

ON RELATIONS BETWEEN THE NGOs OF THE NORTH AND MOZAMBIKAN CIVIL SOCIETY¹

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At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Hegel referred to civil society as an institution placed between the family and the state's political relations, he allowed for an ambiguous reading on the nature and role of that institution. Would civil society be an intermediate institution, and as such have a role to fulfil? Or would it be more of an intermediary institution, comprising the totality of socioeconomic and productive relations, as interpreted by Marx?

Although appearing to be a matter of little importance – whether the institution is intermediate or intermediary – the fact remains that this question is present in the day-to-day relations between the civil societies of the South and the Non Governmental Organisations of the North; this is reflected also in the manner in which both deal with the challenges of globalization. Here we pose the question whether the NGOs of the South must participate in the same way as the NGOs of the North in the construction of an alternative [form of] globalization. Or should the civil societies from both halves of the planet interact in the negotiation between the people, the states and the markets on a global scale?

This paper seeks to address such questions as well as the need to reconstruct the concept of civil society on the basis of the Mozambican experience.

1. The trajectory of the “intermediate institution” in Mozambique

In a 1997 article entitled “The Civil Sector”, David Sogge presented three reasons why Non Governmental Organisations in Mozambique had a modest impact in comparison with their counterparts in other African countries, particularly with those where the official language is English (Sogge, 1997). In his view, one should consider the weight of history, the absence of public authority and the sheer dimension of informal norms

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and networks as explanations as to why Mozambique, and perhaps other countries which are members of the PALOP (African Countries with Portuguese as Official Language), had until then neither adopted a liberating agenda in opposition to a closed state and big business, nor had followed the neoliberal route which would fill, by means of charitable activities, the social vacuum left behind by the state and by private enterprise.

After Salazar implemented the corporative *Estado Novo*, the state used the non-governmental entities as propaganda tools and a means to gather support for its policies; in exchange, their members received protection and other benefits. It was the state that determined which structures should be in place for representation of business, the labour force, the farmers and other interest groups identified by the state. However, in Mozambique, the corporative model was never fully implemented and the urban non-governmental space developed very sparsely. Perhaps this was because Mozambique was never a colonisation colony, but a reserve colony, where there was a minute Portuguese presence³. It was not by coincidence that Mozambican urban nationalism grew out of the few associations which flourished on the margin of the state. These were the Black Association of Mozambique (*Associação dos Negros de Moçambique*), the Mozambican Indigenous Association (*Associação dos Naturais de Moçambique*), the Mozambican Christian Council (*Conselho Cristão de Moçambique*) in Lourenço Marques [now Maputo], and the Mozambican House (*Casa de Moçambique*) in Lisbon.

With national independence the Frelimo government adopted some of the control methods used by the colonial state, albeit with a different ideology. It was the time of the Mass Democratic Organisations (ODMs), which were subjected to strict control and were for the exclusive use of the social or socio-professional groups targeted by them. Thus there was the OMM for women, the OJM for the youth, the OTM for the wage earning workers, the ONP for the teachers, the ONJ for journalists, and so forth. However, it is appropriate to mention that, as in the colonial period, there were movements which started to unfold outside the strict control of the one-party state or the party in power. Examples of this were the continuation of the Mozambican Christian Council, the emergence of Caritas of Mozambique, and the constant difficulties the state had with the peasant movement which became the National Union of Peasants (*União Nacional dos Camponeses*).

³At the time of independence the Portuguese presence in Mozambique was below 3 per cent, while in Angola it had already reached 20 per cent.

From 1980 onwards the war began to spread throughout the country and eventually caused the collapse of the state's power in the rural areas and weakened it in the urban areas. According to Sogge, the informal [sector] then filled the empty space; this resulted in an intersection and even inter-penetration of the social norms and regulations with those of the market, which in turn combined with the state. This was the seed of the institutional creativity which is today a characteristic of Mozambique. At the same time, it marked a period of great vulnerability within the public space where the powers, including the power of words and other symbols, would become an object of contention.

This marked the beginning of a third phase in the history of the Mozambican "intermediate institution". During approximately ten years, from 1988 to 1998, the NGOs of the North associated themselves with the various donors in order to guide the replacement of the Mass Democratic Organisations and the re-configuration of Mozambican civil society by structures typical of NGOs of the North – development NGOs. This period will be discussed in the next section.

The current phase of this development began in 1998, marking a moment of institutional innovation with concepts being reconstructed; and internal, continental and global relations being subjected to alternative readings. This will become clear in sections three and four below.

2. The "supply driven" processes of the NGOs of the North

From 1988 onwards, with economic liberalisation and the prospect of a multi-party system being adopted, a string of NGOs from the North began to arrive in Mozambique. Their agenda included assistance to the country which was in a war situation, and was the poorest country in the world. In essence, these NGOs directed the implementation of projects through their local "partners", having neither any members nor any representation mandate. However, [at the time] in Mozambique there were no local development NGOs which could be constituted as counterparts to the international NGOs.

We then witnessed a process of accelerated formation of local NGOs in which the language used in meetings was English, the funds came from abroad, and the recruitment of staff was detrimental to the local productive and administrative fabric.

In addition, they used hitherto unknown methodologies and, above all, answered to agendas which were conceived and developed outside the country. Having an NGO counterpart meant to “disentangle” one’s life: one could do anything and argue for the justification of anything, provided there was a duly financed project. These were business NGOs, without any personality or ideology of their own; at the same time, they despised the local associative movement because it did not tie in with the “supply driven” process of the NGOs of the North.

Yussuf Adam called them Modern Messiahs in Search of New Lazaruses, in a metaphoric language aimed at denouncing the “hunting of misfortune” by these NGOs (Adam, 1997). David Sogge denounced the desperate search for local “partners” as investment ducts, and the incapacity of these NGOs to recognise that the local organisations neither belonged to the state, nor were they businesses; they were, rather, manifestations of Mozambican civil society which took a different form from that of a Western Non-Governmental Organisation. For both, the NGOs from the North adopted the strategy of creating local organisations in their own image. Even today many local people consider NGOs as “a foreign thing”.

At the time I wrote an article which pointed out some of the negative points in the intervention of these NGOs. The growing deterioration of the institutions of the Mozambican state worked in favour of the proliferation of a myriad of organizations which sprang up like mushrooms across the whole national territory. Even though the NGOs of the North proclaimed themselves as non-governmental, in fact a significant part of their budgets were provided by their respective governments; and there were cases in which these amounts were debited to the receiving country’s external debt, leaving the Mozambican state with no possibility of recourse (Negrão, 1997).

A second negative point was inefficiency in the utilisation of disposable funds. The high hidden costs and the transaction costs in the NGOs’ headquarters in their countries of origin were alarming. Salaries which were paid in the countries of origin, travelling and inter-continental holidays, family visits, accommodation, transport and fuel were all debited to the respective organisations; meanwhile, the national counterparts were not allowed these practices, because they were not sustainable. The ‘sustainability’ discourse, among many others, was unilateral; this translated in an unequal power relationship, leading me to call them “multinationals of charity”.

My last point was an unrelenting criticism of the discourse “we do concrete things”. The lack of investment in research, the dearth of viability studies, and the deficient or

even non-existent co-ordination with the state's programmes, all this together led to the resurgence of the 1970s myths regarding the economic behaviours of the poor farmers. For example, the myth that they only produce for their own subsistence, having no relation whatsoever with the market; or the myth that technological stagnation is a result of the almost genetic ignorance of the peasant woman.

In a text on this period in Mozambique and the intervention of the foreign or "transnational" NGOs, Boaventura de Sousa Santos emphasised two parallel processes. First the segmentation and sharing of sovereignty among nationals and international NGOs. This segmentation was determined by the different conceptions of intervention by the pivotal states which are behind the international NGOs. Second, the financial dependency of the national NGOs on the international ones, leading to a situation of subservience to the conditions imposed upon them (Santos, 2003).

The result was widespread indignation and, with it, a certain radicalism and absolutism which still holds sway among many public opinion makers in Mozambique. However, as time went by one began to understand that the NGOs from the North are not homogenous; one began to learn to establish the differences among them. An international NGO where the "officers" are entered into the salary sheets of the respective Ministry of Foreign Affairs is different from an NGO which survives from donations collected on the streets of European capitals, whenever television news bulletins invade the homes of ordinary people with the African tragedy. An international NGO that compels its entire staff to pray to Jesus Christ every morning, even when they are Moslem, is different from an NGO that fights for the respect to local creeds, turning them into a platform for its activities. An international NGO that prescribes a work schedule "because it was decided upon by the family" is different from an NGO that sends volunteers to work schedules which are locally defined. The recognition of these differences is essential for the establishment of common platforms; otherwise, the result is the working out of more explicitly normative global agendas on what should be equality, social justice, sustainability and cultural pluralism, than found in the bulk of the mainstream theories which have reached us by means of liberalisation.

During this period, the most burdensome and most difficult to eliminate legacy of the NGOs from the North was the idea that the local NGOs they had created were the alpha and omega of Mozambican civil society. However, in the majority of cases they are neither the one nor the other: they are neither intermediate nor intermediary institutions. What they ended up being are hybrid institutions in the heart of civil society, with the

characteristics of a service providing business.

A second grave consequence that derives from the first is their character of exclusivity, with a tendency towards sole representation resulting in them becoming the “mouthpiece for civil society”. Having one sole representative of civil society is to leave the door wide open for its manipulation by the political interests in power. The domestication of civil society, which was exactly how it was attempted with the propaganda associations of the colonial period and the ODMs after independence, continues to be a temptation for the African governments.

However with the passing of time, the organisations that were created as counterparts of the NGOs from the North were becoming different one from another. A national NGO that survives by conferences and seminars about globalization is different from a national NGO that has acquired legitimacy by means of the work being done within a community. A national network that is being paid exclusively through international financing is different from a network that survives from the work carried out by its members and from its capacity to raise some funds towards concrete activities. A national association that bids for consultancy tenders internationally is different from a local cultural association whose members party together as well as assist each other whenever disaster befalls them. The recognition of these differences and diversities is essential for the success of some of the practices we mention in the following section.

3. A practice that leads to a concept reconstruction

Perhaps it is because of their opposition to the “supply driven” model of the NGOs from the North, or because of the internal dynamics of the social movements that, in some concrete spheres, the practices of various Mozambican social organisations acquired totally differentiated contours; these lead to a definition of the role they are supposed to fulfil and to a reconstruction of the concept of civil society in the operational context of the country.

The first rough outlines of an ‘autonomous’ action in the dependency relationships arose in the post-war period, with the initiative of the Mozambican Christian Council – the campaign known as “Hoes for Arms” and later, the establishment of the Mozambican Debt Group (Grupo Moçambicano da Dívida). None of these initiatives was *sui generis* Mozambican. In other international contexts they had already

attempted to collect arms and, symbolically, transform them into hoes as a means to create income alternatives for the combatants and to bind them to the land and the family, making them forget violence. In addition, the international movement for the writing-off of the debt had created various pressure groups in some of the most debt ridden countries.

However, there were two circumstances that made this different in comparison to the previous period. On the one hand, the bond that both initiatives created with the poor farmers and with the national *intelligentsia*; and on the other, the fact that neither needed large amounts of external funding in order to continue. When one spoke of transforming arms into hoes, one was taking in a target population that comprised fundamentally young people of rural origin, and whose childhood had been marked by the collapse of the agricultural sector with a consequent lack of opportunities for a livelihood in the agricultural field; they made war because nothing could be lost, and not because they supported one or other of the ideologies advocated by the contending parties. After independence, the poor family farmers, who had been so artfully mobilised by Frelimo to bring down the colonial regime, were forgotten. With the war this sector reached levels of misery, malnutrition and impoverishment never before encountered by living generations. The Campaign for the Transformation of Arms into Hoes marked the moment of reconciliation between the urban and the rural, in which viable alternatives began to be sought for the poor farmers.

Due to its specific nature, the question of Mozambique's foreign debt could not be led by the NGOs from the North. And, because of its complexity, it could not be left to the two or three NGOs which were interested in the matter. The moment had arrived to integrate all Mozambicans with preparation and information on this matter so that they would support the international lobby for the writing-off of the debt. It was at that moment that persons like Carlos Cardoso, Nuno Castelo Branco and José Negrão got involved, among others who had never depended on and never worked for any NGO from the North. Thus they had maintained a certain autonomy regarding the intellectual control enforced by the one-party system. The Mozambican Debt Group was the meeting place for Mozambican social activists and intellectuals, in a framework that was neither dominated by the state nor by the NGOs from the North.

It was in this context, ten years after the introduction of neoliberalism into Mozambique, that three initiatives appeared, which lead to the current image of Mozambican Civil Society: namely, the Land Campaign, Agenda 2025, and the Poverty Observatory.

The Land Campaign

The land problem was and will continue to be vital for countries such as Mozambique, where the agrarian sector is a source of indispensable income for social reproduction and the place of employment for the overwhelming majority of the population. The end of the war in 1992 opened the possibility for competition for the better, and better located lands for agriculture, for forest exploration and synergistic tourism. In the wake of the Structural Adjustment Programme, the Land Tenure Centre, which was the war horse of USAID and other NGOs from the North, pressured for the granting of individual titles to the land as the only way the right to land could be secured. The fall of apartheid opened the way for speculation in landed estates by white farmers who came from South Africa because they were unhappy about the end of the subsidies they had been receiving there. All in all, it made the land a catalyst for an enormous diversity of interests.

The mobilisation around land was felt on three fronts at the same time: in the innermost recesses of the Catholic Church, by means of Caritas and the Diocesan Commissions for Justice and Peace; inside the Mozambican Christian Council through the ORAM - Mutual Assistance Organisation; and inside the UNAC - National Union of Peasants, due to the conflicts which began to appear because of an accelerated privatisation of the “state farms” and the attempt at usurping the land of the co-operatives. The binding element among the three fronts was the discussion of a new Land Law for Mozambique; the catalysing movement was the Land Campaign. Around 200 organisations gathered around the Land Campaign, from national and foreign NGOs to Grassroots Community Organisations, and from religious denominations (Christian, Moslem and *Mazione* to academics and individual persons. All were interested in a common cause, namely to ensure that access to and possession, of the land by the poorest would not become dependent on the issue of a title. At the same time, they wanted to ensure that mechanisms of land management rooted in custom would be recognised, and that relationships between private individuals and families could be constructed on the basis of mutual advantage (Palmer, 2003).

Unconsciously, the Land Campaign ended up establishing some of the basic characteristics of the new image of Mozambican civil society:

- adherence to common causes, irrespective of ideological diversity;
- possibility of participation of grassroots community organisations without being

- compelled to be under the direction of an urban NGO;
- full participation of religious denominations, whether they were Christian, Moslem or local;
- the opportunity to define appropriate strategies with the private sector;
- the utilisation of state institutions (the Legislative to approve the Law, and the Executive to carry out the Law) without necessarily having to take on power; and
- participation on an equal footing with international NGOs.

It was in the period that followed the Land Campaign (which ended in 2000) that, after the assassinations of the journalist Carlos Cardoso, the economist Siba-Siba Maquáqua, and of more than 100 people in the Montepuez prison, various factions of civil society once more united in order to demand the moral regeneration of the state and an end to corruption. In this way, journalists, socio professional associations and countless members of the urban élites joined the already existing civil society dynamics. As a result, a Law was approved by which civil society is responsible for the selection of three candidates for the Presidency of the National Elections Commission. The voting takes place within the Commission whose members are indicated by the political parties which are represented at the national parliament. This is a unique phenomenon in the whole African continent and perhaps even in the whole world.

Agenda 2025

Agenda 2025 arose after the dispute for world institutional hegemony fought between the UNDP and the World Bank/IMF. The objectives of Agendas 2020 and 2025 are to create consensus between all the political forces and the national interest groups around a common vision of the medium term future and of a set of development strategies which must be adopted by the various executives, independent of their political colour.

After the failure of the launch of an initiative to develop an Agenda for the year 2020, because the Party in power tried to do it behind closed doors, there arose Agenda 2025, which had a greater equilibrium of forces among the 14 members of the Council Committee and the circa 100 members of the National Committee. Representatives of practically all the political factions, of all the socio professional groups, and a significant number of intellectuals, artists and writers worked during a whole year under the executive co-ordination of some national figures respected for their impartiality, integrity and nationalism.

For the construction of consensus it was necessary to do a retrospective analysis, to agree on the national potentialities as well as structural weaknesses and, most difficult of all, to discuss the principles which could form the common starting points for the elaboration of all the possible scenarios for the two following decades (Agenda 2025, 2003). In this way, it was possible to draw up four possible scenarios for Mozambique:

- the scenario of the Kid [juvenile goat] – in which each of the main actors hides his/her head under the ground and only thinks of him or herself; this scenario means a return to war, to intolerance and to social exclusion;
- the scenario of the Wild Duck – in which each actor arrogates to him or herself the right to say that he/she knows all, resulting in cyclical crises followed by moments of slow and tenuous recovery because of the breakdown in structures caused by each crisis;
- the scenario of the Xirico [a small song bird] – in which each actor is a small bird that sings as much as possible everywhere possible, but which does not create an harmonious symphony towards the development of all of Mozambique's potentialities; and
- the scenario of the Bee – in which the actors work together and are sure to develop a hive that will meet their own needs and respect the rights of everyone.

The most creative aspect of Agenda 2025 was the identification of the set of determining variables upon which an analytical model was built. On this model the presuppositions which led to the elaboration of the country's scenarios and strategic options were placed⁴. For the first time, the monopoly of the discussion of the *res publica* was taken away from party summits and the myth of the infallibility of the enlightened vanguards or the enlightened leaders was broken.

New characteristics were thus added to the image of Mozambican civil society:

- the non-existence of vanguards or infallible leaders;
- the capability of conscious discussion about the future of the public good by various groups of people, provided their right of speech was recognised;
- the acceptance of different points of view, provided common principles are

⁴The 20 determinant variables resulted from the application of an analytical model which was based on four axis: human capital; social capital; economy and development; and governance. By pondering each variable, there appeared another normative model with results that are substantially different from the normative model applied by the PRSPs (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers).

- discussed and agreed upon;
- the sense of commitment towards the country and, in particular, to social justice.

The Poverty Observatory

The Poverty Observatory appeared in the wake of the movement for the writing-off of external debt. In 1996 the World Bank and the IMF launched the HIPC initiative, whose object was to eliminate what they called the “unsustainable debt” of the poorest and most indebted countries. The objective was to reduce these countries’ debt up to the limit of the capitalised liquid value of the debt considered sustainable; this would mean 150% of the export volumes and 250% of the government income. In that same year, the international donor community joined the initiative and the traditional terms of rescheduling of the debt by the Club of Paris and other bilateral creditors were, as far as possible, altered in conformity with those limits (Negrão, 2003).

Mozambique was one of the countries that most benefited by the HIPC initiative. In 1998 its debt was reduced from US \$ 5,6 billion to a sensible US \$ 1,3 billion. The debt-exports ratio was estimated at 200% to 220% in order for the initiative to provide a way-out for the country. The immediate results achieved were satisfactory. Between 1996 and 2000 the annual inflation rate went down from 47% to 2% and the Gross National Product grew on average 10% per annum.

In the year 2000 the country suffered the most devastating floods recorded until then. The losses in the South and Central zones were astronomical, as those regions were literally submerged for more than a month. As a consequence, the World Bank and the IMF decided to accelerate the debt relief by pardoning the total debt servicing payment for that year. The Club of Paris postponed the payment until Mozambique would be in a position to pay, and various bilateral creditors acted in the same way. In this way, Mozambique was able to enter into the second phase of the HIPC initiative, also known as HIPC 2.

In this second phase, the Bretton Woods institutions agreed to grant partial pardons of the debt, provided the country strictly followed the programme approved by those institutions. The creditors of the Club of Paris were prepared to grant debt relief under clearly preferential conditions and it is believed that the same will happen *vis-à-vis* the bilateral creditors.

The World Bank / IDA and IMF set four conditions for finally approving the transition to HIPC 2:

- elaboration of a *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper – PRSP*, that in Mozambique was called *Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty – PARPA*. This plan had to ensure the active participation of civil society, the private sector and the public in general;
- the implementation of a set of measures related to social development, public sector reform, and the legal and regulatory framework for economic activities;
- maintenance of a stable macroeconomic climate under IMF control; and
- confirmation of the participation of other creditors in the debt relief.

On 25 September 2001 the World Bank/IDA and the IMF concluded that Mozambique had met all four conditions imposed in 2000, and had taken the necessary steps to enter into the second phase. This made Mozambique the third country in the world to reach this phase, after Bolivia and Uganda. The external debt became US \$ 750 million, meaning that circa 73 per cent of the initial amount had been forgiven. The debt service went from US \$ 100 million per annum in 1988 to an average of US \$ 56 million between 2002 and 2010. This means a drop on average from 23% to 10% of the state income from 2002 to 2010; and it is estimated that this average will be 7% from 2011 to 2020.

The savings in the state budget from the reduction of the debt service allowed for an increase of state disbursements towards the PARPA. Translated into figures, the state can make available circa US \$ 130 million per year for the activities of the PARPA.

However, the required full participation of civil society, the private sector and the people in general in the PARPA's creation was reduced to sporadic consultations which often took on an informative character about what was being done or what had already been achieved. Consequently, the conception of the PARPA did not incorporate the perceptions, the knowledge and the experiences of the various actors which have a role to play in the reduction of absolute poverty. On the other hand, the economic development model adopted by the PARPA follows the neo-liberal paradigm applied to Third World countries. The master plan was drawn up by a specialist from Harvard University, who travelled to Maputo for this purpose. Consequently, an almost exclusive emphasis was placed on an export-lead orientation, in the expectation of the trickle-down-effects; the result was that the whole problem of investment required for

the formation of national capital was ignored.

In order to compensate for this gap, civil society agreed to push forward the Poverty Observatory, an organ led by the government in order to oversee the implementation of the PARPA. The Mozambican Poverty Observatory comprises three groups of actors: government, donors and civil society in the widest sense.

The nominations of who should represent the whole of civil society were carried out by civil society itself in co-ordination with the government. There is no doubt that the Mozambican government should be praised for affording this opportunity; in Zambia civil society represented in the Poverty Observatory is limited to some NGOs with the exclusive task of supporting the government in the identification and application of some indicators; and in Vietnam it is the NGOs from the North, such as CARE International and Action Aid which participate in the Poverty Observatory. In Mozambique, the government left the selection of its representatives to civil society, prescribing only that the private sector, as well as the trade unions, should have a presence.

After an internal consultation phase, the following were identified as representatives of civil society for the Poverty Observatory in Mozambique:

- four representatives from religious denominations (two Christian and two Moslem).
- two representatives of the trade union federations (OTM and Sindicatos Livres);
- three representatives of private sector associations (commercial association, industrial association and CTA);
- six representatives of 3rd tier organisations (Land Forum, Women's Forum, UNAC, GDM, Link and Teia);
- four representatives of 2nd tier organisations (FDC, Kulima, ORAM, Khindlimuka);
- one representative of an autonomous research institute (Cruzeiro do Sul - IID).

The Poverty Observatory has two objectives: fill the gap created by civil society's lack of participation when PARPA was first conceived; and to establish, on a national scale, a system for monitoring and evaluating poverty (and not only regarding PARPA), which should lead to the elaboration of the Annual Poverty Report by the Civil Society representatives from the point of view of the poor and their demands in general.

Other, new characteristics of the public image of Mozambican civil society began to appear:

- capitalising on opportunities as they surfaced;
- affirmation of a multicultural diversity and interaction for social welfare and an improvement in the quality of life;
- replacement of discourses of a hegemonic character by inclusive, flexible and changeable discourses, in function of the local conditions; and
- co-operation with the government on strategic operational questions.

Reconstruction of the concept of civil society

The experiences which had been accumulated during these last five years ended up giving a special significance to the concept of civil society in the Mozambican context, and perhaps even in the context of other African countries.

There is no doubt that civil society is a construct, and that its application to the African Continent has been the object of the most varied theoretical elaborations and interpretations one can imagine. The charismatic leader of the National Union of Peasants, Ismael Ossemame, once said, “Now everyone calls me civil society, but I do not know very well what that means”. Here we do not pretend to exhaust the topic, but only to contribute the Mozambican experience towards the definition and utility of the concept, that is, the notion of civil society.

For some, this is a contested concept that has been used with different meanings and, as such, has no operational use; for others, however, there are local meanings which are being created around the concept, as part of the universal negotiations among the people, states and the markets⁵. There are those who argue that civil society refers to a wider set than that of the NGOs, establishing the difference between these and the grassroots, community organisations. But there are also those who prefer to widen the definition of NGO, creating a hierarchy of levels or tiers according to their scope and reach as well as the type of members which are involved. According to this scheme, 1st tier organisations are those which are constituted by community elements or workers; 2nd tier ones are those which generate groups of 1st tier organisations; and 3rd tier ones

⁵Chandoke (2000) has an excellent synthesis on the various meanings of civil society outside the Western context, while Lewis argues that in 2001, on the basis of concrete examples, the concept may at the same time have an analytical value and an inspirational power, which makes it into a useful and operational concept.

are those which work with organisational networks of any of the other tier⁶.

In operational terms the issue becomes complex when one has to select representative elements of this construct called civil society, as happened during the three years mentioned above. There are three sectors which are particularly sensitive in regard to the definition of civil society: the private sector, the religious denominations, and the organisational forms derived from kinship.

For some, the private sector does not combine with the associative character principle because for them it is rather a question of talking about “strategic alliances”; for others, however, the private sector is situated between “the home and the state”, and thus its contribution should be considered, not as a useful instrument, but a rightful member, without which there cannot be any development⁷ (Guimah-Boadi, 2001).

For the first philosophers civil society formed part of the social life that was not the Church and that was situated between the state and the family; in practical terms, however, it has been shown that the religious denominations, when they are not established as an “ideological tool of the state”, fulfil an essential role in mediating between the people and the state, and between the latter and the markets. But religious denominations are not homogenous, and their capacity for incorporating change along the years and the centuries is different from denomination to denomination and in their innermost recesses; therefore, there is not always agreement on their inclusion or not into the operational definition of civil society.

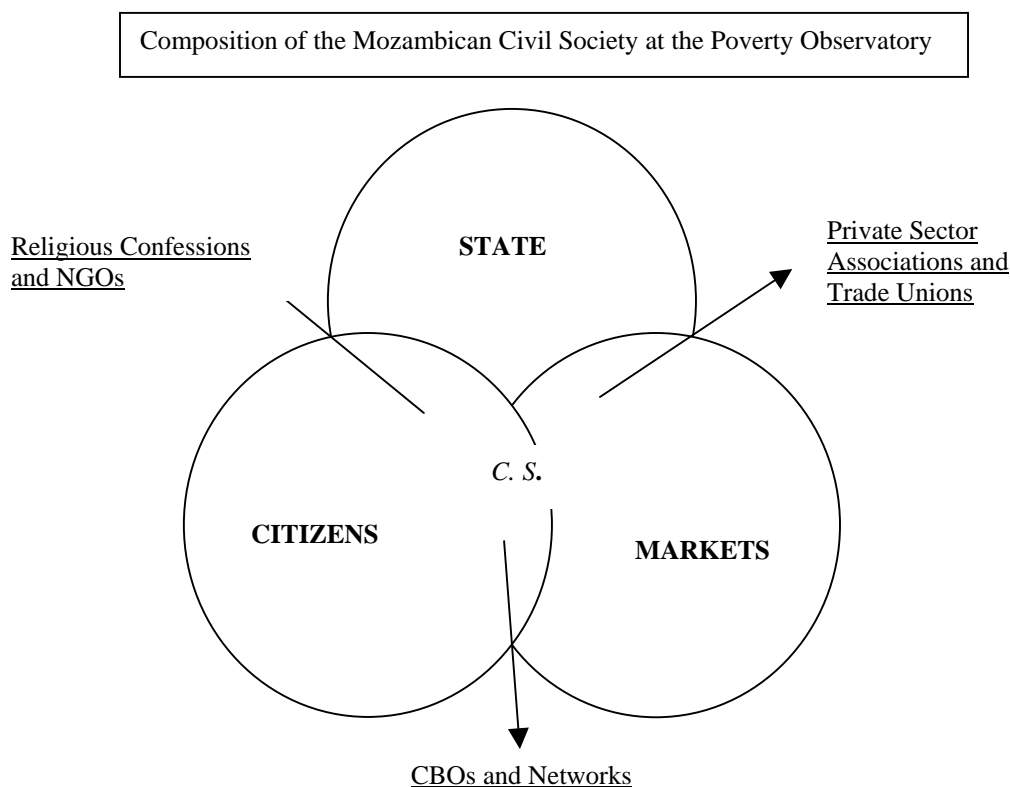
The third considerable sector in the composition of civil society is that of the organisational forms derived from kinship. For Boaventura de Sousa Santos, traditional leaders operate in the sphere of what he called non-civil society, as opposed to the extraterritorial civil society of the NGOs from the North, or the secondary civil society, that is the local NGOs created by the state or by the political class. For him, the visibility of the local authorities is directly related to the administrative incapacity and loss of legitimacy of the state. For Kanji, however, the organisations of mutual assistance and of kinship constitute the largest category of “organised” civil society in

⁶In this regard, see ‘Commonwealth Foundation Guidelines on NGOs’ in Ball and Dunn, 1995.

⁷For Guimah-Boadi, from the University of Ghana, civil society refers to the space between the home and the state, it is inhabited by voluntary groups and associations, partaking common interests and amply autonomous from the state. Business has obviously been excluded from this definition.

Mozambique (Kanji, 2002). Lastly, for David Sogge, the domestic units, pertaining to lineage and community, are merely primitive organisational relations where, in many cases, the main forms of association are compulsory and involuntary. In the revision of this problematic about the composition of civil society representation in the Poverty Observatory, it was concluded that the organisations which are derived from kinship, particularly the traditional authorities, would be better placed in the sphere of decentralisation and participatory democracy than in civil society, since their actions derived, fundamentally, from the Common Law state, and not from the interaction between it and the local people.

The selection of civil society representatives for the Poverty Observatory ended up by synthesising the contribution the Mozambican experience can make towards the reconstruction of the concept in a non-Western context. The diagram below demonstrates the intersection among the spheres of the state, the people and the market, and the areas from which the various representatives of civil society were selected.



To sum up, civil society is a construct that is not self-identified, but that is recognised in the diversity of a whole in which self-organisation, voluntary association,

obligatorily not for profit, the defence of citizenship rights before the state and the market, and the demand of a common vision of society, are more than a simple sum of the parts.

Thus we are not dealing with the adoption of a liberating agenda *per se*, nor with a neo-liberal route, but the conquest of a space of interaction between the state, the market and the people; this takes place sometimes through negotiation, other times through constructive dialogue and others yet through sharing of points of view and intervention strategies in favour of common causes which can be so simple like “peace” or so complex like “social and human development”.

4. From inverse relations to analogical relations

What reading should be done of the relations who were established during the reconstruction of the ‘intermediate institution’ in Mozambique? There are two spaces to be read – the space of internal relations and the space of global relations.

In the space of internal relations one went from the concept that the relation between the state and civil society was obligatorily inverse (that means that the one’s gains implied the other’s losses), to an analogical relation, that is, one that is established between equals, and could be neutral or positive to both the parties.

However, internal relations do not unfold only with the state; they are equally present among NGOs born neither with a mandate nor with legitimacy, and associations which represent interest groups which go from socio professional organisations to the informal dynamics of participation in campaigns for a specific cause. Furthermore, their relations tend to evolve on the basis of assent on the common principles which guide them, separating the wheat from the chaff when necessary and proclaiming the wealth of diversity, even ideological, of the organisational forms within the national territory.

A third dimension of the space of internal relations is where relations are developed between the urban and the rural, between the market and family economics, and between economic growth and human welfare and development. Also here we note the evolution of contrasting situation to that of the establishment of a continuum, which can lead to the production of innovative forms of integration and articulation, which can be of benefit to both parties.

To sum up, the tendency towards verified change points to a greater maturity and deliberation in recognising mutual spaces and in identifying the causes which might bring benefits and a better quality of life for all. The theoretical implications arising out of this could be:

- To the militancy to conquer power in order to foster popular ideals, perhaps one could add that participation in the public decision making processes can be assured by the practice of participative democracy, without one having to obligatorily belong to a political party.
- To the distinction between the state, the basic economic structures and civil society, established by Gramsci, one could perhaps add the distinction between the day-to-day life of the people, where one finds the real world, and its organisational forms, which constitute civil society.
- To Polanyi's society, in which the market is incorporated among so many other social functions, one could perhaps add the transformation dynamics caused by development, where the economic during a certain time tends to take on priority but without having to, obligatorily, make growth an end in itself.
- To Goran Hydén "affection economics", a product of the consubstantiate interdependencies of kinship relations of the peasant economy, perhaps one could add the enlargement of the kinship networks towards the state's political sphere in Africa, together with intimate friendships (godparents), nepotism and corruption.
- To the analysis of the third system focussed on the people instead of the political system, one could perhaps add the indispensability of the state so that multiplying effects in absolute poverty reduction can be reached, as well as the distribution of wealth on the basis of principles that are recognised in social justice (Martinussen, 1997).

However, in the space of global relations, I am not sure if the same tendency can be found for the transition of the inverse relation into the analogical relation.

Here also there are three dimensions to be read. The dimension of relations with the states, that of relations between organisations from the North and from the South, and that of relations in the interior of the South and the North. The relations that the NGOs from the North establish with the states for their articulation with the South are essentially different from those that the South maintains for the same ends. Subsidies, facilities and, in some cases, diplomatic status, although facilitating the concretisation

of their activities, place them in a situation of dependency on the agendas of their states; and these dependencies are replicated by their related organisations in the South. The autonomy in relation to the state is far greater in Africa; this gives the various endogenous national organisations moral authority and the freedom to go ahead with their objectives without fear of any immediate financial reprisals. Thus it seems to me that there is an inverse relation from the side of the large NGOs from the North which operate in Africa and the state, while on the side of the African Continent, one goes in the direction of an analogical relation.

The types of relations which are established between the NGOs from the North and Mozambican civil society have already been mentioned. Although in the specific case of this country there is a tendency to establish differences between the NGOs from the North and to establish analogical relations with those [NGOs] which partake of common principles, I do not think that the tendency on the Continent is pointing in the same direction. There are some laudable initiatives but there continues to be a pattern of implementing agendas defined by the “sisters” of the North in the South, the reason being the lack of [local] financial support. Perhaps the most blatant case is that of a large NGO with a budget that is larger than the budgets of some African countries; this NGO launched a campaign against the agricultural subsidies of the European Union and the United States, assuming that the market *per se* tends towards perfection, without first entering into dialogue with its counterparts in Africa to find out if it was their priority to remove the subsidies in the North or the establishment of some kind of financial support in the South. There are not many instances like the abovementioned, when actions of this nature unleash an inverse relation where the gains of some are to the detriment of the interests of civil society in the host country in the South.

Lastly, regarding internal interactions, there are still some significant steps to be taken pertaining to the recognition of the right to differ in the spheres of conceptualisation and action. Have there not been various instances when South African organisations arrogated to themselves the right to want to impose their methods and their conceptual framework on the other civil society organisations in Africa? It is also not unusual that Latin American organisations refer to their African counterparts with disdain, and to the South-East Asian ones as being weak for co-operating with their governments.

Also in the realm of global relations, we can extract theoretical deductions:

- To an alternative to neo-liberal globalization, perhaps one could add the globalization of a plurality of conceptual frameworks, of analytical instruments

- and of definition of practices on the basis of common principles and concomitant objectives.
- To the people's resistance to Bailey and Scott's external intervention, one could perhaps add hospitality, when the fears of the risks of adopting new behaviour [patterns] have been overcome.
 - To the global political rhetoric of democracy and human rights, one could perhaps add the analysis of practices of the discourse concerning gender relations, by means of the use of natural resources and by the exploitation of a child labour force in the social institutions which precede civil society.

To sum up, we find ourselves at a moment of intense change in international relations, when a given characteristic rapidly changes into its opposite, and where spaces are successively empty and filled. In this context, it is not possible to produce an objective characterisation on the relations between the NGOs from the North and Mozambican civil society; even less to theorise about it. However, what we have attempted to achieve with this text, is to identify tendencies of change (and from that draw some deductions) so that actions to be realised in the short term may bear in mind the idiosyncrasies of both sides and may be based on the mutual acceptance of diversity, as one of the fundamentals of alternative globalization.

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