20 RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE

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INTRODUCTION

After a protracted war that began in 1964 between the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (Frelimo) rebel movement and the Portuguese colonial government, Mozambique achieved its independence on 25 June 1975. The celebration at Machava Stadium was preceded by the triumphal journey undertaken by then president of Frelimo, Samora Moisés Machel,² covering the whole country and starting from the north, the cradle of the national liberation struggle.³ The celebration of national independence was the culmination, in the eyes of the leadership of Frelimo,⁴ of a heroic struggle against the Portuguese fascist regime. The struggle, according to the leadership of Frelimo, mobilised all those lovers of freedom and of a just, egalitarian society, where there is no exploitation.

In fact, this stance was confirmed in the first Constitution of Mozambique. Article 26 of the Constitution stipulated that,

All citizens of the People's Republic of Mozambique enjoy the same rights and are subject to the same duties regardless of their colour, race, sex, ethical origin, place of birth, religion, educational level, profession ethical origin. All acts aimed at disturbing social harmony, creating divisions or situations of privilege based on colour, race, sex, etc. are punishable by law.⁵

Nonetheless, despite the great ambition shown to create a harmonious society, the memories of colonialism and the alliances made during the colonial period would weigh significantly on the development strategies to be adopted,⁶ as well

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2 Joaquim Alberto Chissano, who later succeeded Samora Moisés Machel from 1986 to 2005, directed the interim government formed after the ceasefire on 7 September 1974. He took over as prime minister on 20 September 1974 up to the celebration of National Independence.

3 On the discourses of Samora Moisés Machel during his triumphal trip, see Darch C and Hedges D. 2013. "Political Rhetoric in the Transition to Mozambican Independence: Samora Machel in Beira, June 1975", *Kronos* 39:32-65.

4 Frente de Libertação de Moçambique [Front for the Liberation of Mozambique].

5 República Popular de Moçambique. 1975. *Constituição da República Popular de Moçambique* [Constitution of Popular Republic of Mozambique], Maputo: Imprensa Nacional.

6 The Roman Catholic Church, for example, made official alliances with colonial government in Mozambique in 1940. Some Muslims were coopted to the Portuguese side during the liberation war. Some individuals acting as government officials were also regarded as Portuguese allies, the famous "compromised".

as the commitments that would be made by various actors within the project of the construction of the “New Man” and the end of tribalism.⁷ The “New Man” was conceptualised as a context in which the nation would be free from dividing particularisms, such as tribal and ethnic groups.

This chapter aims to contribute to the understanding of the relationship between religion and development strategies in Mozambique from independence to 1990. In order to understand the complex relationship between religion and development strategies, I will consider the role of the Christian churches (Roman Catholic and Protestant), African traditional religions and Muslims, respectively.⁸ The objective is to show that the relationship between development strategies was accompanied by tension and that the holders of political power treated various segments of Mozambican society in ways that undermined the well-being of various religious groups. According to the holders of political power, it was religion that created social divisions at a time when it was necessary to engage everyone in the project of building the “New Nation”. Thus, all those who were against the ideals of the “New Man” and the “New Nation” were “enemies of the revolution”.

In this study, I argue that the Roman Catholic Church, in particular, paid a heavy price because of its connection with the Portuguese colonial authorities. I also contend that religious groups were not passive victims of the development strategies, but rather exploited existing opportunities or channels in order to practise their faith. In fact, they delivered pastoral letters, approached Frelimo government and developed strategies to counter restrictions. The study deals with the period from 1975, the year of national independence, to 1990, when Mozambique adopted a more liberal constitution. In 1989, the Department of Religious Affairs hired a Muslim to deal with Muslim issues. It is an ambitious study in the sense that it intends to cover the whole country, since most of the religious institutions studied are present throughout the whole country.

RELIGION AND POWER IN MOZAMBIQUE

The study of religion in Mozambique was first the terrain of missionaries, ethnographers and anthropologists. Missionaries during the early days of the colonial encounter, were concerned with the Christianisation of Africans and saw links between kings and emperors and religion as being diabolical, unwilling or unable to understand the relationship between religion, power and well-being

⁷ “Que morra a tribo e nasça a nação” [May the tribe die and the nation be born] from Samora Machel became famous as a statement. It alluded to the need to end tribalism that had been used by Portuguese colonial authorities to divide the native Africans.

⁸ The Catholic Church had more impact on the Mozambican people and government officials than any other religious group. By 1975, the Roman Catholics were 20%, Protestants 5%, Animists and others 62%, and Muslims 13%. These percentages are problematic and should be taken as indicative. Morier-Genoud E. 2000. “The 1996 ‘Muslim Holidays’ Affair: Religious Competition and State Mediation in Contemporary Mozambique”, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 26(3):419.

in Africa. Moreover, there was a general consensus on the need to drive Africans away from the so-called “barbarism” by instilling Western values. The accounts that Friar João dos Santos, a sixteenth-century Dominican missionary who arrived in the territory that came to be the modern Mozambique, provided through his observations of the way ordinary individuals interpreted their surroundings using religion were typical of a missionary whose attitudes fit within the spirit of the European Inquisition and who was himself part of the colonial enterprise. His attitudes undermined, in part, the harmony and social cohesion of Africans by pursuing and condemning the religions that Africans practised.⁹ Travellers without proselytising missions, who also recorded in writing the relationship between religion and African daily life, basically took the position of Friar João dos Santos, because their interpretation of the African reality was done through European lenses. These travellers and others have strongly criticised Europeans who appropriated African religious practices, without considering the local context and the non-existence of European institutions to deal with problems that affected them on African soil.¹⁰

Analysis of the studies of missionaries and travellers during the early days of the colonial encounter shows, on the one hand, that religion had become embedded in precolonial African society and, on the other, that it was a stabilising factor, and created cohesion amongst Africans, thus contributing to well-being.¹¹ Studies on religion and power after the Berlin Conference came from the hands of Europeans, especially Portuguese, who were linked to colonial administration and were

9 In the region of Tete, for example, he burnt the mosque and destroyed the tomb of Mafamede, a place of local religious worship. See Dos Santos J. 1999. *Etiópia oriental e vária história de cousas notáveis do Oriente* [Eastern Ethiopia and various history of notable things from the East]. Lisboa: Comissão Nacional para a Comemoração dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, 564-566. Thus, depriving Africans of places with immense significance in spiritual, moral, social, economic and political life as a result of the difficulty of separating religion from all facets of society. It is important here to emphasise that, during the sixteenth century, Islam had penetrated inland and became Africanised. The first reference to Islam in eastern Africa, including Sofala, dates back to the ninth century. On the Africanisation of European Institutions, see Isaacman A. 1972. *Mozambique: The Africanization of a European Institution: the Zambesi Prazos, 1750–1902*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

10 Rodrigues E. 2012. “A ciência europeia e a medicina africana de Moçambique: explorações, apropriações e exclusões, entre finais do século XVIII e meados do século XX” [European science and African medicine in Mozambique: explorations, appropriations and exclusions, between the late eighteenth and mid-twentieth centuries], *Congresso Ibérico de Estudos Africanos (CIEA)* 8. Madrid: UAM; Dias de Andrade I. 2016. “‘Tem um espírito que vive dentro dessa pele’: feitiçaria e desenvolvimento em Tete, Moçambique” [“There’s a spirit that lives within this skin”: witchcraft and development in Tete, Mozambique], PhD Diss, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 118-119, 123.

11 For example, António Rita-Ferreira argues that “probably before 1800 slavery may even have served the chiefs to eliminate anti-social individuals who would affect the cohesion of their communities as criminals, rebels, adulterers, defendants in crimes of wicked witchcraft, etc.” Rita-Ferreira A. 1982. *Fixação portuguesa e história pré colonial em Moçambique* [Portuguese settlement and precolonial history in Mozambique]. Lisboa: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 154.

concerned with the role of African religions in the colonial project. The common denominator in these studies is that they considered the religions practised by Africans to be harmful to colonial power, hence the need to eradicate them in favour of Christianity. The accounts of Barro Gomes, for example, who was, amongst other things, minister of the Navy and the Overseas in the late nineteenth century, and António Enes, a royal commissioner also at the end of the nineteenth century, considered the Christian religion to be an absolutely necessary element to maintain their Portuguese prestige amongst the natives and that the native religion had to be eradicated.¹²

But with the “winds of change” blowing all over the continent and with the consequent abandonment of the *política de dificuldade administrativa* (administrative hardship police),¹³ there emerged a group studies that showed how the Portuguese authorities coopted some Muslims against the rebel movement.¹⁴ After independence, studies of religion in Mozambique were dominated by the “political paradigm”, as the sociologist Eric Morier-Genoud termed it.¹⁵ In fact, there were studies of a nationalist nature that were concerned with the position of religious institutions in the face of colonialism and the struggle for national liberation dominated by historians. Within this new perspective, there was a profusion of studies on the role of Protestant churches in Mozambican nationalism. The general argument in these studies, guided by the “political paradigm”, is that the Protestant churches, being rooted in African soil and defending African values, played an important role in the emergence of Mozambican nationalism,¹⁶ as opposed to the Roman Catholic Church, which was allied with colonialism.

One of the problems of the aforementioned type of approach is that it turns a blind eye to the significant role of religious institutions in education, health, cohesion and

12 Lourenço VA. 2010. *Moçambique: memórias sociais de ontem, dilemas políticos de hoje* [Mozambique: social memories of yesterday, political dilemmas of today]. Second edition. Lisboa: Gerpress – Comunicação Empresarial e Marketing Lda.

13 Cahen M. 2000. “L’État nouveau et la diversification religieuse au Mozambique, 1930–1974. Le résistible essor de la portugalisation catholique (1930–1961)” [The Portuguese Estado Novo and Religious Diversification in Mozambique, 1930–1974: The Resistible Growth of Catholic Portugalization (1930–1961)], *Cahiers d’Études Africaines* [African Studies Papers] 158:317 (quoted in Morier-Genoud E. 2002. *O Islão em Moçambique após a independência: História de um poder em ascensão* [Islam in Mozambique After Independence: A History of a Power in Ascension]. Paris: Karthala. (Revised version of *L’Afrique politique* 2002. *Islam d’Afrique. Entre le local et le global*. Paris: Karthala, 123-146)).

14 Monteiro FA. 1992. *O islão, o poder e a guerra (Moçambique: 1964–1974)* [Islam, Power and War (Mozambique: 1964–1974)], PhD Diss, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa.

15 Morier-Genoud ED. 2000. *The Catholic Church, Religious Orders and the Making of Politics in Colonial 1974-Mozambique: The Case of the Diocese of Beira, 1970–1974*, PhD Diss, State University of New York/UMI Dissertation Service, 17-19.

16 See Cruz e Silva T. 2001. *Protestant Churches and the Formation of Political consciousness in Southern Mozambique (1930–1974): The Case of a Swiss Mission*. Basel: P. Schlettwein Publishing.

social harmony. With rare exceptions, this political paradigm still prevails in religion studies in Mozambique. Rare are the studies that analyse the complex relationship between development strategies and related policies with religion. One may say that development studies in Mozambique adopted the “exceptionalism paradigm”¹⁷ in relation to religion.¹⁸ Anthropologist Inácio Dias de Andrade is an exception for prompting the incorporation of the witchcraft discourse in development projects, using the example of the province of Tete, where several mega projects took place.¹⁹ Despite the greatness of his contribution, Inácio Dias de Andrade is primarily a social anthropologist. With this approach in this chapter, I include historians in the debate on the complex relationship between religion and development strategies in Mozambique.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN MOZAMBIQUE

Despite the immense difficulty in defining the concept of development because of heterogeneity of values, this work considers development as being the “(1) universal access to healthy food, unpolluted air and water, hygienic clothing and shelter, (2) enhancement of the resource base while improving yield, (3) self-reliance and optimal use of the potential of each locality, region and nation in the perspective of better use of ecological (and human) resources, (4) harmony between the individual, the family and society”.²⁰ Greater emphasis will be given to the third and fourth aspects of this definition, taking into account the central theme of human flourishing. Strategies towards human flourishing are conceived here as proposals for activities or activities aimed at the functioning of society in areas conventionally considered in a definition of development. The development options, adopted during and after independence in the official discourse, appear with various designations, such as

17 This expression derives from Catton WR and Dunlop RE. 1980. “A new ecological paradigm for post-exuberant sociology”, *American Behavioral Scientist* 24:15, quoted by Joseph Drummond when inquiring about the delay of the social sciences in adopting the geological time and designated it as “human exceptionalism paradigm”. Drummond JA. 1991. “A história ambiental: temas, fontes e linhas de pesquisa” [The Environmental History: Themes, Sources and Lines of Research], *Estudos Históricos* 4(8):180.

18 For example, the analytical variables adopted by various developmental authors exclude religion. Yussuf Adam, an historian from the University Eduardo Mondlane, in his study focuses on development strategies and related policies, destabilisation and aid. See Adam Y. 2006. *Escapar aos dentes do crocodilo e cair da boca do leopardo: trajetória de Moçambique pós colonial, 1975–1990* [To Escape from the Crocodile’s Teeth and Fall in the Leopard’s Mouth: Trajectory of postcolonial Mozambique, 1975–1990]. Maputo: Promédia. Artur Mungoi, a geographer from the University Eduardo Mondlane, focuses on power and territory. See Mungoi CA. 2008. *Desenvolvimento regional no Vale do Zambeze: Moçambique em perspectiva* [Regional Development in Zambeze Valley: Mozambique in Perspective], PhD Diss, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul.

19 Dias de Andrade, “Tem um espírito que vive dentro dessa pele”, 118-119.

20 Hettne B, Karlsson S and Magnusson P. 1990. *Aspects of militarization and development in sub-Saharan Africa*. Maputo: Mimeo, quoted by Adam, *Escapar aos dentes do crocodilo*, 109.

“option”, “objective”, “strategies”, “tactics”, “political options”, “ideology”, “political line”, “politics” and “policies”. Strategies are also referred to as economic and social development strategies.²¹

Although Mozambique adopted socialism after independence, great care must be taken not to homogenise and create stereotypes about development. Avoiding homogenisation and stereotyping has the advantage of allowing analysis of a complex reality that cannot be reduced to the great landmarks of socialism such as economic centralisation, collectivisation and nationalisation. From this point of view, and following the prior work of Yussuf Adam, this work considers the following development strategies within the socialist project: (1) “kill the alligator while small” (1975–1978), (2) re-privatisation of small and medium trade (1979–1984) and (3) the free market (1984–1990).

Addressing party members on 5 November 1976, president Samora Moisés Machel explained the alligator metaphor: “The alligator is killed when still small, because it lives on the banks of the river. The alligator is in the riverbed when it is already big, and then we need boats to attack it. This means that we must kill capitalist ideas, still in the egg, when they have not yet created force, when they have not yet consolidated. That is why we compare capitalist ideas to an alligator. The alligator is killed when it is small with fine ease, because it lives on the banks of the river, when it does not yet have the capacity to be in the riverbed”.²² Regarding the subsequent re-privatisation, Machel, in an interview with Allen Isaacman²³ and the journalist Ian Christie in 1979, stated that “the private sector in industry, agriculture and commerce plays an important social role within the Mozambican economy”, but it has to be subjected to the interests of the national economy.²⁴

While the first strategy was intended to end capitalism, to create the “New Man” and the “New Society”, the second strategy of re-privatisation involved the government giving space to private enterprise for small and medium trade. This allowed Muslims, for example, to re-engage in this trade. The last strategy of the free market deals was ushered in when the Mozambican government approached Western financial institutions and subsequently adopted Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) that coincided with gradual concessions to religious groups.

CHRISTIANITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE

Christian churches, both Catholic and Protestant, were also impacted by development strategies, particularly the nationalisations aimed at ending the “bourgeois” and

21 Adam, *Escapar aos dentes do crocodilo*, 108.

22 Samora Moisés Machel. 1976. “Nossa tarefa é construção do socialismo” [Our task is the construction of socialism], *Tempo*, 11 November, 6.

23 Allen Isaacman, an historian from the USA, has many works on Mozambican history.

24 Isaacman A and Christie I. 1979. “Entrevista com Samora Machel” [Interview with Samora Machel], Maputo, May. Online at: <https://www.aluka.org/stable/10.5555/al.sff.document.isaacman0002>

the “aspiring bourgeoisie” in order to build a new society without classes. Starting from the transition period up to 1978, it can be said that the position of the new independent government of Mozambique in relation to Christian churches was similar to other religious groups with just a few exceptions, as in the case of the Swiss Mission, whose Frelimo superiors from the south were linked.²⁵ The concessions made by the party-state were more favourable to the Protestant churches than the Roman Catholic Church, because of the weight of the latter’s connection with the Portuguese colonial regime, especially from 1940 until the end of the national liberation struggle. Thus, the Roman Catholic Church was increasingly prevented from participating in the development of the new society.

In fact, during the period of transition, for Frelimo, religion was considered to be an obscurantist manifestation that served to deceive, trick and divide the people, while the party was engaged in building an egalitarian society. Thus, Frelimo banned the teaching of religious creeds from all government schools during the transition to independence.²⁶ Two months after the celebration of national independence, that is to say, in August 1975, a communiqué from the Steering Groups (Grupos Dinamizadores)²⁷ revealed that religion was not welcome to be part of the construction of the new Mozambican society, despite the fact that the Constitution of the People’s Republic of Mozambique made clear in Article 36 that “in the People’s Republic of Mozambique, the State guarantees citizens freedom to practise or not to practise a religion”.²⁸ Subsequent developments showed that only in theory there was religious freedom.

Armando Emílio Guebuza, a high ranked Frelimo cadre,²⁹ gave the first signs of how bitter the relationship with religious groups would be when his communiqué named several religious groups under the umbrella term “agents of imperialism”.³⁰

25 Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane, first president of Frelimo, was the fruit of the Swiss Mission. See Cruz e Silva, *Protestant Churches*, 101-119.

26 Cabrita J. 2000. *The Tortuous Road to Democracy*. New York: Palgrave, 97. It is important to remember that, under the terms of the Concordata, the Roman Catholic Church participated actively in education and health sectors.

27 “In order to replace the vacuum of power created by the abolition of the condition of traditional authority, and from the proposals advanced by Frelimo during the armed struggle, Frelimo created the ‘Grupos Dinamizadores’.” This form of popular grass-roots organisation, which never would have known a formal legal format, was taking shape in public institutions, factories and companies, schools and residential neighbourhoods. The Steering Groups exercised various tasks, such as management of social issues, conflict mediation, policing, administration and regulation. Meneses MP. 2009. “Poderes, direitos e cidadania: O ‘retorno’ das autoridades tradicionais em Moçambique” [Powers, Rights and Citizenship: The “Return” of Traditional Authorities in Mozambique], *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais* [Critical Journal of Social Sciences] 87:26.

28 People’s Republic of Mozambique, *Constitution*.

29 He later became president of Mozambique from 2006 to 2015.

30 Guebuza A. 1975. “Combate Popular organizado contra estandartes do imperialismo” [Popular Fighting organised against the standards of imperialism], *Notícias*, 17 October.

In another circular, the Steering Dynamic Groups echoed this new orientation. The circular accused national and foreign missionaries of being “agents of imperialism” who wanted to maneuver believers to serve the interests of the exploiters.³¹ According to this circular, tithing was not being used “for the maintenance of full-time pastors and exclusive dedication to the preaching of the gospel” as the Bible preaches,³² but for the particular use of the religious hierarchy and to send abroad.³³ The assumption that missionaries were acting as “agents of imperialism” made possible this judgment that is most closely connected with social control efforts, including the need to control the missionaries’ links to foreign entities.

President Machel told the Roman Catholics that they would not be part of the new order, because they supported colonialism. Machel also argued that the Church has not worked for national unity, much less against tribalism.³⁴ Thus, the destiny of Catholics was sealed. The limitation of the Roman Catholic Church was further systematised in June 1978 at the Second National Conference of Ideological Work in the city of Beira. This conference, directed by the party-state, ended up issuing rules on the control the publication, import and distribution of religious material and to prohibit religious organisations from “duplicating” the work of state-sponsored mass organisations, the women’s and youth groups, the OMM³⁵ and OJM,³⁶ respectively.

Additionally, the formation of interfaith associations and meetings was prohibited. It was stipulated that the enrolment in religious seminars was only permitted for people eighteen years or older or after completion of ninth grade and compulsory military service. All buildings belonging to the Catholic Church became part of the national heritage. The religious cults were restricted to temples and not permitted near schools, hospitals, communal villages and military centres. It was also agreed that the missionaries should be concentrated in the urban centres and that their movement would be controlled by the pass law (*guia de marcha*).³⁷ These measures were more consistent in 1979. During the transition period, the Frelimo government

31 Grupos Dinamizadores. 1975. “Circular de Grupos Dinamizadores” [Circular of Dynamic Groups], Maputo: Centro de Estudos Africanos (CEA), Referência 97/CPN/95, CEA, pasta 13.

32 See 1 Corinthians 9:14.

33 In 1975, more than 600 missionaries left the country, because they felt it was difficult to operate under the new conditions; others were ordered to leave the country. This situation continued in the following years. See Cabrita, *The Tortuous Road*, 121.

34 In his first speech as president of the People’s Republic of Mozambique, Samora Machel highlighted, amongst other things, that tribalism was an evil that should be combatted like colonialism.

35 OMM: Organização da Mulher Moçambicana [Mozambican Women Organisation].

36 OJM: Organização da Juventude Moçambicana [Mozambican Youth Organisation].

37 The “pass laws” were institutionalised in Mozambique during the period of the Marxist regime, adopted and imposed by Frelimo in the years following the independence. They were used to control the mobility of people inside the country. Anyone, who wished to travel from one locality, district or province to another, would have to present their identification pass at the arrival point.

also arrested missionaries, sometimes without formal accusation.³⁸ The Protestant churches also lost their role with the mass expulsion of several missionaries. The leadership of Frelimo homogenised the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, closing its eyes to the critical interventions of bishop Sebastião de Resende of Beira,³⁹ the Burgos Fathers⁴⁰ and the Protestants who flanked Frelimo during the national liberation struggle in Cabo Delgado, Niassa, Tete. Gradually the Roman Catholic Church saw the diminution of its agency in sectors that were conventionally part of the definition of development, namely education, health and harmony between the individual, family and society.

The Roman Catholic Church, feeling that it was losing ground, attempted a compromise with Frelimo authorities at the First National Pastoral Assembly in Beira in September 1977. This move was intended to offer the Church's support for the socio-economic development of the country. The leadership of Frelimo understood this as "a new tactic", "a tactic of occasion". Frelimo thought that if they were able to gain advantages in colonialism by positioning themselves against the exploited, they would repeat the same tactic by exploring the new opportunities. From 1984 forward, there were visible signs of rapprochement with the Roman Catholic Church. The supplies were lacking. The war intensified, mainly in the south. Internationally, Frelimo's image was sullied by its approach to the Roman Catholic Church. At the domestic level, the state-party recognised that a segment of the population belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, Pope John Paul II came to visit Mozambique in November 1989 as a result of changes in development strategies.

Jehovah's Witnesses were also subject to a range of accusations.⁴¹ Because of their beliefs, they were accused of denying the achievements of the revolution, of refusing to pay taxes, of saluting the national flag and of recognising the symbols and leaders of the Mozambican homeland. Jehovah's Witnesses came to be labelled as "unproductive" and "enemies of the revolution",⁴² a move that fueled their violent

38 Prior to the circular, Nazarene Church and Assembly of God Church missionaries had been arrested in July and August. Also, 150 missionaries and church workers were being held without charge in Maputo and Beira prisons. Following these arrests, "members of the Twelve Apostles Church were rounded up in Maputo for, according to the government, having been caught spreading their faith" (Cabrita, *The Torturous Road*, 122).

39 Morier-Genoud, *The Catholic Church, Religious Orders and the Making of Politics in Colonial Mozambique*.

40 The Burgos Fathers denounced the Miriamu massacre perpetrated by Portuguese troops on 16 December 1972. On the Wiriamu Massacre, see Dhada M. 2013. *O massacre Português de Wiriamu, Moçambique* [Portuguese Massacre of Wiriamu, Mozambique]. Lisboa: Tinta-da-China.

41 The persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses in Southern Africa goes back to the colonial era. See, for example, Jubber K. 1977. "The Persecution of Jehovah's Witness in Southern Africa", *Social Compass* 24(1):121-134; Pinto P. 2005. "Jehovah's Witness in Colonial Mozambique", *Social Sciences and Missions* 17:61-123.

42 This perception and this form of representation and construction of the social problem led to the implementation of the policy known as Operation Production. See Quembo C. 2017.

mobilisation to participate in Operation Production, whose purpose, according to state-party Frelimo official, was a political-administrative measure in the name of revolutionary legality, of social intervention to eradicate social ills (crime and prostitution) in cities (Beira and Maputo) and to render the “unproductive” useful to society in order to fulfil the objectives of the development of the time and for the formation of a new Mozambican society, stripped of coloniser values.⁴³

The war between the government and Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo) came to an end in 1992 with the signing of the General Peace Agreement in Rome. The whole negotiating process that led to the peace agreement was strongly supported by Christian religious leaders. The democratic constitution of 1990 paved the way for multiparty elections. From this time on, religious played a greater role in politics.

ISLAM AND DEVELOPMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE

With independence, it was necessary to end the exploitation of man by man between the “bourgeois” and the “aspiring bourgeoisie”. Considering that about one third of the Mozambican population professed the Islamic religion and that trade was dominated by Muslims, individuals practising Islam, the first strategy described above, the “kill the alligator while small” strategy, affected many Muslims. Moreover, President Machel had paved the way by stating in Lichinga and Inhambane in 1975 that Muslims had supported colonialism.

The Frelimo leadership did not take into account that the Portuguese colonial state had adopted a hostile attitude towards Islam until the beginning of the 1960s in light of the winds of change that were blowing across the continent and affecting Mozambique. These changes prompted the colonial government to co-opt Muslims,⁴⁴ so that they would not line up with the “rebels” and “terrorists”. Frelimo’s leadership speech homogenised all Muslims, including those who, by force of circumstances, had no alternative but to collaborate with the colonial authorities.

The speech put under the same umbrella the Muslims who had participated alongside Frelimo in the struggle for national liberation since 1965. After all, Frelimo assumed that, “One of the basic principles which inspire the Frelimo policy is respect for all religious beliefs. Among our militants, there are many Christians and Muslims.”⁴⁵

O poder do poder: Operação Produção (1983) e a invenção dos “improdutivos” urbanos no Moçambique socialista [The power of power: Operation Production (1983) and the invention of urban “unproductive” in socialist Mozambique]. Maputo: Alcance, 65.

43 Quembo, *O poder do poder*, 72.

44 Alpers E. 1999. “Islam in the Service of Colonialism? Portuguese Strategy during the Armed Liberation Struggle in Mozambique”, *Lusotopie, Dynamiques Religieuses en Lusophonie Contemporaine* 6:172-177.

45 This is a critical stance to the position of Don Custódio Alvim Pereira, the auxiliary bishop of Lourenço Marques, in the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Missionary Agreement that entrusted all official education in the Portuguese colonies to the Roman

The development strategy adopted after independence sought to accelerate “nationalisation”, thereby reducing the role of religion in sectors such as health and education. Faced with the spectre and threat of “agents” and “lackeys” of imperialism, the new independent state also accelerated social control. Thus, pilgrimages to Mecca were scrutinised, and from 1977 Muslims there were not allowed,⁴⁶ thus denying Muslims the realisation of one of their pillars of faith, which is to make pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lifetime. It was forbidden to teach the Quran to children, the wearing of the fez or tarbush head covering by Muslim men in the cities, districts and party headquarters, and some madrasas and mosques were closed in some provinces, including Niassa, Inhambane⁴⁷ and Cabo Delgado.⁴⁸ The nationalisation strategy, which aimed at preventing the emergence of a class society with the bourgeois at the top, also focused on buildings that previously served as madrasas.⁴⁹

The nationalisation policy limited Muslims’ religious practice, but it also limited Muslim interventions in the social sector. It became difficult to teach the Quran in the madrasas and to carry out actions of help and self-help to the believers in madrasas and mosques that were being closed. The same nationalisation policy limited the performance of Muslims in small and medium commerce, and they have historically been active in this sector. The prohibition of private initiative in favour of the centralisation of the economy and the consequent creation of “*Lojas do Povo*” (“people’s shops”)⁵⁰ stripped Muslims of their traditional means of subsistence. At the same time that the new government argued that it was necessary to “kill the alligator when still small”, it sought to transform capitalist agriculture into forms of socialist agriculture planned by the state and urged Mozambicans to increase production.

Frelimo’s concern for agricultural production was affirmed by its first president, Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane, who died in 1969.⁵¹ For Mondlane, production was of extreme and immediate importance, since it was necessary for the survival of the

Catholic Church on 7 May 1965. (See Alpers, “Islam in the Service of Colonialism?”, 178). For an example of Muslim participation in the liberation war, see Bonate L. 2013. “Muslim Memories of the Liberation War in Cabo Delgado”, *Kronos* 39:230-256. Online at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26432417>

46 Morier-Genoud, *O Islão em Moçambique após a independência*.

47 Morier-Genoud, *O Islão em Moçambique após a independência*.

48 In Mocimboa da Praia, Cabo Delgado province, some Koranic school teachers “were arrested because they had madrasas and taught Islam to children. See Bonate, “Muslim Memories of the Liberation”, 245.

49 Carvalho AS. 1999. “Comportamento dos empresários islâmicos em Moçambique”, *África: Revista do Centro de Estudos Africanos* 22/23:338.

50 The existing shops before independence and owned by various traders, including Muslims, were nationalised and became “people’s shops”.

51 Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane was the first president of the National Liberation Front since the formation of the movement in 1962 until his death on 3 February 1969 through a book bomb. He received his doctorate in sociology in the United States of America and was also an official of the United Nations (UN).

population, the army and any civil services.⁵² With independence, Frelimo resumed this discourse and inserted it into the scope of the construction of the “New Society” and in the consolidation of the revolutionary conquests. Everyone was to be engaged in this noble task. In a manner disrespectful of their beliefs, Samora Moisés Machel, the first president of the People’s Republic of Mozambique, called on Muslims to participate in the country’s economic development by engaging in pork production.⁵³

This appeal was made in Gaza province at a rally in 1977 and addressed to about 100 Muslims present. In the city of Nacala, in the province of Nampula, the appeal was repeated in the same year to an even larger population, and many inhabitants of Nacala were Muslim. In his appeal Machel, questioned Muslim fidelity to the new society and sought to impose the Frelimo ideal of economic development without respect to their religion.⁵⁴ This stance created a climate of suspicion and exacerbated tensions.

The result of these development strategies, in terms of production, turned out to be the opposite of what was intended. By 1978, the lack of supplies became more acute.⁵⁵ Due to the increasing chaos, Frelimo was under pressure in order to rethink its development strategies. As a result, some individuals opposed to the state monopoly on commercialisation in the form of the privatisation of marketing networks were granted concessions. In fact, the “people’s shops” were abolished, and there was recognition of private farmers and small business owners, who were also granted space.⁵⁶ The concessions were possible, because the party-state understood that the previous development model was not sustainable, since it was against the interest of those Frelimo considered to be the social basis of the revolution.⁵⁷ It allowed some Muslims to resume their business, which also facilitated support for beggars and the poor, or *zakat*, which is one of the pillars of the Islamic religion.⁵⁸

52 Mondlane EC. 1969. *Lutar por Moçambique* [Struggle for Mozambique]. Lisboa: Sá da Costa Editora, 190.

53 Silva CN. 2017. *Viver a fé em Moçambique: as relações entre a Frelimo e as confissões religiosas* [To Live the Faith in Mozambique: The Relationship Between Frelimo and Religious Confessions], PhD Diss, Universidade Federal Fluminense, 1113-1114; See also Macagno L. 2004. “Samora e os muçulmanos: narrativas pós coloniais sobre uma relação ambígua” [Samora and the Muslims: Post-Colonial Narratives about an ambiguous relationship], *XXVII Encontro Anual da ANPOCS*, Caxambu; Macagno L. 2004. “Islã e política na África Oriental: o caso de Moçambique” [Islam and Politics in Eastern Africa: The Case of Mozambique], *6 Jornadas de Sociologia*. Buenos Aires: Faculdade de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Buenos Aires.

54 Silva, *Viver a fé em Moçambique*, 115.

55 Adam, *Escapar aos dentes do crocodilo*, 116.

56 Grocery stores, beauty salons and other small businesses were re-privatised. Adam, *Escapar aos dentes do crocodilo*, 123.

57 Adam, *Escapar aos dentes do crocodile*, 131.

58 On Friday, beggars and the poor, both Muslim and non-Muslim, go through Muslims’ shops in search of alms.

The tension created by development policies, especially the “nationalisations”, was used by Renamo. Already in the mid-1980s, Renamo appeared to be campaigning for sympathy from Muslims by distributing examples of aggressive speeches and government actions against practitioners of the Islamic religion in the late 1970s. Moreover, the rebel movement distributed the Quran in the province of Cabo Delgado and left the mosques standing.⁵⁹ The situation of Muslim practitioners improved further after 1989, when the Department of Religious Affairs hired a Muslim to deal with Muslim issues.⁶⁰ In subsequent years, Muslims participation in politics increased.

AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS AND DEVELOPMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE

Development strategies, regardless of the designation used, have undermined the role played by African traditional religions. The position of the independent government in Mozambique has created serious problems for many of those whose lives gravitate around traditional religion, with its links between the world of the living and that of the dead. Maria Paula Meneses, a Mozambican anthropologist captured well this in an interview with a traditional healer, who said, “When there are no problems, we are in good health, no bad luck, no nothing.”⁶¹ In Cabo Delgado, for example, one villager stated in one of several conversations I had with him that “these our children when they returned from the bush⁶² demanded us to stop doing our traditional ceremonies and never gave clear reasons”.⁶³ A traditional healer interviewed by Meneses, Maciane F. Zimba, echoed this view when he observed that “we had the independence and Papa Samora [Machel] arrived while we were working in our organisation [AMETRAMO].⁶⁴ Over time they prevented us from doing our own work.”⁶⁵

59 However, evidence from Gilé and Meloco in Cabo Delgado province shows that later the situation deteriorated with the destruction of mosques and assaults on believers. Vines A. 1996. *Renamo: From Terrorism to Democracy in Mozambique?* Second Edition. London: James Currey, 110.

60 Morier-Genoud, *O Islão em Moçambique após a independência*.

61 This definition of health is in line with the World Health Organization’s (WHO) concept of health which postulates that “health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and illness”. See Nunes ED. 1992. “Henri Ernest Singerist pioneiro da história social da medicina e da sociologia médica” [Henri Ernest Singerist Pioneer of Social History of Medicine and Medical Sociology], *Educ Med Salud* 26(1):76.

62 From the national liberation struggle.

63 Interview with Ahmad Fiqili by J Machele, Namiune village, Nangade district, Cabo Delgado province, northern Mozambique, 11 November 2011.

64 Associação dos Médicos Tradicionais de Moçambique [Mozambican Traditional Healers Association].

65 Meneses MP. 2004. “Maciane F. Zimba e Carolina J. Tamele: os percursos e as experiências de vida de dois médicos tradicionais moçambicanos” [Maciane F. Zimba and Carolina J. Tamele; the trajectories and life experiences of two traditional Mozambican doctors], in

In an atmosphere of uncertainty generated by the end of the colonial war, by the frequent occurrence of natural disasters, especially floods and drought, by diseases and plagues of various natures and frequent threats of accusations of witchcraft, many people lost the protection afforded by the spirits of the ancestors, who were often consulted and appeased in favour of Marxism-Leninism. Moreover, the civil war between the Renamo forces and the Mozambican government destroyed the social fabric of Mozambicans, and many went through indescribable traumatic experiences.⁶⁶ These victims had as “psychologists” only practitioners of traditional medicine, who through purification rites helped in the social integration of the various victims of this conflict,⁶⁷ but the political powers tried to squelch it, thus pushing it underground.

In fact, there are studies that associate religion with happiness and an ability to deal with losses. From the point of view of social support, “where two or three are gathered”, since in traditional African religions people treat their misfortunes through involvement of extended family, this is significant. Isabel Parada Marques, a psychiatrist in Mozambique, went so far as to state that, with regard to

... everything that is in the forum of the pathology of depression, the pathology of trauma, the pathology ... Which is related to the intra-psychic process, but which actually depends on its relation to the outside, traditional medicine is much more capable of interpreting symptoms, of interpreting the patient's speech, of understanding their social environment, of having contact with their family structure, and of systemically finding a way of establish a dynamic that is conducive to the behavior of the patient, something we in Western medicine are not able to do.⁶⁸

In religions, it is common for members to argue that “we should delight in one another, make the conditions of the other our own conditions, rejoice together, mourn together, work and suffer together, always having our community before us as members of it body”.⁶⁹ However, the condemnation to which the practitioners of African traditional religions were victims has undermined their happiness and ability to deal with losses.

De Sousa Santos B and Cruz e Silva Teresa (eds). *Moçambique e a reinvenção da emancipação social* [Mozambique and the reinvention of social emancipation]. Maputo: Centro de Formação Jurídica e Judiciária, 114.

66 On the use of violence by Renamo, see Gersony R. 1988. *Summary of Mozambican Refugees' Accounts of Principally Conflict-Related Experience in Mozambique*. Washington, DC: United States Department of State.

67 On the purification of veterans of war, see Granjo P. 2012. “Trauma e Limpeza Ritual de Veteranos em Moçambique” [Trauma and Veterans Cleaning Rituals in Mozambique], *Cadernos de Estudos Africanos*, 21.

68 Literal translation from the author. Kotany S (ed). 2003. *Espírito Corpo*. Maputo: Coopimagem.

69 Myers DG. 2007. “Religion and Human Flourishing”, in Eid M and Laarsen RJ (eds). *The Science of Subjective Well-being*. New York: Guilford, 326.

It was partly in line with this position of the government that in the second half of the 1980s pamphlets appeared in the political manifesto of the Renamo rebel movement defending, amongst other things, the restoration of traditional religion.⁷⁰ Afonso Macacho Marceta Dlhakama, the second leader of the movement after the death of André Matsangaissa in 1979, stated in an interview to Portuguese radio and television broadcasting on 5 June 2015 that “what was said in the bush, to fight for independence, was totally forgotten and what the people saw were shootings, deaths, traditional healers were killed, accused of witchcraft, religious were forbidden to pray, Frelimo even said that God was Portuguese.”⁷¹ Following this, a former Renamo fighter stated that “our struggle is for the spirits”.⁷²

The fact that Renamo’s leadership argued that it was in part “fighting for religion” and opting strategically to not interfere with worship services and to not destroy churches, mosques and sanctuaries, especially in the central and northern parts of the country, it prompted the government forces to identify many individuals linked to such sacred places and ceremonies with Renamo. There are, in fact, testimonies of violence perpetrated by government forces against individuals and churches and certain traditional authorities and healers. This instilled an atmosphere of fear and tension that made it difficult to access the protection of spirits against the misfortunes of life. With burned churches, with devastated places of worship, with the fear of death lurking around, people could hardly realise their potential.

The use of religion made by Renamo shows that religion has great potential for mobilisation, a fact not unknown to the Frelimo government. Frelimo was not unaware of the motivating and mobilising force of religion, but it did not intend to restore it. Its intention was to integrate the country under contemporary and modern institutions.⁷³ The signs of the inability to “kill” African traditional religions became evident when President Machel was pressured in order to accept the creation of an

70 Some authors argue that the rebel movement did not have a political agenda in its early years. For these authors, it was a destabilisation movement financed initially by the Southern Rhodesia secret services and later by the South African apartheid government from 1980 until the end of the white minority in Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. See, for example, Hanlon J. 1991. *Mozambique: Who Calls the Shots?* Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Others, such as anthropologist Christian Geffray, argue that it was a civil war. See Geffray C. 1990. *La cause des armes au Mozambique: une Antropologie de une guerre civile* [The Cause of Weapons in Mozambique: An Anthropology of a Civil War]. Paris: Karthala. The expression “1–year war” is also used by those seeking to adopt a neutral or intermediate stance, thus avoiding the polemic between “destabilisation” and “civil war”. For a discussion on this topic, see O’Laughlin B. 1991. “A base social da guerra em Moçambique” [The Social Base of War in Mozambique], *Estudos Moçambicanos* 10:107-142.

71 Lusa. 2015. “Dhlakama afirma que Renamo nasceu da ‘traição da Frelimo à independência” [Dhlakama states that Renamo was born of “Frelimo’s betrayal of independence”], 5 June.

72 Vines, *Renamo*, 113.

73 Borges E. 2001. “A política cultural em Moçambique após a independência (1975–1982)” [Cultural Policy in Mozambique After Independence (1975–1982)], in Fry P (ed). *Moçambique: ensaios* [Mozambique: essays]. Rio de Janeiro, Editora da UFRJ.

association of traditional healers, with the recommendation to traditional healers that “do not *kotsolem*,⁷⁴ do not help to abort, do not take away sand from the tread of others to kill, go to work”.⁷⁵

RELIGIOUS RESPONSES TO DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

In a 1976 pastoral letter, we find the Catholic hierarchy commenting on nationalisations, expulsion of missionaries and the mission of the church. The bishops of the Roman Catholic Church lamented the fact that Christian religious institutions were understood by Frelimo leadership as “mere structures of exploitation” and of having many privileges. Reacting against these accusations they made clear that they were willing to renounce them, but they demanded the maintenance of the means indispensable for the performance of their missionary work.⁷⁶ In 1977, when Frelimo officially adopted Marxism-Leninism, bishop Manuel Viera Pinto⁷⁷ of Nampula wrote a pastoral letter to respond to tension created by the new regime. In his view, “Marxism-Leninism should not disturb Christians, but lead them to deepen their faith, and live it in an individual and collective experience.”⁷⁸ He went on to maintain that “criticism of religion should not raise criticism, crusade or self-defense”.⁷⁹

Responding to injustices, including arrests,⁸⁰ Christian leaders wrote letters condemning such acts and asking for clarification. They even wrote to the minister of the Interior, but they never were answered. The Permanent Commission of the Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM) even set up a fund to help the families of the detainees.⁸¹ Sometimes militiamen committed injustices against men and women in African traditional religions. As a response, traditional religious practitioners approached President Machel to denounce and complain of their fate. Moreover, they began to press the leadership of the party-state for change

74 From the Xi-Changana verb *kòtsòlà*, meaning “to captivate using magic”. Sitoe B. 1996. *Dicionário – Changana-Português*. Maputo: INDE, 89. Xi-Changana is an African language spoken in southern Mozambique.

75 Meneses, “Maciane F. Zimba e Carolina J. Tamele”, 115.

76 Conferência Episcopal de Moçambique (CEM). 1976. *Viver a fé no Moçambique de hoje* [To Live the Faith in Mozambique of Today]. Maputo: CEM, 3-4.

77 He was expelled as persona non grata by the Portuguese colonial authorities for opposing the colonial injustices. He returned to Mozambique in January 1975 and was a special guest of Samora Machel at the National Independence Ceremony.

78 Pinto MV. 1977. *Interpelações da Revolução* [Interpellations of the Revolution]. Nampula, 25 de Junho, 32.

79 Pinto, *Interpelações*, 32.

80 The pastoral letter of 1976 indicated that about 600 missionaries left the country between 1975 and 1976. They were expelled or left due to difficulties of adaptation to the new situation. See CEM, *Viver a fé*, 7.

81 Cabrita, *The Torturous Road*, 121; Da Silva, *Viver a fé em Moçambique*, 128.

and acceptance. Efforts were made to solve the problem, while African traditional religions courageously continued to work in this hostile environment.⁸²

Frelimo began to make concessions from 1982 onwards, because it realised that the actions taken against religion had a negative image. In fact, there was a significant segment of Christians, Muslims and African traditional religion practitioners in Mozambique that had to be taken into account if the government sought to defend the interests of its social base. Moreover, support had to be mobilised to deal with the destruction of the war with Renamo and against natural calamities. The Frelimo government returned some of the confiscated property during nationalisations. The growing calls for peace and reconciliation by the Roman Catholic Church and the Christian Council of Mozambique made various religious congregations become valid interlocutors with the government and Renamo in an environment in which the country was already saturated with the war whose end was seen through dialogue. Following domestic and international pressures, the government adopted the democratic constitution of 1990, which stipulated in Article 54:

2. No one can be discriminated against, persecuted, harmed, deprived of rights, granted or exempted from duties because of their faith, conviction or religious practice;
3. Religious confessions enjoy the right to freely pursue their religious purposes, to possess and acquire goods for the realisation of their objectives;
4. Protection of places of worship is ensured;
5. The right to conscientious objection is guaranteed under the law.⁸³

A year after this liberal constitution, the government enacted the Freedom of Association Act that allowed the legalisation of AMETRAMO in 1992. With this Freedom of Association Act, many Muslim associations were created and legalised.

CONCLUSION

This study has sought to relate religion and development strategies in Mozambique from national independence in 1975 to 1990, the year that corresponds to the introduction of liberal constitution that gave greater space of maneuver to religious institutions. Three development strategies were analysed. The first strategy, known in official discourse as “killing the alligator while still small”, includes policies of nationalisation, collectivisation and increased agricultural production that ran from 1975 to 1978. The second strategy, called re-privatisation, which consisted of small and medium-scale private trade concessions between 1979 and 1984.

82 Meneses MP, “Quando não há problemas, estamos de boa saúde, sem azar nem nada: para uma concepção emancipatória da saúde e das medicinas” [When there are no problems, we are in good health, without luck or anything: for an emancipatory conception of health and medicines], *Migraciones, linajes y estados en África austral* [Migrations, lineages and states in southern Africa], 96.

83 República de Moçambique. 1990. *Constituição da República*, Maputo: Imprensa Nacional.

The third strategy of free market begins with the approach of Mozambique to the international financial institutions. The three strategies impacted the three religious groups analysed in this chapter.

The study concluded that from the period of transition forward, Frelimo has generally treated the existing religious groups as equals in the context of creating the “New Society” and the “New Man”, free from exploitation of man by man and without the bourgeois and aspiring bourgeoisie. This strategy was operationalised with the nationalisations and with the hampering of the activities of existing religious groups and with the adoption of Marxism-Leninism. The Roman Catholic Church suffered the most, because of its connection with the Portuguese colonial regime, especially in the light of the Concordat and the Missionary Agreement. Thus, the role it has played in sectors considered to be part of development, such as health, education and harmony between the individual, family and society have been undermined.

The collectivisation and the *Lojas do Povo* (“people’s shops”), the closure of churches, mosques and madrassas, the prohibition of religious instruction, and the social control to which various religious groups were subjected, undermined their potential and, therefore, their contribution to the well-being of both their members and to society in general. The inclusion of Muslims in the agricultural production strategy did not take into account their religious beliefs. The strategy of re-privatisation was further leveraged by Muslims, who were traditionally engaged in the medium- and small-scale trade. Renamo, a rebel movement that started a war against the government, took advantage of the resentment created, defining itself as a movement that fought for the restoration of traditional religions.

The strategies adopted were contrary to the interests of those that Frelimo itself considered as its social base, a fact that justified the changes in strategies. Christians, Muslims and African traditional religions pressed for greater inclusion in the country’s development in the face of growing divisions. Thus, the mid-1980s witnessed concessions, but to varying degrees, because the Roman Catholic Church remained the ally of colonialism in the official discourse. The liberal constitution adopted in 1990 gave more space to the three religious groups analysed in this chapter. The Freedom of Association Act, enacted one year after the liberation constitution, allowed the creation and legalisation of several religious associations, including AMETRAMO. These concessions allowed religious groups to participate actively in the development agenda.