorized and practiced during the armed struggle. In independent Mozambique, however, this was forgotten and quickly substituted into a recurrent urban bias that was proper of the processes of African neo-colonization that Frelimo had repudiated and directly confronted.

This setback in Mozambique had decisive consequences in what concerns the extension of the liberation project by the other liberation movements in Southern Africa. To a great extent, the policies and choices with which the African National Congress started to dismantle the apartheid regime and define its strategies of development in South Africa have here part of its roots. The same could be said of Swapo and its conquest of political power in Namibia. Once in power, both movements went directly from the end of apartheid and the conquest of independence to the open acceptance of the projects of structural adjustment of the IMF. Today's reality in Southern Africa is an obvious consequence of all this.

VII THE SAP MODEL

1: The Sapping of Africa

Africa today is often described as being the direct consequence of a situation of economic crisis and contraction which, in the mid-1970s, was already being lived by the generality of its newly-independent countries. By then, it is also stated frequently, twenty years of independence had gone by with a single, uniform result: the general deterioration of what, before it, had been achieved by colonialism. To be sure, this vulgar and vulgarized assertion must be placed upside-down. Africa in the mid 1970s was not only, in great part, a consequence of colonial occupation and exploitation then to a great extent being continued under different forms. It was also the result of the economic contraction of the world-economy started in the beginnings of the decade and aggravated with the rapid increase of oil prices to critical levels, both within the core and in the periphery. Moreover, Africa was soon going to be transformed into one of the sources through which capital attempted to slow down the severity of contraction. This implied the general imposition on the continent, as in the rest of the periphery, of radically different conditions of economic relationship with the core. The so-called Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) was conceived with that objective. From the early 1980s onwards it started to be uniformly applied on the different countries of the continent by the complementing agency of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB).

The vulgar assertion that the problems of Africa were and continue to be the result of twenty years of independence is usually explained by the greed and cupidity of the different governing elites of the continent. According to it, once political power was assumed, their main objective became centered on a multiplicity of frequently illegal schemes to enrich as soon as possible – by amassing huge bank accounts, usually transferred to or invested in Europe. To be sure, in some cases and at different degrees of rapacity this was and continues to be part of the sad reality of the continent. It assumed the forms of bribery, of appropriation of public goods, of stealing resources, of exchanging and selling influences to the highest bidder. Usually served by deficient administrations, by mismanagement, and by the lack of effective control, corruption became widespread in independent Africa. This was one more sector where, in other words, continuity with previous and characteristic practices of the colonial administrations has prevailed.

On the other hand this is not, by any means, the only reality of post-colonial Africa. In the majority of its countries, attempts to fulfill at least in part the expectations of independence and confront the effects of more than 100 years of colonialism were often seriously initiated (⁷⁸).

⁷⁸) This point has also been made, probably for the first time in African Studies, by Onwudiwe and Ibelema (2003). They point out that one common theme in both academic studies (by critics like Johnson (1992, 1993), Kaplan (1994) and Ayettey (1992) and in the media is that the underdevelopment of Africa has been exacerbated by self-rule since the early 1960s. According to them, independence gave rise to monstrous corruption and mismanagement, aggravated poverty, reduced the quality of life and led to civil wars. This became the dominant image of Africa not only within the core but within Africa. In a forceful, persuasive way the authors and their collaborators show that “Africa has made more progress than it is suggested by those and other critics and by Africa’s dismal image” (3). An important chapter points out that “several economic success stories have been overshadowed by the accounts of regression and gloom” (Boko: 93-108). Another one underlines the fact that immediately after independence and in many African countries improvements were registered in basic health indicators including related manpower, mortality rates, health expenditure and hospitals (Nnadozie: 121-48). The authors conclude that their examination of a wide range of elements of societal advancement make obvious that since political independence “sub-Saharan Africa made progress in all facets, including... the economic”. This is not, to be sure, the full reality. But it is indeed part of the post-independence African reality. A consistent feature in the multiplicity of

To be sure, these attempts were sometimes limited by corruption: but not only. They were also obscured by it, by the negative image it projected into the easily manipulated public opinions of the rest of the world. The truth is, also, that a great number of social, political, cultural and economic projects were started in Africa in the years following independence (Onwudiwe and Ibelema 2003). Notably, they benefited fields like education and health. But they were equally designed to improve and recover infrastructures in order to make them more accessible to everybody. In social contexts in which the great majority of the population had been deprived of everything by colonialism, this made all the difference.

The two objectives of improvement of social and economic conditions and of personal wealth through corruption were complemented by many other and equally expensive projects. Among them, the sumptuous construction of palaces, monuments, and inadequate infrastructures as a sign of prestige and standing but also, as the result of fraudulent or, more often, badly informed investments. Many cases could be indicated here but the most interesting is that many of those unprofitable and inadequate investments had been made by the former colonial states. They fed corruptive schemes in the continent but their immediate profit ended up in the accumulation structures of the core. I will discuss below the contemporary impact of similar projects and investments in Southern Africa. The point I want to emphasize here is however a slightly different one.

contemporary statistics about the continent, usually published or established by the IM/WB/OECD is that they tend to obscure, namely by ignoring them, historical statistic series of the period before the mid- or late-1980s. For them, Africa starts around 1990...

The total computation of all those projects, the necessary and socially useful ones but also those inspired by corruption, the illusion of status, or by greed, forced an increasing number of African countries to deplete all their monetary reserves first, to increase heavily their borrowing from the core, afterwards. Throughout the 1960s and the early years of the 1970s it was, to be sure, very easy and very cheap to borrow. In a situation of economic expansion of the world-economy, first, of an increasing offer of loans at very low interest rates following the increase of the oil prices and the so called oil shock, afterwards, the African states were generally encouraged to borrow. And that was what they did, often indiscriminately. In the process, to be sure, they became heavily indebted. The so called debt crisis in Africa has here its beginnings. But the debt crisis was also, before and through the way it was generated, a debt trap.

As the world-economy entered in its systemic crisis in the early 1970s, that trap started to be activated. This was part of the same process that, under the rhetoric of neo-liberalism, deeply affected the generality of the collective systems of social security and welfare put in place throughout the previous thirty years within the core. There, it was as well reflected in increasing levels of unemployment, in the outsourcing of an unprecedented number of industries and services, in the contraction of wages, and in the growing concession of tax breaks to the multinational corporations and other dominant enterprises of the world-economy. The crisis impacted negatively as well the core levels of production paralyzing an increasing number of industrial units. This was replicated in serious consequences within the periphery and, in particular, in what its relationship with the core was concerned. On the one hand, scarce investments of capital in the periphery became even scarcer. As already pointed out, there was

a prevalent lack of trust in the way the core looked at the peripheral states, in particular in Africa, and the way they were organizing their respective economies by centralizing and closing them. In a phase of worldwide contraction this was aggravated by the generalized perception that it was becoming too risky to invest in the periphery as a way to generate profits. The core-periphery flows of goods and capital came to a standstill. This led to the quick but inexorable decline of the systemic role of the periphery as a fundamental element of the generation of profits and the processes of capital accumulation. Very important in phases of expansion, this became unbearable as the effects of the crisis continued to be felt. In other words, a non-productive periphery represented an additional squeeze of profits within the core and, obviously, some kind of solution had to be found to counteract it.

On the other hand the various African countries started to have difficulties to pay their accumulated external debts. Consequently they needed fresh loans. This was what activated the debt trap as a two-time trap. To start with, it made African states heavily dependent on new loans. They had to keep on borrowing to pay not only for what they owed but also for the so called lenders services and interests on their loans. They had also to borrow to minimally continue with the implementation of their social and economic programs. Finally, they needed new loans to guarantee their functioning as states.

The growing intervention in Africa of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), soon complemented by that of the World Bank (WB), was made possible by the confluence of those critical factors. It was through them that the second stroke of the debt trap was activated. It consisted primordially of the conditions then established by what euphemistically became

known in the continent as the “creditors’ community”. Assuming names like the Paris Club or the Rome Club, that “community” was formed by the main creditors of each one of the countries in need of more loans. In meetings with their representatives, they would “reconsider” the conditions of the existing debt and set up new conditions for the continuation of borrowing. According to them, and usually, the states interested in rescheduling their debts and so be able to borrow more would have first to enter into agreement with the IMF and the WB. Uniformly, these institutions would make that agreement dependent on the fulfillment by those states of a number of obligatory requirements. These were the prerequisites necessary to structurally adjust their respective economies. Without them, no new money could be accessed. This was how African states were uniformly pushed into what Zeleza calls “the deadly embrace” of those agencies. He writes: “In exchange for their seal of approval and new loans the IMF and the WB exacted their pound of flesh from the emaciated African economies in the form of structural adjustments... One after another African countries surrendered... and accepted draconian “reform” or “stabilization” measures” (1989: 28-29).

Those measures can be reduced to five or six. The first one consists in the radical reduction of government spending. To a certain extent, this is a correct measure. Post-independence African states tended to become not only huge networks of individual and familial interests but also, increasingly, very inefficient and heavy infrastructures of personal power. On the other hand, and because this measure affected principally government spending on health, education and welfare, it was catastrophic for the peoples of the continent. The spread of AIDS and the multiplication of other pandemic diseases (like malaria, tuberculosis, and cholera) have here part of their deadly roots. Moreover, this is an imposition that affects Africa not only in the

present but also into the future. The new generations are being less educated, in qualitative and quantitative terms, are less healthy, have reduced access to social and political opportunities. All over the continent, mortality rates have increased in relation to the levels they had been able to reach in the twenty years following independence.

This is to a great extent aggravated and made even more complex by three other basic conditions of the SAPs: the privatization of state enterprises, the generalized contraction of wages, and the elimination or weakening of the mechanisms protecting labor. All of these measures have been characterized by important and usually unintended consequences. For instance, the privatization of water services, and the increase of prices of their supply to the growing but impoverished urban masses, has often resulted in the spread of cholera. Because privatization usually affects only those public sectors that are profitable, it has equally reduced the resources of the various states and, with it, their ability to confront crisis. At the same time, it has boosted the rates of unemployment and semi-employment to unprecedented levels. The exponential multiplication of jobless and the pressures, often of a legal nature, with that objective has, at the same time, reduced labor ability to confront the situation. All over Africa, labor movements that immediately after independence if not during the process leading to it, were assuming important roles in the direct control of policies and of the decision-making process of governments have been increasingly reduced to passivity.

Finally, the two remaining measures of SAPs are directly concerned with the opening up of African economies to the external world, which is to say to the will, interests and free penetration of multinationals. Those measures make compulsory the devaluation of national

currencies, as well as the liberalization of import-export and the removal of all kind of restrictions on foreign investment. To a great extent, these two conditions of structural adjustment make clear and explain all the others, that is to say, they denounce the true objective of the SAPs. The need for weaker governments, privatization, reduction of wages, devaluation and the elimination of mechanisms protecting labor are all part of the same packet destined to open up the African countries to foreign investments – that is to say, to allow the free play of foreign interests and objectives. This has become so obvious that it has also started to be defended not only by the IMF/WB but by the governments in place: drastic measures have to be adopted to guarantee foreign investment. This is, they add, the meaning of globalization. And there is nothing one can do to counter it – besides waiting for a better future.

In other words, none of the SAPs measures imposed by the IMF/WB to the African states since the early 1980s are directly or indirectly designed to benefit the present or the future of the peoples of the continent. They are, rather, designed to serve the interests of the multinationals based within the core. All type of possible barriers for their action has been removed. All the other conditions have been applied and, with immense social costs for the overwhelming majority of the population of Africa, consolidated. However, what is even more striking when looking at the situation in the continent from this stand point is the fact that the increase of foreign investment promised to follow the SAPs did not happen. On the contrary, the levels of FDI, if compared for instance with 2000 or even before, have been declining all over the continent. According to the OECD, “the overall picture of the investment climate in the African countries is, to varying degrees, not sufficiently attractive for FDI. This is true even in

those countries where serious reform programmes have removed many of the major barriers that acted both to foster poor governance and to deter private investment” (Ögütçü1 2004: 14). In other words, the SAPs have failed in one of their two main objectives. In terms of welfare, health, education, elimination of poverty, and the dignity of labor they have destroyed everything that already existed in Africa. They did it in order to open up the continent for foreign investment and make it highly profitable. The main agencies of that investment, the multinationals, have however stayed away. Foreign investment has been falling, not increasing in Africa.

SAPs are, consequently, a complete failure in what concerns making the continent more attractive to multinationals. They have not failed, however, in what constitutes their second main objective. As already discussed above, this objective can be defined as providing the necessary environment to guarantee the continuity of capital flows from Africa to the core in situations of systemic economic contraction like the one the world-economy has been living since the early 1970s. As also pointed out, the repercussion of systemic contraction in the periphery (and, for that matter, in the semi-periphery), in general, in Africa in particular is measured in decreasing demand, decreasing production and higher import prices. This constitutes, to be sure, one of the reasons why FDI in Africa has been declining or very slowly reaching new levels. In other words, Africa tends to dry up as a source of profits for the core. The only solution to avoid it is then the use of the debt or better, the exigency of its payment. The circle is then closed. If the African countries cannot pay their debts they must pay the service and rates implied by it. It is the outflow of these amounts that have constituted the new outflows of capital out of Africa. To be sure, and on top of the SAPs conditions, they aggravate

even more the ability of African governments to guarantee a minimum of welfare, education and health to their peoples. Scarce resources from taxes and from international aid are uniformly channeled for the core to pay for the service of the debt. At the same time, this is the basic condition, as defined by the IMF/WB to guarantee the access to new loans.

In other words, debt not only originated more debt in Africa in what soon became a self-reproductive cycle of indebtedness that continues today. It originated situations in which the economic, financial and social roles of the African states were almost integrally assumed by the IMF – through Washington and through its local missions. It resulted, in short, into new forms of direct domination of the continent as the various states were swiftly marginalized and made subaltern to the main process of decision-making. This happened as an increasing number of its countries had no alternative but to start to apply the conditions of “adjustment” dictated by the IMF at the same time having their finances and economy controlled by it and by the WB, by the European Economic Community or by other international agencies of the core.

The main lines of structural adjustment for the different countries of Africa were first made public in 1981 in an official document that in a very suggestive way became known as the “Plan of Action” (World Bank: 1981). Its main objective was to analyze and propose corrections to what are referred as the main causes for the degrading situation of the continent. The document underlines that those causes are, all of them, “internal causes”: too much state intervention in the economy; the over valuation of national currencies; neglect of peasant agriculture; and too heavy government emphasis on protected manufacturing industry. The document presents and anticipates justifications for the programs that had been designed to

overcome that situation. Their application and control by the IMF/WB was mandatory. As stated in what in each one of the national cases is titled as “Articles of Agreement” between the IMF and the African governments, the main objectives of the Adjustment Programs are “to facilitate the expansion and balanced growth of international trade” (Article I, sec. iii), as a way to “shorten the duration and lessen the degree of disequilibrium in the international balance of payments of members”. In this case the members were, of course, the highly indebted African states. Their acceptance of the conditions would be, according to the same document, the necessary base for everything else: the development of the production resources, the promotion and maintenance of high levels of employment and of real income, the “primary objectives of economic life” (World Bank 1981).

In other words, what seems fundamental in the World Bank and IMF approaches to the problems of contemporary Africa is the conception that a sustainable level of economic growth will come through an export-oriented strategy. Everything else – including national consumption and the efficient utilization of effective and potential resources -- became submitted to that objective. To be sure, this is structurally very similar both to the colonial and to many of the post-colonial export-oriented strategies of development we have described in previous chapters. Namely in what concerns colonialism, these programs do not contemplate the need for any kind of deep structural change besides the adjustment of their structure of prices in order to allow market forces to operate fully in the so called allocation of resources. In this sense they are not very different from colonialist programs of development. What now happens is that the metropolitan center and administrative control are substituted by the direct access and control of structures of accumulation of the core. Intimately related with this, they

imply the liberalization of trade based on export promotion. This means the complete opening up of the different peripheral countries to the rest of the world – which continues usually closed to them.

The great majority of the peasant population in each one of the African countries submitted to the IMF/WB regulation is not contemplated by it. Even in general terms, that regulation was not conceived to consider their social and economic living conditions or the fact that they are the direct producers of most of those exports. The fundamentalist application of the SAPs, and till now there has not been any other kind of application, establishes a kind of relationship with them that transforms them, simultaneously, into an expendable factor and into an immense pool of labor to be used if, how, where, and when needed. Till then, they are not part of the equation of structural adjustment. To be sure, this reproduces what has been always, historically, in terms of the world-economy, their designated role as a subaltern resource to be exploited, manipulated, left for itself or moved around. To be sure, we find this attitude in colonialism: this was how forced labor under all its forms considered those multitudes. But we find it as well in the long night of slave trade as we detect it in the so-called urban bias of most of the development projects of post-colonial Africa. One of the most astonishing features of the SAPs is, precisely, the fact that they reproduce directly that urban bias. They are urban-designed projects.

To a great extent this is not changing the historical trajectory of those multitudes. The fact that they have been the most affected historically, by the slave trade, by colonialism, by forced labor, by apartheid and by generalized exploitation of their resources is not minimally taken

into account. They have to remain poor to continue to produce, that's all. The IMF/WB structural adjustment program involves, as well, strict conditions that preclude the involvement of the state in social development. It implies the compression of its bureaucracies and forbids all kinds of protectionism. Among its objectives, there is the privatization of all the public sectors and public enterprises through their open sale for the best price. If there is no buyer then they will have to be closed down and their workers lay off. Finally, the main social objective of SAP appears as being the transformation of the great majority of the population in each one of the African states into the kind of more or less *vogelfrei* proletariat needed as labor reserves. It will be through it that those populations will be transformed into consumers of markets-in-the-making. Despite the frequent anti-poverty rhetoric of both interstate institutions, the heavy reality is that SAP seems to be an economic program without pity and without people.

The first main characteristic that becomes obvious when the IMF/WB SAP is considered is the fact that it was conceived and started to be implemented in a phase of contraction of the world-economy. The result in Africa was, to be sure, a catastrophic one. As Wallerstein points out, "at moments of world economic downturns... the relative decline in world output reduces the market for the exports of the peripheral countries, and faster than it does the prices of their imports...The bulk of the periphery simply 'stagnates'" (Wallerstein, 1979: 88-89). This means also, as for instance asserted by Zeleza, that "economic crises in peripheral capitalist regions are essentially derivative and secondary" (1989:15). The SAP was consequently applied in Africa in a situation of economic stagnation.

This was generally speaking the first evidence that the objective of the SAP was not to contribute to the economic and social development of the various independent states of the continent. It was, rather, an integral part of the attempts by the core to expand its sources of accumulation and consequently to slow down if not to completely overcome, the effects of economic depression. Gunder Frank has classically shown (1980), that the expansion of the core, its economic prosperity, means always the increasing of the underdevelopment, dependency, and misery of the periphery or, for that matter, of Africa as part of it. Expansion, on the other hand, is usually a function of the attempts by capital to overcome the effects of phases B in the cyclical curves of the K-waves. In particular in those phases on which economic depression coincides with the beginning of the end of a dominant hegemonic power in the world-economy, Great Britain in the late nineteenth century, as the United States in the late twentieth century, the evidence is that new forms of relationship tending to increase the respective degree of exploitation and surplus extraction develop between what increasingly becomes a multicentric, highly competitive core and its periphery. Although limiting it to phases of declining hegemony, Bergesen made this point when he wrote that “colonialism expands when there is instability within the core and contracts when there is stability. There is instability when there are multiple core powers... and there is stability when one hegemonic power dominates” (Bergesen, 1970: 121; also Bergesen and Schoemberg, 1980). In the case of contemporary Africa and on top of all other channels of surplus extraction by the core and semiperiphery that increase in the degree of exploitation is clearly embedded in what became known throughout the last thirty years as the IMF/WB SAP.

Made possible by what I designated above as the “debt trap” the main objective of the SAP was and is presented as being the regulation by the IMF/WB of the debt problem. This meant, in the first place, the control of all the projects of development, of the central banks, and of the ministries of finance in each one of the countries affected by the SAP. Paradoxically or maybe not, that resolution of the debt problem represented, first of all, an explosive increase of the African foreign debt. This was geared, as already pointed out, by the possibility opened up by the acceptance of the SAP by the African countries to access new loans. But it was also geared by the quick increase of the respective rates of interest, in particular after the mid-1970. Borrowing under the WB/IMF became increasingly more expensive, from 5.4% in 1976 to 8.5% in 1982 (Darkoh, 1989: 63). But borrowing under the WB/IMF increased as well exponentially from the early 1980s onwards. Amounting to a total of 56.2 billion dollars in 1980, Africa’s foreign debt grew to 96.5 billion in 1985 and to an amazing 147.0 billion dollars in 1989. Besides the billions of dollars in the meantime paid to creditors in account of the original debt, this represented an increase of more than 150% (World Bank, 1989-1991; OECD, 1990). In terms of the total GDP of the continent, this represented an increase in the rate of debt from 39% in 1970, to 69% in 1987. If related with the totality of exports, ratio rose from 93.6% to 355.4% in the same period of time (Zezeza, 1989: 24).

This general increase of Africa’s foreign debt to unprecedented levels is made even worst with the considerable burden represented by obligatory payments of the debt service. Ascending already to more than 6.3 billion dollars in 1980, the annual average represented by those payments increased to 11.2 billion dollars in 1985. Under African and other international pressures, it was the object of an adjustment that placed it in the order of to 8.8 billions in

1989. In percentage of the total debt, its service increased from 10.9% in 1980, to 28.2% in 1985. In 1989, it decreased to 22.2% (World Bank: Idem; OECD, idem; Tart, 1993: 21). It has however been increasing again, since then.

In what concerns debt structure, the African Development Bank adds that the share of loans received directly by the states of the continent under the SAP obligations has increased continuously since 1980. It reached 64.8% in 1985 and 73.7% in 1990. The Bank points out that this is a growing trend in Africa. It is also a source of non concealed preoccupation for its potential and effective consequences. Among them it has already become “a major obstacle to recovery and sustained growth in the continent” (ADB, 1991: 31).

For Onimode, the imposition of the SAP in Africa reflects the conditions on which the prize of a “silent war of recolonization” is being collected by the core. That prize, he adds, includes the massive foreign plunder of Africa through huge outflows of capital. It benefits also from the cheapening of its raw materials. The free repatriation of super-profits by multinationals and the acquisition, often by those same multinationals, of cheap state assets through privatization aggravates its consequences. The program imposed by the IMF/WB has thus resulted into the increased foreign domination of the African economies. At the same time, it implied the physical occupation of the central banks and finance ministries of the great majority of the African states by agents and representatives of those organizations (1989: 9).

Onimode does not quantify the effects of this cluster of effects. However, Finn Tart, formerly a high officer of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), an agency of the United Nations, tried to measure them. With that objective, he singled out a period of eight years during which he considered the impact of those consequences, called by him “external factors”, into the general economic performance of the majority of the sub-Saharan countries of Africa. With that objective he considers features like the actual interest paid by them every year, the payments of the interest rates of new borrowings, the frequent increase of those rates, and the falling of the terms of trade. He concluded that in the eight years period of implementation of the SAP under his observation, the “losses” suffered by the continent increased steadily. Notably, they jumped from a level of 1.3% of the GDP in 1980 (or \$6.1 billion dollars of which \$3.3 billions in interest payments and \$2.8 billion as a result of the fall of terms of trade) to 9.6% of the GDP in 1987 (or \$17.3 billion dollars, 3.5 in interest payments and \$11.2 billions resulting from losses in terms of trade). “This”, he concluded, “is well above the negative overall resource balance of 3.3 percent of the GDP in 1987. Furthermore, had the terms of trade not changed and had the level of interests remained at previous levels, sub-Saharan Africa would *ceteris paribus* have had a considerable current account surplus from 1984 onwards”. For him, the dominant approach of the World Bank and IMF “singling out deficiencies in domestic policy-making as the primary and dominant source of the African crisis in the 1970’s and 1980’s is vulnerable to justified criticism” (Tart, 1993: 22-23 and 19; cf. also Table 1.8).

Some kind of quantification about structural adjustment in Africa was also attempted by Zeleza who writes that for instance in 1986 the totality of capital flows to the continent were around

US\$18 billion dollars of which US\$16 billion was assistance to development and \$2 billion in private lending. In the same period the commodity prices dropped by \$19 billion while the debt service paid by the continent amounted to more than \$15 billion dollars. This means that \$34 billion of dollars went out of Africa, he concludes, representing “**a net outflow of about US\$ 44 million a day**” (1989: 34, my emphasis, ML). This does not include, of course, other forms of capital out flowing from Africa under the form of surpluses extracted from the direct exploitation of its labor and its various sectors of production. It does not include as well the direct payment of the debt...

One of the main consequences of this outflow of capital from Africa is the accentuated contraction of investments in welfare and social development. To be sure, this is a feature common to the three layers of the capitalist world-economy since the late 1970s. In Africa, the continent most necessitated of that kind of investments, the level achieved was however the lowest of them all, **minus** 11.4%. This is affecting the whole population of Africa not only in what concerns education at all its levels but also concerning health, the combat against HIV/AIDS, poverty and hunger, the access to water, child-care and the equalization of social opportunities. It affects men, women and children of all ages. Besides its amorality, this accentuated decline is also striking for two other main reasons. The first is that it coincides with and appears in the direct causality of the imposition of structural adjustment on the continent since the late 1970s by the IMF and the WB. Secondly, because this accentuated decline represents the inversion of a general trend in the continent. If we consider the period of ten years preceding the imposition of SAP the reality was that since the mid 1960s the investment of African states on social development had achieved an annual average growth of

about 10%. According to statistics collected and published by the WB that was an average greater than any other registered in the periphery or semiperiphery of the capitalist world-economy in the same period of time (World Bank: 1987: 208-209). This was how, in Africa, sectors that were previously considered sources of justified pride due to their advance in relation to the previous colonial situation, sectors like general education, health, children care, women development, or housing, were severely affected by IMF/WB structural adjustment to enter, since the late 1980s, into a more or less generalized collapse all over the continent (PNUD, 1990).

The generalized contraction of social development in Africa is however only one of the direct consequences of structural adjustment. Other quantifiable declines have as well been registered and, among them, that of net investment in means of production. This has become, throughout the last twenty years the main factor explaining the impossibility to expand outputs and introduce new techniques of production in the continent. Without a serious and consequent renewal of its means, technologies and strategies of production any kind of economic growth in the continent will continue to be impossible. To a great extent, this must be related with the fact that all forms of foreign aid to African development continues to be dependent of the effective or implicit approval of the IMF. The result has been that so called foreign direct investment (FDI) in the continent has consistently declined from about US\$ 1.5 billion a year in the early 1980s to less than US\$ 400 million dollars as a yearly average from the middle of that decade onwards (PNUD 1990: 11).

In the convergence of all these negative aspects there is little surprise that the imposition of the SAP on Africa by the IMF/WB has been consistently denounced as a generalized failure. More surprising, however, is that the same conclusion has slowly but consistently become part of the annual reports about that implementation published by the World Bank. In other words, from an upbeat attitude, highly optimistic and full of development promises, the WB has since the late 1980s changed it to a more pessimistic and qualified set of conclusions about the relative efficiency of the SAP. This becomes clear if we place side by side reports from both organizations published before and after 1989. For instance, the main conclusion of the report “Africa’s Adjustment and Growth in the 1980’s” the general conclusion is that the SAP policies being applied were resulting in “emerging signs of economic improvement since the mid-1980’s (and) a brighter prospect of recovery and growth” (World Bank, 1989: 12). Two years after, this approach had already changed considerably. It had been substituted by a different conclusion pointing out that in 1989 the economic growth in sub-Saharan had “continued to fall short of the population growth”. Consequently, the results of the SAP had ended up “adding another year to a decade of economic decline” (World Bank, 1991: 26-28). This happened, underlines the report, despite the general implementation of policies to encourage food production that coincided with favorable weather conditions for agriculture all year round in most of the continent. According to the report, and besides the usual reference to the negative weight of “internal” conditions, the bad results were also a consequence of the continuing decline of the international prices of export commodities. In particular in what concerned the prices for cocoa and coffee it represented “a severe blow to the export earnings of producers (that) as part of their structural adjustment program... had raised the domestic producer prices... in an effort to increase production and hence exports” (World Bank 1989).

A great number of independent analysts had already asserted the same type of conclusions. Based on data corresponding to the first decade of application of those policies and programs in a great majority of the countries of the continent, Adriansen, for instance, had no doubt that “the take over of control of economic management from African states by these institutions while intended to cure the crisis has actually made conditions worse” (1989: 219). The same conclusion was achieved by Campbell and Loxley who attributed it to the fact that the conception behind those policies constitutes “a distorted interpretation of how the so called newly industrialized countries have successfully adopted export-oriented strategies” (1989: 2). The same approach and conclusions can be equally found in the 1993 Annual Report of Oxfam, a British based aid agency. Analyzing the African implementation of the policies of the two organizations since they had been “effectively controlling the economic policy-making in the continent”, the report concludes that those policies have been not only “irresponsible and complacent”. They were also “a complete failure”. In the Oxfam perspective this is due to the fact that the World Bank and IMF programs and measures in Africa have been “precisely the opposite” of what was required if the objective was its “positive development”. The consequences will be that the extremely high interest rates, severe credit squeezes, the cuts in public expenditure and the drainage of funds imposed by those programs will prolong the economic and social decline of the region “well into the next century” (Oxfam-BBC, 1993). A similar criticism is made by Michaels. According to her, “the structural adjustment programs are now more than a decade old, which is unfortunate, since they were supposed to have died victorious by age six”. In the meantime, she adds, “they have not achieved any meaningful growth in private investment”. For her, the “root problem” is that the World Bank has been in

Africa “a powerful combination of arrogance, ignorance and absolute, unchecked power... Africa has become a research lab for economic reform experimentation—much of it dictated by the terms of international lenders—and the continent is increasingly worse for the wear” (1993: 98 and 101).

At the culmination of all these aspects, it becomes obvious that the policies of the World Bank and IMF in Africa do not represent the opening up of new roads of economic and social development for the continent. Rather, in their inadequacy to the realities of the continent, they are “imported programs” and as such they repeat the basic characteristics of many of the development programs adopted and implemented before and after the various independencies. They are, in other words, old vinegar in new bottles. As inferred above, however, development must not be considered as being their main objective. Based on currency devaluations and compensations to attract private investments, on the generalized export-oriented reform of agriculture, on privatization as source of resources and on the drastic reduction of spending by the public sector, particularly on social infrastructures (Darkoh, 1989: 64; Onimode, 1989: 8), the reality seems rather to be that the IMF/WB SAP imposed in Africa forms of continuity not of rupture with colonialism. This explains why they brought back as a priority the cash crop system for export. According to Darkoh, “agricultural exports continues to be the primary source of foreign currency for most African nations today; much of this foreign currency is required to service their foreign debt, and little of the balance is used to better the conditions of the majority of African people who are rural and poor” (Darkoh, 1989: 63). As Okojie rightly points out the generality of the measures imposed by the World Bank and the IMF determined

the reintroduction in Africa “of the very economic path which has been the source of (its) poverty and misery (1989: 11).

This considerable outflow of capital from Africa in what was and, to a great extent continued to be in the first years of 2004 a phase of economic contraction of the world-economy appears, consequently, as the true objectives of the structural adjustment imposed in Africa since the early 1980s. They have created conditions according to which a stagnant African economy continued to contribute, probably to ranges never before attained, to the economic recovery of the core. It was as such, not in their nature of core-based or core-oriented policies that they determine equally the interruption of the great majority of the policies and projects of development that had been started within the generality of the newly independent states of the continent immediately before and after their respective independencies. By doing it, they blocked any other possibility or alternative of relationship with an evolving world-system.

2: Southern Africa in Crisis and the Artificiality of SAPs

Structural adjustment started to be imposed in some of the Southern African countries more or less at the same time and for the same reasons it was being imposed in the rest of the continent. To extend it to Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa, the IMF/WB coalition had however to wait to the end of colonialism, first, to that of the liberation model of development, afterwards. Things were relatively different in relation to South Africa where the apartheid regime, before its demise, started the first implementation of IMF policies in the country. In what concerns the other countries, the extension of those policies was also one of the objectives of the regional project of destabilization conceived and

implemented by the apartheid regime of South Africa. As the effects of aggression started to be even more complicated in Mozambique, the IMF activated the mechanisms conditioning the access of the Mozambican state to new loans. After the failure of various attempts to overcome that obstruction, the Mozambique state had to accept exploratory talks with the IMF. In 1987, a first agreement was signed and the conversations necessary to set up the conditions for the full adhesion of the country to the IMF started. Notwithstanding the strong resistance of the Mozambican representatives to safeguard some of the social achievements of the first decade of independence, achievements like the free access to education, health and dwelling, the fundamental conditions of the IMF ended up being imposed without change. This happened after the Mbuzini conspiracy and the murder by South African secret forces of an influential group of members of the Mozambican leadership, including its President, Samora Moises Machel. In what became its more critical phase since independence, a debilitated state decided to accept the draconian measures of structural adjustment and, under the close control of the IMF/WB, to start to implement them.

A similar process of resistance characterized the extension of SAP to Namibia and Zimbabwe. It was still going on, in the second of the two countries, at the end of 2004. In South Africa, the process of adhesion was initiated and completed during the last years of apartheid. The transitional government led by the ANC and including representatives of the former apartheid regime confirmed that adhesion without any evident reluctance. It re-affirmed, as well, the neo-liberal policies of the apartheid regime as being also their own policies. In particular after the retirement of Nelson Mandela, those policies were consolidated and expanded. As Patrick Bond tells us, they brought together New and Old Guard ANC officials and cadres around the

principles of so called free-market economic policies based “on an export-orientation fetish” (13). Like what had happened before in Mozambique, the SAP recognition in South Africa by the ANC represented the end of an alternative project of development. As much as the main programmatic documents published by Frelimo before and immediately after independence, including the country’s constitution, the ANC’s main political reference, the Freedom Charter, constitutes in itself a frontal denial of the policies advocated by neoliberal globalization. Their imposition was possible because in the case of Mozambique the state had been substantially weakened by internal deviations that increasingly made it incapable of responding to the South African aggression under all its forms. Similarly, in South Africa, the state formed by the ANC was marked at birth by compromise and concessions that destroyed its ability to implement the type of liberation project that had been developed during the struggle against apartheid and promised to the South African people. In both countries, as in the rest of Southern Africa, the imposition of the SAP followed the exact same conditions that characterized it in the rest of Africa -- with the same or similar catastrophic results.

Just like the development projects designed by Frelimo during the armed struggle the ANC Freedom Charter, in its spirit and letter, is an anti neo-liberalism statement. It is complemented by the Constitutional Bill of Rights of 1996 stating that everybody in liberated South Africa has the right to healthcare services, including reproductive health care, education, sufficient food, and social security. As happened in the case of Mozambique, it is emphasized that the triumph of the struggle has to establish some kind of effective demarcation, in political, economical, social and even cultural terms, not only with colonialism and apartheid but, also, more importantly, with the kind of neo-colonial system more or less embraced all over the

continent by its postcolonial elites. To be sure, the construction of those elites by the core was a necessary pre-condition to the extension and practice of neoliberal policies in Africa, under the general designation of SAPs. In South Africa those elites were already in place and actively contributing to that implementation of neo-liberal policies when both the Freedom Charter and the spirit of the Constitutional Bill of Rights started to be extensively violated. This was and continues to be done with the direct support, often even under the direction, of many of the ANC cadres that, in the previous years, had been consistently struggling against them, defending an alternative to them and claiming for a decent future for all and every South African. Essentially the objectives are precisely the same being imposed in Mozambique. A big difference must however be pointed out: it cost a war and millions of deaths to finally achieve in Mozambique what in South Africa was considered as a natural, acceptable part of the transition. This is what makes some analysts of the South African situation today to speak in terms of an alliance between the ANC and the still prevalent interests of economic apartheid. Patrick Bond, one of the most interesting and outspoken of those analysts, tells us that “together, the ruling party and its new-found Afrikaner co-conspirators” have allowed or approved policies that led to the **increasing de-capitalization** of the country by rich white people and by the largest firms, including in the latter case, the relocation of their financial headquarters to London. The alliance resulted also in the cut of corporate taxes from 48% in 1994 to 30% five years after. This was done in name of the need to attract new investments, an objective that did not materialized. The co-conspirators alliance allowed as well the collapse of industries like clothing, footwear and appliances and organized the increasing privatization of public assets. This led to the firing by business of a fifth of all the workers of the formal-sectors of the economy as a way to contract expenses and increase profits. The results were

also disastrous in environmental terms. Also dramatic were the consequences to public health with the rapid expansion of cholera, HIV/AIDS, etc. Finally, all this was made even worse by the generalized “lethal ruling class incompetence” (Bond 13-16). If the South African statistics were adjusted not to include the non-renewable resources that mining houses strip from the ground, Bond adds, the GDP balance would be consistently negative in the long term (Ibid: 31). One of the possible conclusions is that, consequently, capital accumulation in SA is based and dependent on those non-renewable resources. This means that it is a non-sustainable process. On the other hand, this seems also to confirm what I defended in a previous chapter, that South Africa cannot be defined as industrialized country. Its semi-peripheral status continues to be fundamentally dependent of it’s complementarily with the rest of Southern Africa.

The problems today increasingly affecting South Africa are not different if compared with those affecting the rest of the region. To a great extent, their public discussion has been hidden under the rhetoric of nationalism complemented with that of sustainable development and democracy. The reality behind this rhetoric is that poverty, including absolute poverty, continues to increase. In Mozambique it is now affects something like 72 percent of the entire population. In South Africa it jumped from half to more than 60 percent of the Black population between 1993 and 2001. Of the different millennium goals as defined by the United Nations Mozambique is considered as being “far behind” in such fundamental fields as the access of children to primary school, the elimination of gender disparity in all levels of education, and infant mortality. The indices corresponding to the goal described as to halve the percentage of people suffering from hunger are equally considered as below the necessary

(AEO 2003/2004). What increases the paradox of this dreadful situation is that it happens at the same time that the IMF/WB elected Mozambique to the level of an exemplary model in Africa for the triumphs achieved by structural adjustments in Africa. The situation is slightly better in South Africa but the country is considered “sliding back” in what concerns infant mortality. The situation in Zimbabwe is, on the other hand and perhaps surprisingly, better than that of Mozambique and similar to South Africa. Objectives related with gender equality and access to water have been achieved or are on track. The poverty and education indices continue however to increase (AEO 2003/2004). The situation of the HIV/AIDS in the region constitutes with absolute poverty the two most worrying problems affecting the region. This is so because they are not being counteracted by serious policies and, to be sure, the IMF/WB coalition pays little more than lip service to both. In the case of Mozambique, one of the countries with the highest levels of infection, the combat was considered by local ONGs and United Nations agencies as being “out of control” (RTPI: September 2004).

This must be related to what constitutes one of the fundamental consequences of the imposition of the structural adjustment policies on the region: the increasing social and economic polarization it causes. This means that the already very unequal economic structures of the region, a direct result of colonialism, apartheid and more than forty years of war, are becoming even more unequal. This has been happening not only at the level of a shrinking middle class. It has affected local elites, making them wealthier but contracting their number and relative importance. At the same time structural adjustment has increased exponentially the number of households living below the poverty line. These trends continue to be very much active in the region.

An obvious conclusion from the consultation of the statistics published by the World Bank and other similar organizations, like the OECD, is that the economy of the region achieved a level of self-reproducing stagnation which has not yet been overcome. One of the direct consequences of this situation is the increasing levels of unemployment registered in all its countries: with indices that achieve levels between half and 60 percent of the active population. Only in South Africa the stagnant economy resulted in the loss of more than 1,5 million jobs in the last two years in a process that has not yet ended. This means that the levels of growth registered in the cases of South Africa and in that of Mozambique, the IMF/WB miracle, have been artificially achieved. They do not correspond, in other words, to the natural functioning of their respective economies but rather to injections of capital whose regulations, conditions, and even origins contradict the neo-liberal principles on which both economies appear to be based. On the other hand, they do not mean in the perspective of a self-sustaining development. An interesting aspect of those investments is that they contemplate projects that are common to South Africa and to the northern region of Mozambique.

The discussion of the so called Mozambican economic miracle and the up beat situation being lived by the leading elites in South Africa will help me to illustrate what I consider to be not only the true objectives of structural adjustment but also its nefarious consequences both to those countries but also to the region. I will utilize as my main sources of information documentation made public in the regional press, radio and TV of Southern Africa. Some of the major publications about the region and published, in an almost monopolistic way, by international organizations like the IMF, the WB, and the OECD will as well be used. An

important reference for my reflection will be the work that has been done in this field by Patrick Bond (2002) often in contact with a great number of South African social movements. Equally, Mozambican sources who want to continue anonymous will be taken into account as well as a brief in the field research I realized in Maputo during the fall of 2003.

3. IMF/WB SAPs as SDIs, IDZs, EPZs and MOZAL in Southern Africa

One of the most important vectors of the existing economic development in Southern Africa today consist of what locally is known as IDZs, Industrial Development Zones. According to Bond, they are seen in South Africa as a way out of the systematic lack of international competitiveness that affects the productive infrastructure of the country (2002: 69). In other words, they are the hope for South Africa to be able to defend and maintain its position in the semi-periphery of the world-economy and in regional terms. In the case of Mozambique, they try to overcome the development failure that the imposition of the SAPs in the country by the WB/IMF has represented throughout the last decade. In more global terms, IDZs constitute part of the present strategy of capital in trying to contract costs of operation, not only in what concerns the cost of labor but also those related with taxes, inputs, and environmental destruction. They are a particular category of Spatial Development Initiatives or SDIs. Essentially they are the same type of industrial mega-projects around which are constructed the also called Export Processing Zones (EPZs).

Whatever their names or designations this type of projects all have in common the fact that they are a central feature in the present profit-seeking strategies of capital. They started by being installed in semi-peripheral regions but they have been also located within the periphery.

They have also in common the fact that they are usually fenced off areas and consequently isolated as much as possible from the realities of the areas where they are located. These areas are usually situated near an airport or a port as their production is mostly destined to be exported. Equally, the main raw-materials or semi-finished products used by them are imported.

By definition, SDIs offer effective or potential investors special incentives under the form of suspension of custom duties, discounted water and electricity, tax holidays, and cheap loans. In some cases they are as well excluded from official dispositions about minimum wages, from labor laws and from environmental requirements. Through SDIs, capital externalizes some of the conditions of core-production. By outsourcing production it seeks to maximize profits through the most favorable local conditions of activity. Among them, capital demands are particularly focused on conditions offering the minimum possible costs in what concerns labor, inputs and taxes. SDIs constitute also an important instrument to externalize and abolish the increasing costs and effects of environment destruction within the core.

Hailed in their beginnings in the late 1970's as constituting the only way out for a world-economy in crisis, SDIs became later on not only the object of generalized criticism but, in a growing number of cases, a generalized failure. In other words, they did not completely fulfill the expectations of capital. According to this perspective, three of their characteristics have been consistently pointed out as highly negative. The first one is the evidence that as large scale projects they are too vulnerable to the cyclical fluctuations and other boom-bust processes of international markets. This started to become particularly obvious in the last

decade of the 20th century both in Latin America and Asia. In a process that continued throughout the first years of the present century, this has been once again made evident by what started to be heavily trumpeted as an example for the rest of the world: the Mexican *maquiladoras* in the border with the United States. As the contraction of the world-economy assumed critical levels, a growing number of their industrial sectors had to drastically contract production or be stopped. This led to the need to reduce labor, originating thousands of suddenly jobless men and women. To be sure, unemployment and contracted production would not be an important problem to capital if the correspondent immobilization of local investment would not follow those reductions. The general systemic trend is that they can suddenly cease to be privileged areas for profit-making and, consequently, for the accumulation of capital. Like the emptied industrial parks of the core that they replaced, SDIs tend, also and consequently, to become an anomaly.

This problem has been consistently aggravated by a second unattended consequence of the multiplication of SDIs around the semi-periphery. Consistently, they have been contributing increasingly to world crisis by producing many times what, in particular in metal markets, is demanded by the world-economy. Leading to frequent gluts of commodities and semi-transformed raw materials (iron, etc), this not only aggravates world competition but sets up a race to the bottom in what concerns prices and, consequently, profits.

Thirdly, SDIs under the form of EPZs or IDZs used to be too dependent of large quantities of local labor. To be sure, the abundant offer of manpower at very low wages is, to start with, one of the main reasons for their set up out of the core. The problem is that the semi-peripheral cost

of labor also tends to increase with time and, from a competitive advantage point of view, it ends up being a very expensive problem. The transition of SDIs to new, lower-wages regions, including timidly the periphery, was a way to confront and solve it. Since the mid-1980s, outsourcing of already outsourced industrial projects and production has become a dominant process of the world-system core.

Outsourcing or delocalization has obviously many advantages for capital. It constitutes an instrument to confront and control labor pressures at the same time opening up the possibility of projecting into the future renewed conditions of profit-making. It affects, however another important factor of competition: the need to innovate, to introduce new technological processes and constantly increase production and productivity. The permanent eventuality of contracting or ceasing production with delocalization to other regions of the world is a major obstacle to the natural development of those features. In particular it affects the possibility of upgrading the skill of existing workers in order to make them able to use and accept new technologies. In other words, the need for frequent delocalization ends up constituting a generator of slow growth.

The introduction of so-called flexible processes of production tended to confront and overcome such a basic problem. It led, since the early 1990's, to the generalization of a second type of EPZs. Based on flexible forms of production, and considerably more advanced in the levels of technology and work they required, they constitute in terms of world-production a more advanced layer in relation to the dominant type of SDIs and their mega-projects. In what

concerns older SDIs, however, the reality is that flexible production is not one of their characteristics: on the contrary.

Finally, SDIs in all their forms and modalities constitute an immense and always present risk not only for local but also to global environment. What this means is that they can and usually do transfer huge, unexpected costs of environment destruction to the locales where they are established. To be sure, these costs will have to be paid in a more or less near future. However, and almost by definition, that payment is expected to start when the SDI is no more present...

If the general appraisal of SDIs in the perspective of capital has generally been a negative one it can be considered as disastrous in the perspective of the interests of the peoples of the areas and countries where they are set up. To start with, they do not lead to technological transfers as managerial and high skills jobs are in the hands of foreigners. Secondly, the local incorporation of value can achieve levels of around 40% but, usually, it is inferior to 20%. In the case of the major SDI in Mozambique that incorporation is even lower. All the needed raw-material is imported and all the production is exported. This means that the foreign exchange earnings are usually overstated. Moreover, SDIs are usually enormous destructors of the environment.

In Mozambique, old SDIs, including EPZs in its main ports, were strongly resisted during the First Republic. The general argument then used was that they would take away resources of the country and leave behind, sooner or later, no more than the holes from where they were extracted.

In a more systemic level and more recently, a similar conception was equally assumed within the core, namely by the OECD countries. This conception is based on the general evidence that with time traditional capital-intensive manufacturing centers, most especially those built on transportation hubs, tend to “become “brownfields”, i.e., sites deeply affected by chemical and other forms of toxicity”. They would consequently require, sooner or later, substantial investments to minimize the damages from the past (Bond 2002: 71) and their negative impact on the present and the future.

It is in the confluence of all these negative features that a third type of SDI areas is being planned and tentatively set up by capital. To start with, those new SDIs are being conceived neither as the locale of a single capital-intensive major industry nor around the flexible production of the same type of exporting goods. They are, rather, formed as territorially bounded groups of different industrial clusters, formed by flexible, small-scale and complementary productive units. Their main objective is not only to be able to control production according to sudden market changes but also to be ready to offer new types of commodities according to new potential or effective market demands. On the other hand, and although still using low wage labor, the main element for their set up is the access to cheaper mid-skilled workers. The use of local resources and skills continues to be an important factor but not only or not necessarily. At the same time and in face of the disastrous effects to the environment of old SDIs and the fact that they can be reflected in increasing market pressures, the planning of new ones are also including relatively higher investments in environmental protection. Although this new approach can increase costs, the advantages that in the first place were demanded by capital in the setting out of old EPZs continue to be very much the same:

cheaper access to inputs, including energy and labor, important tax breaks and tax holidays, the externalization of pollution and lower costs in what concerns the use of land and infrastructures like roads, ports or railways. And, to be sure, great amounts of public rhetoric to substitute concrete measures to protect the environment.

We have here, consequently, a succession of three different types of SDIs, each more sophisticated than the previous one. The natural way to consider them is to see also each type replacing the former, with better conditions of functioning and better ways to protect the environment. But this is not what is happening in the world-economy. There is no substitution or upgrade. The three types of SDIs continue to be set up and functioning simultaneously within the space of the world-economy. As such, old SDIs, flexible SDIs and the new and future SDIs are designed and created according to a kind of hierarchy which is based on what I would call political space. A hierarchy decided by capital that demands all the cost-cutting features which, in the first place, led to their conception. But these features have now to be complemented by new advantages. Measured in terms of their interrelationship with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, those new required advantages are in direct relation to the degree of political weakness represented by those relations. This is how stronger peripheral or semi-peripheral states can claim and negotiate for flexible and for new types of EPZs. At the same time, old SDIs continue to be the only reward that politically weaker states are worth of. Southern Africa SDIs or, as they are there designated, IDZs, are mostly of the old type. They consequently bring with them the type of labor exploitation, reduced advantages and environmental destruction that new types of SDIs try to confront and, to a certain degree, reduce in other regions of the world. To call them IDZs was a rhetoric spin with the objective

of making believe that those conditions had been taken into account. But this is not what happens.

The latest and most important SDIs in Southern Africa have been established to form a kind of horse-shoe curve between Port Elizabeth and Maputo. Some of them were allowed by the South African white regime during the last days of the apartheid regime, in the early 1990's. Among them, there is Columbus Steel, Alusaf II and Namakwa Sands. Anglo American also opened up the Highveld Steel and Vanadium project, enlarging and substituting its Middleburg Steel. In 1995, Iscor set up Saldanha Steel, also in South Africa. In Mozambique, with the strong support of the World Bank, the Mozal aluminum smelter was started in 2000. The construction of a second phase, destined to double its capacity and output is already being implemented, also near the Maputo harbor and bay. Finally in South Africa the so called Mandela Metropolis at the Coega deep water port, near Port Elizabeth, has been started as an EPZ in 2002 and is well under way.

These different mega-projects belong to the Anglo American Corporation (Columbus Steel, Namakwa Sands and Highveld Steel), to BHP Billiton (Alusaf, Mozal) and to both corporations through Iscor (Saldanha Steel). The Coega IDZ will have an important participation from Pechiney. Besides Billiton, Mozal has minority participations of the Mitsubishi Corporation and the Mozambican state (<http://www.mozal.co.mz>). All the projects had important inputs from the South African Industrial Development Corporation (IDC). In the case of Mozal, there was also the participation of the World Bank, through its International Finance Corporation. The US\$ 120 million in loans thus invested has been described as the

biggest-ever investment in the continent by the WB. The World Bank, through another of its tentacles, the International Development Association, was also instrumental, through the investment of about US\$ 30 million, to the privatization to the rich natural gas fields in Pande. In this deal, which counted with the active participation, often achieving the level of direct pressure, of the US administration, the main interlocutor and winner of the process was the infamous Enron. With the disappearance of Enron, the project has been taken over by Sasol. The main use of its production will be to power another capital intensive, energy-dependent mineral smelter, with the environmental destruction that it implies.

Notwithstanding the communalities and the shared paternity, there are, of course, important distinctions among those different SDIs, their world-economic role and their functioning. But what among them and between them and those in the rest of the world is common and similar are probably more striking than their differences. In particular in what concerns their most negative aspects.

Pointing out some of their common features, Patrick Bond describes them as being “environmentally destructive, extractive and energy-intensive sites” (2002: 74). They become possible, he adds, because large advantages in what concerns foreign exchange, energy and state support were conceded by the states where they were or are being established. The fact that so many of those zones in Southern Africa exist in relation to highly productive mineral smelters is due to the fact that, also according to Bond, “the price of electricity charged to mining and smelter operations is the lowest in the world” (*Ibid*: 338).

This is consequently the reason why most of them are very large mineral beneficiation projects. In general, they receive the raw material or mineral to process from sources located outside the region. Similarly, the totally or the greatest part of their production is exported. In the case of Mozal 1 and 2 just like in the case of the Coega project in South Africa, the totality of raw material, alumina, is imported from Australia. After transformed into aluminum ingots (or aluminium, as it is designated in South Africa, all the production is exported. In the case of Mozal, the destination is, by contract, the European Union, in particular Holland and France.

One of the major arguments used both by governments and by the international organizations to “justify” this type of projects and their highly negative consequences is that they create jobs. However, this is not true. Calculations made by movements for the defense of the environment in South Africa concluded that the SDIs presently being installed in the arch Port Elizabeth-Maputo are small job creators. Moreover, the relative cost per job created is extremely high: between one and three million Rand per job in average. The number of jobs created is, consequently, reduced: Mozal employs less than 400 local permanent workers. Following the trend in similar situations around the world, wages are also extremely low. In the case of Mozal, the wages for construction workers are less than US\$ 1.20 per day. Mozambican middle managers, the highest of the local contracts, are also paid much less than their foreign counterparts. In 2003 their wages corresponded in general to less than one third of those being received by their foreign colleagues.

Besides the reduced wages, the SDIs effective contribution to national economies is also very limited. Also in what concerns Mozal, the fact that it constitutes an “enclaved” project between

import and export implies that it is not linked to upstream industries and has little or no potential to supply downstream industries. Its production is based in imported raw material, their smelting into ingots, and their export. It does not offer conditions, consequently, to create new jobs, outside its perimeter of production.

How can consequently a project like Mozal be explained in terms and in the perspective of economic growth and development? It can not. In an interview with a World Bank officer in Maputo, he used two main arguments to justify it. The first underlined the quantitative impact of the construction of Mozal at the level of growth indicators. In other words, it emphasized the fact that the entry of the necessary investments represented a beautiful upward spike in the curves of economic growth of the country. When pointed out that such a quantitative increase was principally impressive as a statistic he used a second argument: Mozal can be a way of attracting new investors. It constitutes, he added, “the major a front window for the Mozambican miracle”. The same official was well aware that Mozal was not the kind of project a country like Mozambique needs. But, without it, the Mozambican miracle according to the country’s GDP, the privileged referential measure in the WB/IMF documents and rhetoric, would not exist. And the WB and IMF imposition of the SAP in Mozambique would be what in reality it seems to be: a scandalous failure.

What is perhaps amazing is that these conclusions can be easily reached through the texts published by the direction of Mozal in its web-site (<http://www.mozal.co.mz>). One of them, under the title “Mozal and the European Union” states that: **“The production of agricultural goods that once dominated Mozambique's exports declined in both absolute and**

percentage terms - from 99.4 to 94.7 million euros, and from 58 to 18 per cent. Shellfish (mainly prawns) are the second most important export to the EU, and earned Mozambique 74.5 million euros in 2001 - which was a decline of nine per cent on the 2000 figure of 82.1 million. Exports of cotton, the third most significant export, fell from 15,900 to 10,588 tonnes and in value by 32 per cent (from 20.1 million to 13.7 million euros). Tobacco looks likely to overtake cotton: exports of this lethal drug to the EU rose from 1,600 tonnes purchased for six million euros in 2000, to 4,288 tonnes valued at 12.3 million euros in 2001”.

In other words, the export production of Mozambique, the main productive objective of the SAP, continues to decline to levels never achieved before. But Mozambique’s GDP and the correspondent growth rates of the country increased in the same period to levels that leads the WB and the IMF to describe them as “an economic miracle”. The reason for such a difference is of course the set up and functioning of Mozal. Still according to the same text already quoted above: “Mozambican exports to the EU rose from 111.8 million euros in 1999 to 170.5 million in 2000, to 531 million in 2001. The increase from 2000 to 2001 is a leap of 312 per cent. The production of aluminium ingots at MOZAL began in mid 2000, but the smelter was only operating at full capacity in early 2001. EU countries imported Mozambican aluminium worth 22.1 million euros in 2000, but the figure rose to 391.6 million euros in 2001 (an increase of 1,672 per cent). In 2001, aluminium accounted for 73.7 per cent of Mozambique's exports to the EU”.

Another white elephant built in Mozambique, this time during the colonial period, the Cahora Bassa Dam is the main source of the very cheap energy used by the Mozal smelter. This corresponds to a consumption of about 900 MW of electricity at peak times, corresponding to 75% of the total Mozambican consumption. Here again the advantages for the country are minimum. By contract, Cahora Bassa electricity is sold to the South African company Eskom and then re-exported back to Mozambique at high profits.

In terms of the balance of payments and of the GDP, the construction of Mozal 1 (like the construction of Mozal 2, presently) and the export of aluminium complemented by new loans and by international donations change significantly a situation that, without them and to a great extent, ends up being today even more disastrous and negative than during the colonial and post-colonial periods. In these conditions, not only the country continues its decline but its external debt (and correspondent debt service) has been increasing to levels never before achieved. At the same time, its environment and the already highly affected health of the vast majority of its inhabitants is now being threatened as never before. Plant and animal life of the Maputo or Delagoa Bay are being increasingly destroyed. In June 2003, the consumption of shell fish from its waters was in general considered in Maputo as being improper to human consumption. The reasons and the extent of this degradation are, however, well known. In a report made public in 2002, the International Rivers Network described the situation by pointing out that one year after the opening of the plant corroded equipment increased the pollution of the air by spewing sulphur dioxide and toxic fluoride that affected people living in nearby villages. It affected also fruits in their trees. Since the smelter started to function, eye problems became generalized. The report continues: “the plant emits 26 times more sulphur

dioxide than other smelters, because it does not have a “wet scrubber” installed, a standard component in many modern smelters... Fluoride-contaminated runoff is released in the nearby Matola River. Mozal has not figured out a way to dispose of its hazardous solid waste. Currently, the toxic spent potliners are being stored on site” (Hoover 2002: 14).

It is consequently due to a project like Mozal that the economic situation in Mozambique is today being described, artificially and in percentage terms, as “a miracle”. This is of course another of the WB/IMF African miracles. Mega-projects like Mozal seem to make a difference but, in reality, and as WB/IMF officials and local governing elites well know, they don’t: on the contrary. It is based in all these circumstances that Leon Pretorius has concluded that “far from being an example of the African Renaissance and regional cooperation, Mozal appears to be reinforcing historical inequalities” (2001: 32).

In terms of massive state subsidies, of the resources involved including water, air and electricity and of the severe environmental degradation, the South African IDZ at Coega, near Port Elizabeth, is in many aspects similar to the Mozal project in Mozambique. It will also be constructed around an aluminium production smelter of high capacity similar to that in Maputo. It will however include the local installation of other kinds of factories that will benefit of the development of a deep water harbor and container terminal prepared to accommodate the world’s largest container ship carriers (Bond 2002: 54). Besides such a difference of scale, another important distinction must be as well pointed out. Contrary to what happens with Mozal, the South African project has been the constant object of opposition by

the civil society organized around an important and growing group of activists and researchers (79). According to Patrick Bond, their oppositional standpoint can be summarized in four or five areas of reasoning based on extensive scientific research. In economic terms, they say, there are “extremely high risks” in its full functioning due to indecisive private-sector participation in the project. This is a consequence of two general characteristics of the metals world-market: increasing protectionism and often repeated over-production. Coega will also represent a reduced generation of employment. The number of jobs anticipated would be “the most expensive in terms of capital per job, of any major facility in Africa”

Environmentally, the project represents “potentially immense” costs in terms of its usage of water and electricity, as well as of its degradation of the Western Cape air and sea. Moreover, it will constitute, when completed and functioning, “a brutal attack on the world’s environment”). The project has also conflicted with public law and participation processes in the area. It has already and will continue to determine the displacement of existing residents. At the same time, it affects deeply the survival activities of low income people of the area. The research done about the project has also pointed out that “there are far better prospects for employment creation and socio-economic progress in an alternative economic development scenario proposed by community and environment activists” (Bond 2002: 52-5).

4: (Regional) Unity or Death?

As an integrated region of the world-economy, Southern Africa is nevertheless deeply divided in economic, cultural and linguistic terms. These different divisions are not

⁷⁹⁾ This important group of activists is known as the Nelson Mandela Metropole Sustainability Coalition.

coincident, neither with one another nor with the borders defining its national territories. I have already pointed out that the territorial organization of its linguistic and ethnic human groups as it resulted from the Mfecane was very different from the territorial segmentation of the region according to colonialism. Linguistic and political maps are, consequently, dissimilar representations of Southern Africa. At least two other types of important divisions are as well present in the region. Their mapping generates, often, complicated contradictions of which, more often than not, the states are not aware or, perhaps, seem to be unaware. The first, a direct consequence of colonialism, has its base on the dominant forms of economic exploitation of the different territories. According to it there are areas whose historical characteristics were influenced by mining and market agriculture. Today's South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia and, to a certain extent, Malawi can be included in this first group. The other territories, in particular Mozambique and the so called BSL countries (for Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho), were constructed by colonialism as sources and suppliers of cheap labor. Mozambique assumed as well another, central role, in the formation of Southern Africa as a systemic region of the world-economy. Its geographic location made of it a kind of privileged link, a bridge between the two Southern African areas and their global markets. Because it offered the shortest way to the Indian Ocean both from the Transvaal region of South Africa and from Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia, it was also construed as a supplier of services, in particular railways and harbors, to and from their centers of production. The two main cities of its coast, Lourenco Marques, today's Maputo, and Beira, as well as, further north, Nacala, were the direct result of this type of regional relationship. It originated what today is known as the Limpopo, Manica and Nacala's corridors. As during colonial times, they are the quickest and cheaper trading links between the Southern African hinterland and

the rest of the world. The control, organization and division of space are in Southern Africa the obvious substantiation of its colonial history, of how the region was formed and incorporated in the modern world-system.

Over and above this type of division defined by the different types of colonial exploitation as well as of those formed by its national territories and by the different linguistic and ethnic groups there is however another important division to be considered in Southern Africa. It is a deeper, older and perhaps more complex division because it integrates characteristics of all the others. From north to south, it can be defined by the two rivers delimiting it, the Zambezi and the Limpopo. These are regional rivers with huge, multinational hydrographic basins. Between them, they define a vast central area today mostly corresponding to the Republic of Zimbabwe and a great part of Mozambique. Historically, this was the area of the Mwenemutapa Empire, of gold, silver, and trade with the Indian Ocean. It is also here that the Shona-Karanga and Ndebele presences mostly continue to be felt today as divisions and more or less open conflict. They are mixed with the traces of a modernity based on the traumatic recollection of settler colonialism, oppression, and brutal racial arrogance.

To the north of the Zambezi and reaching as far as the Great Lakes, there is the area of the Makua, Makonde and Swahili cultural and linguistic influences. To a great extent this area was historically constructed between two different, interrelated but antagonistic attractors. One was that of the Muslim world, its trade through the Indian Ocean human space, its religion and its culture. In the first part of the present work, I discussed how old, profound, contradictory, and influential its appeal has always been. It continues to be felt today as an

omnipresent, pervasive influence. The other was formed by the numerous, usually resilient peoples of the interior who, active or passively, refused it. An important but negative imprint gives a common sense of identity to both areas: that of Arab slavery. It precedes, to be sure, that of European colonialism. Because the dark memory of both was kept alive through orality, songs, music and dance, it is still very much present today. As such, it continues to divide as well the local peoples: between those who are the descendent of captured slaves, those who captured them and those who by all means necessary had to resist them for not being captured and sent away.

Finally, a third sub-regional area that can be considered in Southern Africa extends itself to the south of the Limpopo River. Situated between the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic it has the Cape as its southernmost point. It is mostly occupied by the Republic of South Africa but includes also Namibia, the BSL countries and the southern part of Mozambique. This was the area where a different but equally traumatic process of regional social change originated. It was here that the Mfecane started. It was here, and before expanding to the north and as far as Tanganyika, that British, Portuguese, Dutch and German colonialisms first assumed their occupying roles, defended or disputed them. Apartheid and others, equally absurd projects of settlers' independence have also here their roots. Moreover, it was from this part of Southern Africa that the lords of apartheid allied to those of Rhodesia and of colonial Portugal formed their unholy, desperate alliance of White power. They were prepared to destroy the whole region, if needed be, as a delirious strategy for what they considered their self-survival. Before being defeated, an unavoidable fate, they contributed, direct and indirectly, to the consolidation of the triple division of the region. Accordingly, the last

defenders of White power in Africa considered that the strategic bastions of their offensive and defensive permanence in the region were located, precisely, in the Zambezi and the Limpopo Rivers. Contrary to their objectives, however, that hydrological strategy did not function and both rivers were quite easily trespassed by the advance of the guerrilla. First, Frelimo traversed the Zambezi to extend the liberation struggle to the central region of the colony. In so doing, it created conditions for the first attacks by the Zimbabwean liberation movement inside the rebel colony. Secondly, the Limpopo was as well overcome. It ceased to be the last defensive bastion for the perpetuation of apartheid with the collapse of the Rhodesian occupation of Zimbabwe. Lastly, the process of Southern Africa liberation was then able to reach an internationally and regionally isolated South Africa to finally be concluded, with the fall of apartheid, in 1989.

Of all the countries of Southern Africa, Mozambique is the only one whose national territory in its north-south coastal location is formed by important geographical portions that are part of all the three different regional areas. To a great extent they were and are, simultaneously, a cause but also a consequence of the triple regional divide. But not only: besides those influences that are common to the whole region there are others that historically contributed and continue to influence the further consolidation of division in Mozambique. The three divisions are simply designated as being the south; the centre, between the Zambezi and the Limpopo; and the north, towards the Rovuma.

As much as the historical circumstances that led to the triple division of the region, the subordinated nature of Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique is clearly reflected on that

construction of the territory. This is why those zones were differently molded not only in geographical, regional, and cultural terms but, as well, in the long term of their respective historical trajectories.

In discussing the divisions of Mocambique one must however consider as well important factors of its construction as a more or less united territory. The first one, to be sure, was a common, north-south system of colonial repression and exploitation speaking a single language, the Portuguese language. The other was the unifying characteristics of the liberation struggle, by a single movement and, as well, using a single language as its main instrument of communication, the Portuguese language.

In the colonial perspective of the mid 1960s, however, it was not these characteristics of the *longue-duree* uniting the territory that was considered as being important: on the contrary. As Vasco Fortuna was then pointing out, it was the more conjunctural situation that each one of those zones “can be considered as being... area(s) of influence of important transport complexes serving wide and rich *hinterlands*” (1965: 202). In other words, Portuguese colonialism constructed the northern, central and southern regions of Mozambique as different regions by accentuating what in them was already differently structured: the needs of the hinterland. Consequently, this was construed not in accordance with any economic or social objectives concerning the Mozambican territory or its peoples but, very simply, to serve the interests of the neighboring territories of South Africa and of the British colonies of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

This set of conditions is often repeated to underline the distorted situation that the post-colonial state in Mozambique had to confront as part of its objectives of nation-building. It explains why, for instance, there is not yet a single road or railway linking the three regions or, for that matter, the whole country, in the north-south direction. The main roads and railways in the country follow dominantly the direction east-west, that is to say, between the sea and the Southern African hinterland. This was how the three corridors serving the region were built up -- consolidating, at the same time, the three tiered construction of the region as well as that of Mozambique.

But these networks of communication in their direct relationship between South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, or even the Copper Belt and the ports of Maputo, Beira, and Nacala are only part of the story of the construction of the three different regions of Mozambique. The full story, already told in part in the previous chapters, is rather found in the way its peoples were historically incorporated in the capitalist world-economy. It was through that transformation that they became “labor” – cheap manpower, easily accessible if and when necessary. It was through such a transformation of different peoples into a single commodity that the three different areas were constituted as such in Mozambique first; incorporated in the world-economy, afterwards. Two other historical institutions predated this trend and made it possible. The first was the existence of the land and resources-holding system of the **prazos** in the central region of the colony. They were decisive to individualize it in relation both to the north and to the south regions of the colony. The second were the majestic companies that followed them. With a majority of non-Portuguese capital, they occupied both regions with their economic strategies. The fact that those strategies, and

besides a relatively reduced plantation production for the international market, included a vast and consistent exploitation of migrant labor has already been pointed out. In the south, the direct influence of South Africa was decisive to change it into what became, primordially, a labor reserve. It was here as well that the Portuguese centralized their administration of the rest of the colony.

With the exception of South Africa and, to a certain extent, of Southern Rhodesia, the strong “consumers” of migrant labor, this was not different from what happened in most of the rest of the region. Notably, in its three British protectorates, today’s Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, as well as in Nyasaland, today’s Malawi, it was migrant labor that constituted one of, if not the main source of value extraction. To be sure, this happened as the difficult mining of gold in South Africa became the dynamic center of regional economic growth. It was also through this complementarity of the Transvaal gold and regional labor that South Africa created the conditions to be a semi-peripheral state in the world-economy. Moreover, it was through it that the region was constructed as such, as a systemic region. The relative industrialization of South Africa, during and immediately after the Second World War, was possible due to what was already its semi-peripheral position both in the world-economy and in relation to the rest of the region, including a highly competitive Southern Rhodesia. In fact, South African modern industry only complemented and made stronger a regional conjuncture already in place since the early twentieth century.

The exploration of the Transvaal gold, more than any other activity, was the factor that determined the construction of a labor force with the characteristics that define it in Southern

Africa today. One was not viable without the other. The quickly development of transports and communications, services, agriculture and industry arise from that foundational convergence of the Transvaal gold and regional labor. This is the reason why I characterized the access to labor, usually as forced labor, as the defining characteristic of the formation of Southern Africa as a systemic region of world-economy. This was particularly determined by the fact that it was the South African gold findings and exploitation, perhaps to a greater extent than other contemporary findings that allowed the gradual recuperation of the world-economy from the severe contraction that started to affect it in 1873, with the simultaneous outburst of financial panics in Vienna and New York. I already discussed this point extensively above but I do not resist transcribing here two more references underlining it. The first can be found in Cameron: “The depression following the panics of 1873 was probably the most severe and widespread of the industrial era to that date”, he writes, to add: “Eventually gold discoveries in South Africa, Alaska, Canada and Siberia reversed the downward trend of prices and send them gently upward again until World War I (Cameron 1997: 302). The discovery and beginning of the exploitation of gold in South Africa and other regions of the world-economy in the second half of the 1890s is also emphasized by Allen for its impact in a situation of deep crisis of the world-economy. According to him, it “gave the world economy a respite from deflation and depression, lifting prices in the United States by 35 per cent between 1896 and 1910. In Germany the growth in industrial output returned to the levels that existed between 1849 and 1873” (Allen 2001: 217).

In Mozambique, more than one century of gold-labor complementarily was also reflected in the deepening of the differentiation of its southern area in relation to those of the center and

north. A brief research in Mozambique in 2002 led me to conclude that the tendency in the last ten years has also been towards the consolidation and enlargement of that three tiered division of the country. To be sure, this is a process in open contradiction with the dominant policy of construction and defense of national unity, a policy developed and applied during the liberation war that started to be materialized in the rest of the country with national independence. An evidence that those divisions have been increasing and made into an accepted structuration of the country in the last decade is the fact that in each one of the three regions the inhabitants of the others are known by more or less offensive designations. These designations are already not only vulgarized popularly but also frequently verbalized and used at all the different levels of social and political communication, public and private. This is a particularly worrying factor in terms of the continuation of peace within Mozambique. It can as well be a factor of regional destabilization.

To be sure, the three tiered division of Mozambique not only coincides with what I described as a regional divide but, also, has roots in the histories of the different peoples involved. They predate colonialism and the responses given by those peoples in the pre-colonial and colonial periods both to Muslim and Christian slavery and to colonialism. They were exacerbated by strong colonial policies of deliberate division as a way to attain an easier rule and by the colonial war. Nothing new, here: this has always been how colonial powers of the core established its control over the rest of the world.

It was this pervasiveness of new and old divisionary trends that led to Frelimo's consistent preoccupation and struggle against what became known as "regionalism", both during and

after the liberation war. On the other hand, unintended consequences of inadequate policies of the new independent state contributed to aggravate them. At the same time they were cultivated and fed by fifteen years of Rhodesian and South African military and economic destabilization against Mozambique. Moreover, it was through them that the conditions necessary for the continuation of destabilization as a civil war between Mozambicans were created.

The collapse of apartheid in South Africa creating the conditions for peace in Mozambique did not solve the serious problems represented by those divisions. On the contrary: the programs of structural-adjustment that then started to be imposed on the country aggravated them. Based on the blind predominance of the interests of capital against all other types of national, political or social priorities, structural adjustment led to a very obvious concentration of the few important projects of development and investment of capital in the south -- with the equally obvious detriment of the centre and north of the country.

This is usually attributed to the fact that the government and other structures of the Mozambican state are dominantly located in the south. It is also in the south that its capital city was situated during the colonial period and it is there that it continues today. More important, however, is the fact that the south appears as the safest zone of the country. Besides, it is the nearest one to the Republic of South Africa. To a great extent it has always been, and continues to be, a complement to the ups and downs of the economic development of the Transvaal. But not only: particularly in the last twenty years it has become a direct competitor to the functioning of the highly efficient South African structures of services, in

particular harbors and railways. Finally, and aggravating the perception that there is a southern-bias in Mozambique today, there is the general idea, which to a great extent corresponds to the reality, that the main cadres of the state, including the President of the Republic, most of the ministers and national directors are predominantly of a southern origin, in ethnical, racial or cultural terms. The case could be equally made about the fact that both the leadership and the main social base of the most important political opposition in the country have its roots in the center of the country. Although dominant, the division today in relation to the south does not preclude, on the contrary, equally open contradictions and divisions between the centre and the north.

Historically, the social structure of production in Mozambique appears as a direct consequence of the way its peasant households were incorporated in the international division of labor of the late nineteenth century and accordingly transformed to be an active part of the systemic processes of capital accumulation. It followed chronologically the gradual establishment of colonial structures of domination as they were increasingly expanded to submit the peoples of the south in the late nineteenth century, and those of the center and north, in this order, well into the twentieth century. This was and continues to be today another important factor in the three-tiered differentiation of the country.

I am pointing out the pervasive presence of the Southern African and Mozambican three tiered structural organization because, when looking forward into the more or less near future by following present trends, it constitutes perhaps the major problem today evolving in the region. Consequently, I believe, it has to be addressed. I described the situation in

Southern Africa today as a situation of crisis, in particular at the economic level, often hidden behind the rhetoric of the IMF/WB pseudo-miracles, dogmatic neo-liberalism, and nationalism. This is not a good, healthy mixture. Rather it contains the seeds for new, more complicated and deadly conflicts in Southern Africa.

Among those seeds there are the ones already developing into a process of increasing social, economic, political polarization. This process, common to the entire region, can not continue indefinitely. Among the ways and means to confront it, the launching by the United Nations of the Millennium Project was destined to overcome, in something like twenty years the more scandalous aspects of that social polarization: increasing poverty, declining access to education and health, gender inequality, growing levels of infant mortality, access to water, and so on. It was due to its objectives that the project was received with open arms in the continent, in general, in Southern Africa, in particular. The reality today is however that five years afterwards the goals in the region are not being and will not be reached. On the contrary, the more usual conclusion about them is not only that they are not being attained but, even more complicated, that the different countries are “far behind” in their implementation. Moreover, that in many cases, they are “slipping back” to levels that are lower than those registered during colonial times or in the period immediately following decolonization and independence.

If this situation continues, as it seems to be continuing, then the consequences can be indeed very dangerous for the continuation of the peace and security that has been a constant in the region following the destruction of the more brutal aspects of political apartheid. Slowly,

strangely, the first signs of possible conflicts have started to appear in the still far away horizon. They can be and probably are momentary and transitory. In Zimbabwe, they implied a high degree of violence and disrespect for basic constitutional rights. This is the type of conflict that has its roots in the colonial past, in the brutality of exploitation, but also in new circumstances and conditions that evolved after the proclamation of independence. In the central region of Mozambique, in Manica, similar conflicts led in September 2004 to the first armed combats between Renamo and the military in a long time. They were correctly analyzed as being the result of the fact that the state does not yet has the control of the means of violence within the country. In other words, that there are still important pockets of armament in what during the period of South African destabilization were the areas dominated by Renamo; a domination that continues today. Particularly worrying is the fact that both Manica and Zimbabwe are located in the central region of Southern Africa.

The situation in the southern part of the region seems is very different. The intermingling of the economic interests of South Africa with those of the south of Mozambique has been increasing in the last ten years. To be sure, it is usually presented as an element of development and economic growth. But this must be qualified at least at two different levels. The first is the evolving reality that this interrelation and at least apparent growth is being made with the obvious detriment of the rest of the country. The result is that never as today the differentiation of the Maputo area in relation to those of Beira and Nacala has been as great as it is today. In other words, the fissures within Mozambique seem to be growing; and increasingly pushing the south towards South Africa. On the other hand, the present government of South Africa has been obviously pushing South African private and (still)

public enterprises into a very strong policy of expansion towards new markets and increasing profits. Among the main products being offered for sale there is a sometimes worrying emphasis on armament. Besides that, the priority seems to be in energy industries and other similar projects. From a medium enterprise based on Johannesburg, Eskom has become in the last five years a powerful African multinational with ventures not only in South Africa but also Mozambique, Botswana, Swaziland, Zambia, Congo, Angola, Tanzania, Cameroon, Mali and Ghana. It has also initiated important projects in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Libya, Nigeria and Gambia. In the second half of 2004 it has increased its interest in acquiring the Cahora Bassa dam, an operation that is being delayed by the reluctance of the Portuguese to hand it to the Mozambican administration. It would then enter into the IMF/WB list of privatizations and legally “sold” to Eskom. This is a very artificial and unequal kind of growth: unless we mean by growth the increasing influence and domination of South Africa in Mozambique. In other words, regional consolidation in Southern Africa today means that trends of subordination and inequality that were common to colonialism and apartheid are being pushed forward – with the more or less open support of local administrations and the IMF/WB. Just like at the level of the world-economy important forces are today struggling against the consolidation of the neoliberal, dominant globalization, also in Southern Africa there are forces that are openly against a regional consolidation that goes against the interests and objectives of the peoples of the region. They are, however, too weak and, still, too separated.

Two other possible futures in Southern Africa must as well be indicated. One is the continuation, at the present levels, of the regional contamination by HIV/AIDS and other

pandemic diseases, like malaria, cholera and tuberculosis. The evidence is that those levels are growing exponentially and that the efforts to contain them are insufficient, ineffective, and in decline. If this is so, then the future of the region, probably in less than twenty years, appears definitely compromised. But the future can also be compromised by other factors. Namely those related with education at the primary level, to be sure, but also at all the other levels. As already discussed, this constitutes another objective that is not being minimally attained in the region. Consequently, the extreme necessity in more or less specialized workers and other cadres and professionals at all levels and in all fields will not be minimally satisfied.

The third and last problem affecting the region is the uncontrolled domination of its economy and policies by the IMF and the World Bank. The consequences are already being felt. I discussed above some of them, in particular in what concerns social and economic sectors. But the combined action of the IMF/WB has also extensive consequences at the political level. In particular, it weakened the exercise of power by the regional states, destroyed or affected deeply their sovereignty, their ability of decision making and, in many instances, their legitimacy. In so doing, the IMF/WB aggravated the regional tendencies to division, to the propagation of HIV/AIDS, and to the accentuated decline in access to education and health. Basically, because the methodologies and policies of the IMF/WB not only imply a reduced role of the state in relation to those problems but also the contraction of the public budgets necessary to confront them. At the same time, it furnished to the governing elites a magic excuse for their corruption, inefficiency, and lack of engagement

with the true problems of their peoples: it all is the fault of the IMF/WB... Unfortunately they are right, to a great extent.

What will be the probable evolution of this situation? The only certitude is that it can not continue as today. Consequently, some form of devolution of power or, on the contrary, of its more complete assumption will have to be found. Three scenarios are possible. The first is that the IMF/WB not only continues its work in the region more or less in accordance with the fundamentalist principles that have characterized them till now but increases even more its domination and control over the respective governments. This will be catastrophic not only to the countries of the region but, also, to both organizations. It will mean, in short, that all the negative trends already present today in the regional conjuncture will continue their trajectory not only of possible armed conflicts but also of poverty, disease, and death.. To be sure, this is both inadmissible and little possible. A second possibility is that the coalition IMF/WB reduces its influence in the region to the level of mere representations. In other words, it leaves. Contraction of expenses can be one reason. The fact its projects and programs have uniformly ended up in spectacular failures, a second one. A third possibility is a reorganization of the modus operandi of both organizations. It would imply what I above referred to as devolution of political power. It would imply, as well, the assumption by its cadres of different roles: for instance those of consultants or advisers to the legitimate states of the region. This would be, of course, one the best of all the possible futures.

Finally, and in what concerns the governments of the region, the evidence is that they will continue at least in the near future living the tension between forces pushing them for or

against the construction of a more coherent and cohesive region. The evidence is also that the only way for them to increase their power and influence in the world-economy is as active members of the regional organizations, not individually. The experience of South Africa and Nepad, immediately after its formation made into one more instrument of the IMF/WB, constitutes a very good lesson. The key seems however to be with South Africa.

Having failed in its continental role will South Africa finally assume a more active and positive political role in the region? A critical role in relation to what is presently a fundamentalist practice of regional neo-liberal globalization, capable of confronting it and, at least in part, to change it? Contrary to what was beginning to happen in the liberation period, nothing in the present conjuncture of the country or, for that matter, of the region points towards that direction. However, in the transitional phase the world-economy is going through, this has been the position that countries like Brazil, China and, to a certain extent, India have often been assuming. By doing so, their leading elites are showing their awareness not only about the deadly dangers of neo-liberal globalization as being one of the central problem of our time but, also, their ability in defining a possible politics of alliance capable of confronting and overcome some of its more destructive tendencies. The active presence of South Africa leading a united Southern Africa side by side with Brazil, China and India around those objectives is not a reality today but, at the same time, it is not yet impossible.

VIII CONCLUSION: THE NEED FOR A NEW BEGINNING

Caminante, no hay caminos, hay que caminar.

(Written on the wall of a 15th century Toledo cloister)

El camino se hace caminando

Antonio Machado (1937)

I started this work by trying to understand the structural meaning of the historical succession of slavery, forced labor, colonialism, late colonialism, apartheid and, presently, neoliberal structural adjustment in Southern Africa, in general, in Mozambique in particular. To make analytical and logical sense, this approach soon implied the need to take into account the impact of the development of the modern world-system on that succession of models of access and control of labor and resources. A first conclusion was the existence of a determinant causal relationship between systemic development and the sequence of those forms of political, economic and social organization of the different territories of Southern Africa. The same relationship, as it was reflected in the local requirement to complement mining extraction in South Africa with cheap and accessible labor from the rest of those territories, explained the historical conditions leading to their clustering into the formation of what became Southern Africa, a highly interdependent economic region of the world-economy. It explained as well the conditions through which South Africa evolved to become not only part of the semi-periphery of the world-economy but, as well, the dominant regional power in Southern Africa.

This first approach raised however other, different problems. Notably, it brought to the foreground of my reflection the question of the historical social-science perspective of my research. I have already discussed this in previous chapters of the present work so I am not going to describe it here in detail once again. It will be enough to point out that it can be, simultaneously, a false problem *and* the key to solve important methodological questions in our work. It is a false problem if and when reduced to the idea that against one dominant perspective, the dominant Eurocentric perspective for example, one needs to use a different point of view, that of a peripheral subalternity, for instance. This substitution of one perspective for the other is what usually is attempted. It has been extensively experimented. It has, even, given birth to interesting, stimulating works in the fields of postcolonial, Afrocentric or subaltern studies. More importantly, it has given voice and, consequently, effective existence to the great majority of the peoples of our world till then silent, deprived of history, or reduced to the easy musings of classical anthropology. It has returned back to them, in short, the dignity, the respect and the agency that had been stolen from them by slavery, colonialism, forced labor, and other historical or present forms of extreme exploitation. I am not sure however if this constitutes for itself an alternative to the Eurocentric approach or perspective still dominant in social sciences. Often times it reads, rather, like the same Eurocentric conception of the world with a different sign: a plus (+) instead of a minus (-) that changes the value but not the number it precedes. Everything else stays the same, in short.

But the question of the historical social-science perspective and of how to overcome the anxiety of vision it originates can be, it is usually, an important starting point in the characterization of some fundamental questions. It can be, in short, one of the keys to their

resolution. Among them, precisely, the question of the Euro-centrism, under all its forms like those of ethno-centrism or core-centrism, still and dominantly plaguing modern social sciences. I have no solution for the problem. But I think it will be interesting to mention here, as briefly as possible, how I tried to confront it.

I used, basically three main strategies. Two of them are proper of the basic methodology of world-systems analysis. They are, first, the definition of the dominant unit of analysis. Although I tried to focus dominantly on the formation of Southern Africa and the existence in it of a territorially bounded social formation designated as Mozambique, my unit of analysis was the modern world-system. It was its existence and its development that created both the background and the foreground for the questions I asked and its tentative responses. I tried, in short, to establish a permanent, systemic and structural interrelationship between the object of my analysis, Southern Africa, and the unit of analysis that could make sense of it, the modern world-system. Shuttling between those two limits of my research also made obvious to me that their interrelationship in time and in space was also, permanently, a mutually determinant interrelationship. This means that different perspectives are here very secondary. To worry about the dominance of a Southern African or Mozambican perspective versus the perspective of the world-system in this context of research and reflection would not make practical sense. They all disappear or better, come together, beneath the reality of their permanent interrelationship. This was what made of that interrelationship my main object of research. With it, the anxiety of vision started to disappear as well.

A second instrument of research in world-system analysis, the use of the Braudelian structural time in conjunction with conjunctural, cyclical times, was also fundamental with that objective. Angles of vision or perspectives and their use as a basic methodological procedure have their origin in and are proper to historical social times that, for instance, have the life of kings and of their kingdoms as being, simultaneously their object and unit of analysis. Long term or structural time approaches do not tolerate the exclusiveness of perspectives. Rather, they are based on large spaces and long lasting structures on which historical systems are rooted. Their movement and change in time are, primordially, those of the conjunctural cycles generated within those historical systems. They are economic cycles of different oscillation in time simultaneously determining and being determined by geographical, political, social, and probably even by cultural movements. It is these movements that tend as well to organize themselves into cyclical oscillations between contraction and expansion. There is very little room, here, to the preferential or exclusive use of a core-centric or of a peripheral-based perspective.

Both cases, consequently, make impossible the use of one exclusive historical social-science perspective to the conscious or non-conscious detriment of others. What they do is make all the possible perspectives necessary to the good construction of the narrative. In other words, they constitute another, maybe fundamental, instrument towards the objective that Immanuel Wallerstein defined as the need to **open the social sciences**. My third methodological imperative in the confrontation against the intrinsic Euro-centrism that dominantly continues to affect our work has here its roots. It does not consist in ignoring historical social perspectives or trying to put them aside. On the contrary, it consists in the awareness that our work is

always, directly or indirectly, affected by them. In the awareness that usually against our own choices, the weight of Euro-centrism is present, affects, and distorts our work. In other words, that Euro-centrism is often the unconscious, hidden, discrete racism of the social science scholar. And that, finally, the only way to control, counteract, destroy its exclusive influence is, very simply, to bring back in not one, not two, but as many perspectives of the same historical process as possible. To be sure, our perspective or perspectives must be present and assumed as such; but also the perspective of the Other, of others. When we talk about the adisciplinarity of the social sciences as an objective to attain it is also about the need of multi-faceted analysis and narratives that I believe we are talking about. This is not an easy task. Too many perspectives of the Other, their narratives, are still missing and the existing ones are frequently incomplete or insufficient for our objective. But this is a task that has to be attempted. With very irregular results, this is what I tried to do in the present work.

This challenge led me to another, different methodological anxiety. We have today a better understanding of the historical development of the modern world-system. We know more and better about its main processes, its rise and consolidation, even about the possible ways of its future demise. But we still know very little about what, outside Europe, preceded it. And, without this knowledge, how can we be so sure about its nature, its expansion and its existence? What if the modern world-economy is a fiction, an artificial construct only possible because we defined a chronology for its existence that ignores, precisely, what existed before? Specifically in my research about Southern Africa in general, on Mozambique in particular, the question about what existed before the arrival of the Portuguese in both geographical regions after the late fifteenth century became an imperative. It was the attempt to answer it that

resulted in the general organization of the present work into two different but I hope interrelated parts. The first one goes back in time trying to characterize the historical system or systems that existed in the northern Indian Ocean, which, following Braudel, I define as a historical human space. The main objective was to construct a usable reference about the secular impact of those different systems and their trading networks and interests on that part of the African coast that the Portuguese latter on called the Sofala coast. Their arrival and their sequent influence if not domination of the area was possible because of the three most important of those historical systems one had collapsed, the other had become interiorized, the third was going through a very quick decline of influence in the Indian Ocean. The Portuguese had also more advanced instruments of war and navigation. Moreover they had different conceptions about strategic space and, as important, about trade. They brought together in the region for the first time the power of their state, the arrogance given to them by maritime expansion and an effective relationship with the most important centers of accumulation of capital then blossoming in Western Europe. In relation to them they were, consequently, intermediaries – a function that they would continue often to execute in the following centuries as part of the semi-periphery of the world-economy. In what concerns accumulation of capital, I must add, it was the single most important factor in the characterization of their arrival as the arrival of a new, different, still embryonic but already aggressive world order, that of the capitalist world-economy. Even if the Portuguese sailors and traders had no idea about what they were accomplishing with their arrival at the northern Indian Ocean..

The second part of the present work starts, consequently with an analytical description of those transformations in the northern Indian Ocean. It covers their impact on both the Malabar and

the African coasts, the processes then being lived within the southern part of Africa, the relation between the geographic expansion of the Portuguese and the formation of the modern world-system as well as the rise and collapse of the hegemonic trajectories in the world-economy both of Holland and Great Britain. This is particularly important for its determinant impact in the formation of Southern Africa. Notably, it was with the increasing influence of the Dutch and, later on, of the British in the Cape region that the Portuguese interests in Eastern Africa had their administrative headquarters transferred to the south, from the Mozambican Island to Delagoa Bay. To a great extent this coincided with systemic processes that, leading to the abolition of slavery, culminated with the implementation of colonialism and the generalization of forced labor. This was considered as representing a more strict and efficient exploitation of Africa by the European core. It coincided as well with the beginning of the incorporation of both the northern Indian Ocean and of Southern Africa into the periphery of the modern world-system. Finally, it made evident how both Dutch hegemony in the world-economy and, one hundred years after, Great Britain as its more direct competitor and successor in that role used slavery as a basic instrument for accumulation of capital. The slow process leading to its abolition and, later on, to its transformation into colonial forced labor were however, with the division of Africa, processes proper to a phase of hegemonic decline, that of Great Britain. Similarly, decolonization, neo-colonialism and structural adjustment are all characteristics of the rise, consolidation and decline of the United States hegemony in the world-economy. This is what we are living presently, in the threshold of the twentieth-first century. I analyzed, discussed and described these interrelationships by focusing on the history of Southern Africa, in general, and in that of Mozambique in particular. As a way to prove or disprove them I located them within processes that were extensive to the generality of the

African continent as part of the periphery. The major background, the matrix determining those processes was however formed by the cyclical, conjunctural rhythms of development of the capitalist world-economy. It was the constant superposition of these different levels of analysis in their permanent interrelationship that made obvious that the systemic succession of slave labor, forced labor, colonialism, decolonization and, in the case of Southern Africa, late colonialism and apartheid are in their essential nature a consequence of the succession of those cyclical rhythms. They are different forms of control, influence, manipulation or confrontation of their direct impact and consequences. They constitute procedures through which leading elites try to reduce or to expand those consequences. They appear, in other words, as a permanent tension between social agents defined or not within national contexts and the global, structural conditions that define, expand or limit their existence and choices. Sometimes they succeed – but this is not always certain. To be sure, the same happens with so called mercantile, industrial and financial phases of capitalism. There is not a mercantile capitalism as there are not neither industrial nor financial capitalisms. What these designations express are, rather, different, usually alternate ways for capital or capitalists to make profits. They appear or disappear, alternate, or succeed one another according to conjunctural changes or shifts in the general functioning of the world-economy. Equally, slavery, colonialism, or neo-colonialism constitutes core-based, successive processes through which the capitalist world-economy historically utilized the periphery to prolong its processes of capital accumulation. They have assumed today the form of so called structural adjustment or neo-liberal globalization. In other words, just as we find capitalist slavery as an integral foundation of the Dutch hegemony in the world-economy, so we find the succession of slavery, its abolition and substitution by forced labor and modern colonialism as intrinsic to the rise, consolidation and decline of British

hegemony. Similarly, the change of colonialism into generalized processes of decolonization, neo-colonialism and structural adjustment are characteristics of the U.S. cycle of hegemony, its rise and demise. What changes are the words used to designate them. Colonialism, as imposition and in its objectives, was primordially a process of structural adjustment of the continent to the capitalist world-economy of the late nineteenth-century. The imposition and objectives of the IMF/WB SAPs in Africa today are, primarily, ways of attaining new forms of structural adjustment of the continent to the capitalist world-economy of our time. The only thing that changed was the agencies, the colonial states were replaced by international organizations, and the methods of imposition, the use of force changed into the force of the debt. The rest was and continues to be the same, including the tragic consequences of the lack of education and health, the social polarization, and the growing poverty of the continent.

Finally, the present work tried to characterize and discuss as a fundamental objective of research the way the generalized resistance of the peoples of Southern Africa against colonialism and apartheid evolved, changed and assumed new organizational strategies to directly confront the historical sequence and transformation of those different forms of systemic exploitation and control. This allowed me to identify and define what I called, in the absence of a better term, the liberation or postcolonial model as it was historically generated and lived in Southern Africa. The beginning of its implementation constituted what has perhaps been the highest level of hope in a better future ever lived in Southern Africa. Its collapse, under fire and destabilization, was also necessary to the demise of the last defenders of direct White power and European supremacy in the region.

Among the many reasons capable of explaining that collapse a last one must be here recalled because reflecting well a new reality today starting to be lived once again in Southern Africa. That reality is that the struggle for a more just and humane society in the region or, for that matter, within the periphery of the world-economy is yet in its very beginnings. Everything is yet to be done. In its practice and objectives, the liberation model was no more than a rough, incomplete draft for possible alternatives. In its historical and collective experience it was also a first important step in what, ahead of us, is still a quite imprecise, difficult, very long road.

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